

# **NINE** SECRET ELEMENTS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE SALES PRESENTATIONS

(based on 100k sales presentations)



# CONTENTS

p3	The Highlight Reel
p4	How did we get this eye-opening data?
p5	The Nine:
p5	1. Top performers discuss this topic X% more
p6	2. Fight the status quo
p7	3. Avoid these “best practices”
p9	4. Follow the 9-minute rule
p10	5. Provoke buyer questions
p11	6. Establish value before pricing
p12	7. Multi-thread (and upsize) your deals
p13	8. Lock in next steps
p14	9. Turn your webcam on
p15	About Gong

# THE HIGHLIGHT REEL

Top reps get their buyers to sprint through the buying cycle. Why?



**Their presentations create *urgency* in every deal.**

Spark a light inside each buyer that gets them running toward a contract, pen in hand, ready to sign.

With a few strategies up your sleeve, you can run sales presentations that lead to faster deal cycles, better win rates, higher ACV...and yes, more commission.

**Here are the nine ways to create more effective sales presentations:**

1. **Focus on value-based topics**, not product features.
2. **Highlight the dangers** of the status quo.
3. **Avoid three “best practices”** everyone uses.
4. **Follow the nine-minute rule** of engagement.
5. **Encourage buyers** to ask more questions.
6. **Establish your product’s value** before you discuss pricing.
7. **Multi-thread your deals** to win more and win big.
8. **Lock in the next steps** in your sales process.
9. **Turn your webcam** on to boost your win rate.

Incorporate these nine tips into your sales presentation one at a time or go for a full overhaul of your approach. The faster you act on all of them, the sooner you’ll see major improvements in your deal outcomes.

# HOW DID WE GET THIS EYE-OPENING DATA?



**We analyzed 100k sales presentations.**

These nine tips are based on our AI-analysis of 100k [successful sales presentations](#) given by sales reps over video and recorded on the Gong platform. (The data was anonymized, of course.)

Our research team used machine learning and conversation intelligence technology to record, transcribe, and analyze those presentations to uncover best practices you can use right away.

The data was clear: It really does matter which timing, topics, strategies, questions, words, talking patterns, and tactics you use in sales presentations. Some send win rates sky high and others set you up to fail.

You're about to uncover the secrets top earners use to drive deals forward. Consider it your one-way ticket to President's Club.

# THE NINE

## I. TOP PERFORMERS AVOID THIS TOPIC

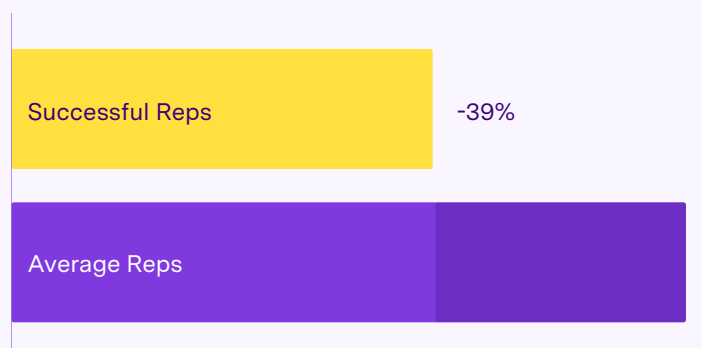
**STOP TALKING ABOUT PRODUCT FEATURES IMMEDIATELY. INSTEAD, TALK ABOUT THE VALUE YOUR PRODUCT PROVIDES.**

Successful reps spend 39% less time talking about features and technical topics.

Instead, they spend that time talking about the value buyers get from their product.

Value-based conversations include everything from talking about the prospect's pain points and business environment, to their timeline and objectives, what the impact of implementation looks like, and the benefits they'll derive from your product.

### Time spent discussing product features and technology



That's because most sales onboarding programs go deep into the product and features, but only scratch the surface of persona and pain points that actually drive the sale.

## 2. FIGHT THE STATUS QUO

The status quo is safe, and that's a positive feeling for your buyer.

So it may surprise you to learn that you should rock your buyer's status quo to the core.

**HELP BUYERS  
UNDERSTAND WHAT  
THEY LOSE BY  
STICKING WITH THE  
STATUS QUO.**

Why? Because your buyer will move toward your solution faster if they think they have something to lose by staying in the status quo.

In your presentation, show them how market forces have changed and what they have to lose if they stay where they are. This will trigger loss aversion, the notion that people work twice as hard to avoid a loss as they do to gain a benefit. It's a real phenomenon!

### **Loss Aversion.**

People will work **twice** as hard to **avoid loss** than they will to **gain benefits**.

They're at Point A (i.e., their comfy status quo) and you want to get them to Point B (i.e., using your solution). Make them feel like Point A is on fire. Show them how much they stand to lose if they don't make a major change.

### 3. AVOID THESE "BEST PRACTICES"

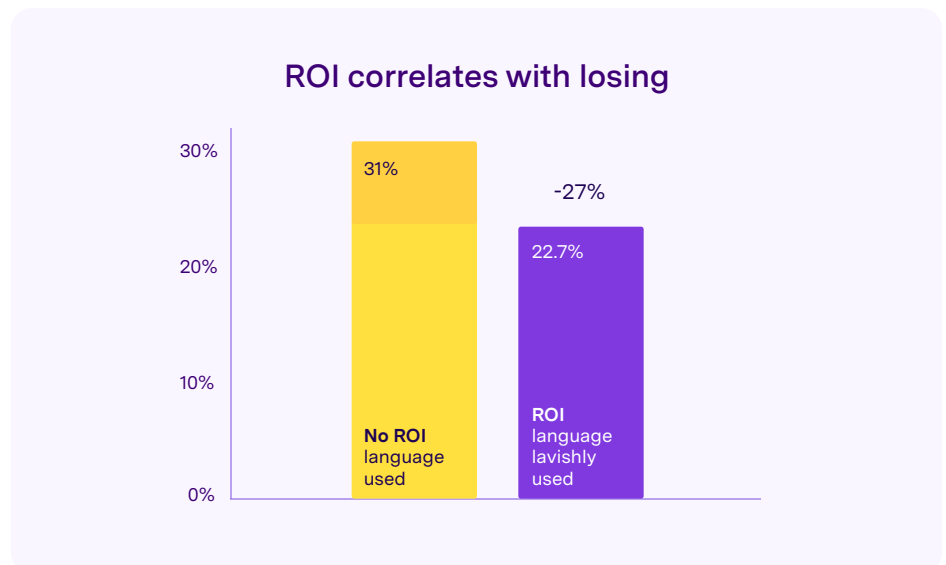
Speaking of blowing up the status quo...

Let's talk about three beloved "best practices" you need to break up with, immediately:

**STOP USING ROI AND SOCIAL PROOF IN YOUR SALES PRESENTATIONS, AND DON'T USE SLIDES IN YOUR DISCOVERY CALLS.**

**ROI:** Presenting ROI in the traditional way — "You'll see a 37% improvement in sales. Ta-da!" — triggers your buyer's logical brain. That's not what you want. It means they'll focus on analyzing the assumptions you made in your ROI comparison.

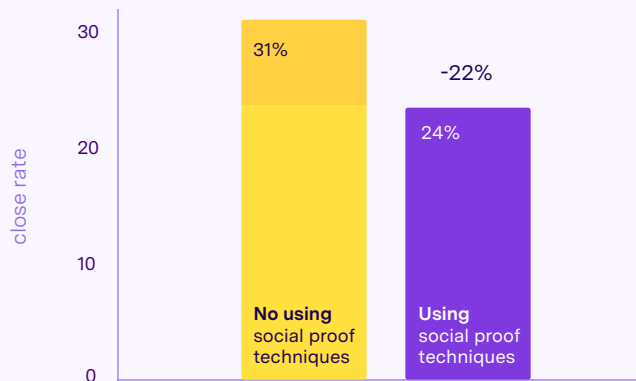
**FACT:** Presenting ROI at any point in your sales process means a **27% drop in close rates**. Instead, trigger their emotional brain by telling a before-and-after story about a customer who's just like them.



**SOCIAL PROOF:** Choose your before-and-after stories carefully. In fact, choose any social proof reference (testimonials, case studies, endorsements, etc.) wisely. If you sell to mid-level orgs that struggle with growing pains, don't name drop Pfizer or LG. Choosing the wrong social proof makes buyers think you don't understand them.

**FACT:** Sellers who use traditional social proof techniques in any of their sales calls have a **22% lower close rate**. **Astoundingly, using those same social proof** techniques during early stage calls doors close rates by 47%. Here's the trick: Social proof can work, but only if your buyer sees themselves in your social proof example. Choose from the same category (sector/size/standing/etc.) as your buyer.

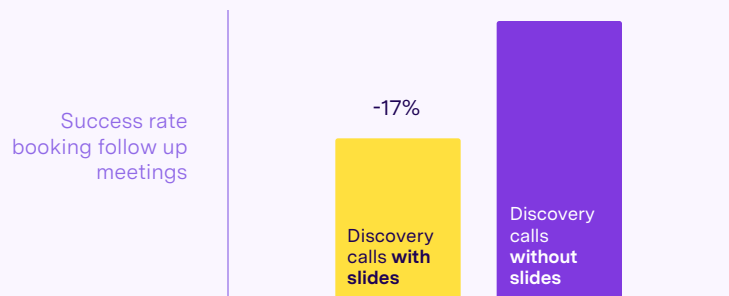
### Social proof has a negative impact



**Slides in discovery calls:** Straight up? They fail. Slides are a major no-no during discovery because slides focus on you, not your buyer. And that’s the opposite of what disco calls are all about.

**FACT:** Selling with slides on discovery calls makes you **17% less likely to book a follow-up meeting**. But don’t worry. Rates go back up when you use slides in mid- and late-stage calls. Just drop them from your disco calls and you’ll be alright.

### Selling with slides decreases call success rates



All three of these “best practices” made their way into the sales zeitgeist years ago, but times have changed, and they need to be kicked to the curb.



## 4. FOLLOW THE 9-MINUTE RULE

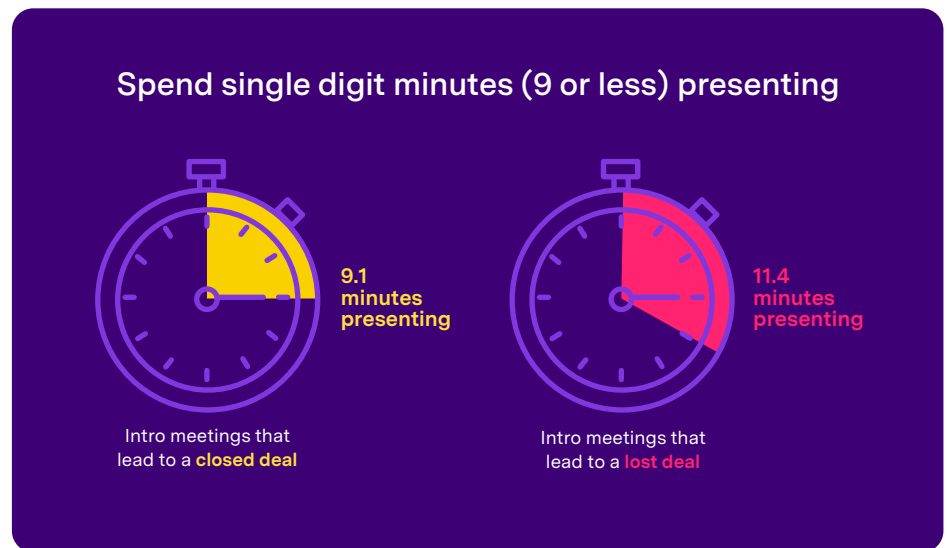
We found something interesting when we ran an AI analysis of the audio and video of 121,828 web-based sales meetings.

**It's another key to a winning sales presentation:**

Reps who eventually won their deal spent only 9.1 minutes sharing their sales deck presentations via video on intro calls.

Reps who lost their deals spent 11.4 minutes on video in their sales decks during intro calls.

**DON'T SPEND MORE THAN NINE MINUTES ON ANY ONE SECTION OF YOUR SALES PRESENTATION.**



**The reason isn't terribly exciting:** People get bored quickly.

Neuroscientists know that human brains like to hit a reset button every 9-10 minutes. Take advantage of that knowledge and build it into your sales presentations. The reset can be any kind of transition: a new speaker, a video or demo, a dramatic story, etc.

# 5. PROVOKE BUYER QUESTIONS

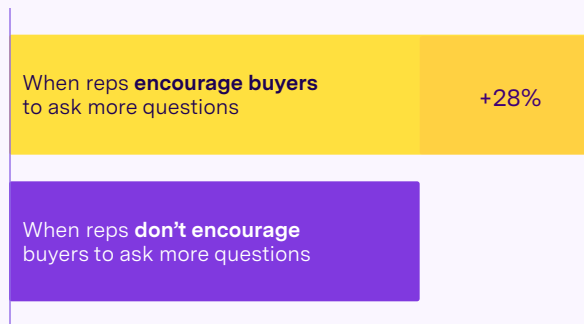
Do you think that if buyers ask a lot of questions, you're doing a bad job of presenting?

Never fear. You're doing things right.

In fact, during demos, the top reps get way more questions than their average-performing peers: **28% more, to be precise.**

**ENCOURAGE YOUR BUYER TO ASK QUESTIONS, AS THEY CORRELATE WITH A GENUINE INTEREST IN BUYING.**

Buyers asking more questions can correlate with more interest in buying



Surprised? Here's an explanation:

Questions aren't a sign that a rep is unclear, they're a sign that the buyer is deeply engaged. Curiosity is a positive behavior in the buying environment and one you want to encourage.

**Here are three phrases that can spark even more questions from your buyer:**

- 1 I'll pause here in case there are any questions before we move on. [MAKE IT A LONG PAUSE.]
- 2 How do you see [YOURSELF/YOUR TEAM] using this?
- 3 Is this something you would use for [USE CASE]?

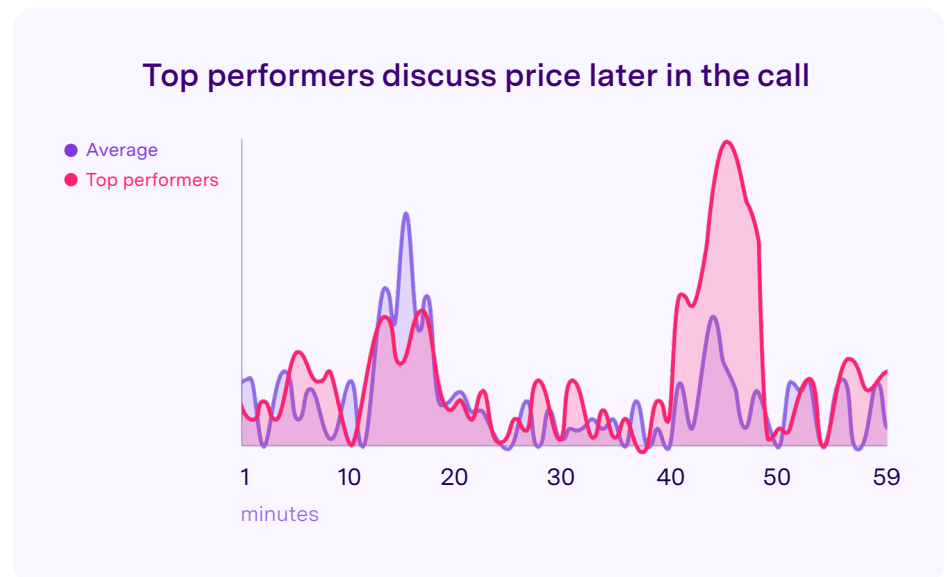
## 6. ESTABLISH VALUE BEFORE PRICING

Would you show a buyer a price tag before explaining the full value of your product? Of course not.

Don't be shy about discussing the value of your product right off the bat. (Remember when we talked about highlighting value instead of features?)

But do hold back on pricing discussions until just the right time. When is that? **At about 38-46 minutes into** your discovery call.

**TALK ABOUT THE VALUE OF YOUR PRODUCT EARLY ON, BEFORE YOU DISCUSS ITS PRICE IN THE THIRD QUARTER OF YOUR PRESENTATION.**



Low-performing reps tend to talk about pricing far too early, **at 11-18 minutes** into the call.

That's well before they've uncovered their buyer's pain points and made a corresponding value offering.

If you establish enough value, your buyer won't wince when they see your price tag.

## 7. MULTI-THREAD (AND UPSIZE) YOUR DEALS

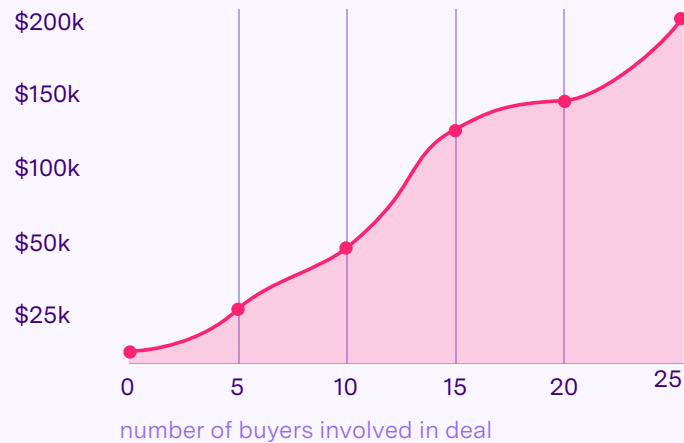
**BOOST YOUR MULTI-THREADING (AND DEAL SIZE) BY INVITING MORE PEOPLE FROM THE BUYER'S SIDE TO YOUR NEXT SALES PRESENTATION.**

You may not associate multi-threading with sales presentations, but you should.

Multi-threading — or the act of connecting with multiple contacts inside the buyer's organization — is important at every stage of your deal because it boosts win rates. It's a known and winning strategy, and presentations are a great time to bring in new people from the buyer's end.

Here's the bonus round: Our analysis of 10,332 sales deals found a strong correlation between deal value and the number of buyers involved in closed-won deals.

**Deal value increase when more buyers are involved in the sales cycle**



That's right. Multi-threading increases your chances of winning AND it boosts the value of your deal.

Probably time to tweak the guest list for your next sales presentation, no?

## 8. LOCK IN NEXT STEPS

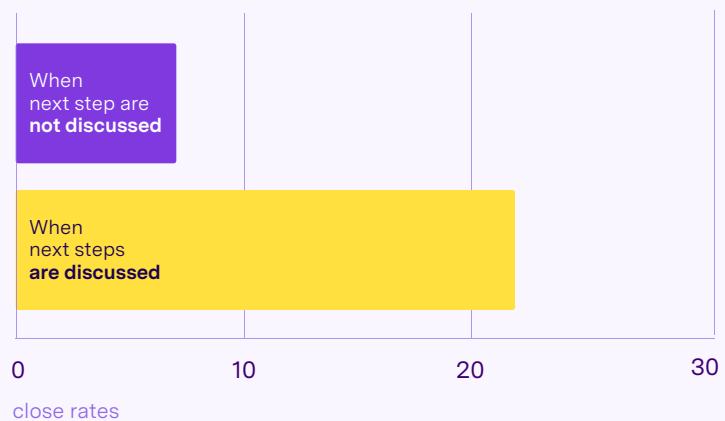
Even when you put these nine tips into place (and we know you'll do that soon), you still have to lock in next steps at each stage in your deal.

Whatever else you do, setting next steps is critical to keeping your deal on track.

Reps who lock in next steps have significantly higher overall win rates.

**SET NEXT STEPS  
AT EVERY STAGE  
IN YOUR DEAL TO  
KEEP IT MOVING.**

**Win rates are significantly higher when next steps are discussed at any part of the sales cycle**



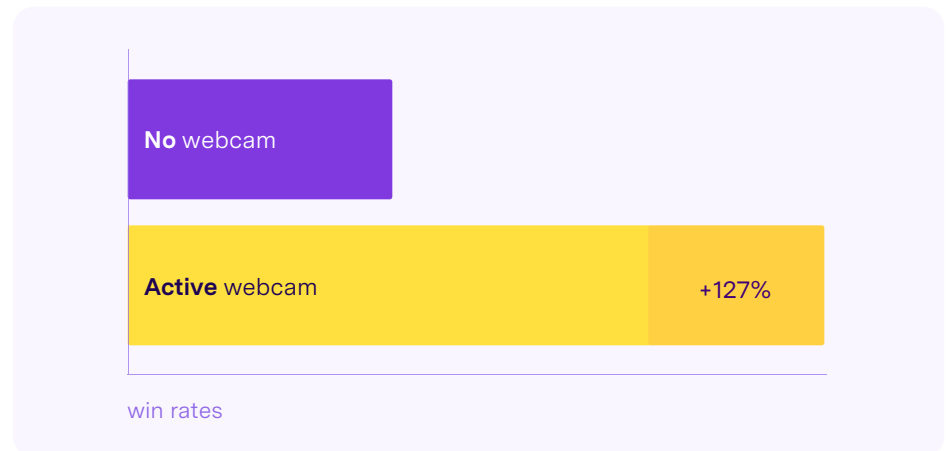
**Think of this as a two-step dance:** Talk about the right topics (like we discussed in the other tips), and you'll get agreement to set next steps more easily.

## 9. TURN YOUR WEBCAM ON

We saved the easiest one for last.

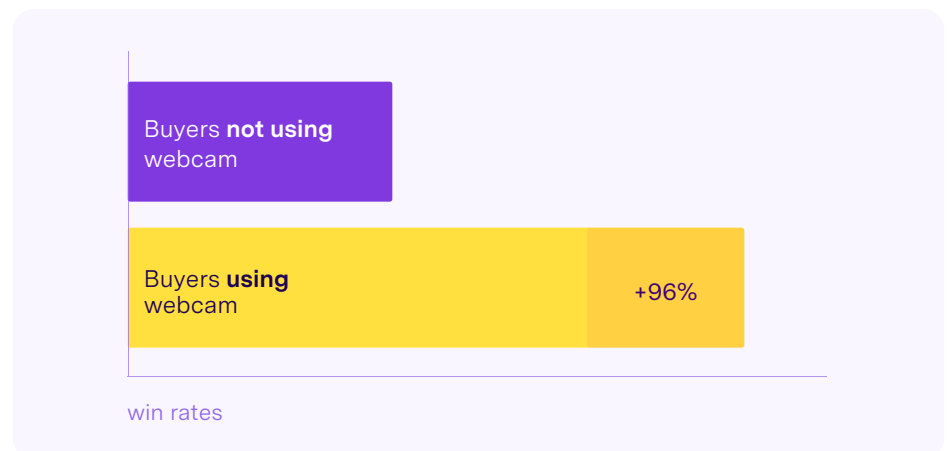
**Check this out:** Deals are **127% more likely to close** when video is used by at least one party at any point in the sales process compared to deals where no cameras are ever used.

**TURN YOUR WEBCAM ON. THAT'S IT. NO COMPLICATIONS HERE.**



This isn't even a tactic you have to practice. It's literally just remembering to flip your webcam switch on. This is post-it-level reminder time, which is a pretty easy trade for a big payout.

Not surprisingly, the numbers also climb skyward when both you and your buyer turn on your webcams. **There's a 96% increase in win rates** when you both use your webcams, compared to no webcams on either side.



You can read each other's facial expressions and body language, which engenders trust and a real back-and-forth connection. As a seller, it also gives you more cues about whether your buyer has objections you need to address.

# ABOUT GONG

If you think the industry-based tips above are handy, imagine what Gong could do if we had a look at what's really happening inside your team.

Gong's revenue intelligence platform offers personalized solutions based on your sales team's customer and buyer interactions. Talk about tailored solutions you'll covet.

Gong is the #1 revenue intelligence platform (for a reason).

It automatically records, transcribes, and analyzes your team's sales conversations to give you insights that drive more deals across your team.

Yes, please.



[Request a demo](#)