

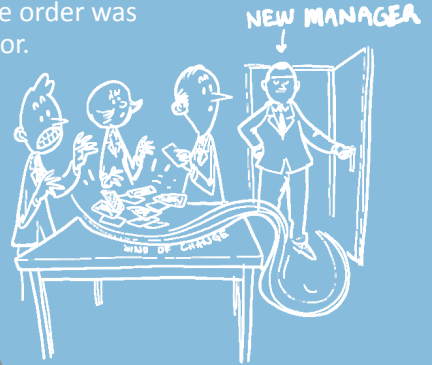


BUYING CENTER ANALYSIS

The concept of Buying Center is perhaps best illustrated with a story about a lost sale.

A large telecom operator was evaluating vendors to build their next generation mobile network. The current supplier was clearly in a favourable position based on their successful track record...

The customer project team completed the request for proposal, evaluated alternative solutions, and (no surprise) recommended staying with the current vendor. But things turned out very differently at the last minute, and the order was placed with a competitor.



So what went wrong?

Given the technical nature of the project, both the project manager and the vendor sales team believed that the Chief Technology Officer would just approve the project team's recommendation.

But the CTO was new to the position, and had a strong relationship with the competitor from his previous job. This came as a big surprise for the incumbent vendor.



This is why it's really important to understand each person's role in the decision-making process, as well as their level of influence, and of course, their relationship with competitors. Your internal supporters might lack credibility or have less influence than you believe.

Experience shows that the lack of a relationship with key decision-makers is the real reason for losing in 8 out of 10 cases. Unfortunately many times you only find this out after the "no" decision has already been made.

