



# UNDERSTANDING CUSTOMER NEEDS

Every salesperson will tell you how important it is to understand the customer's needs.

So, how do you go about doing it?

Let's look at it from 3 aspects:

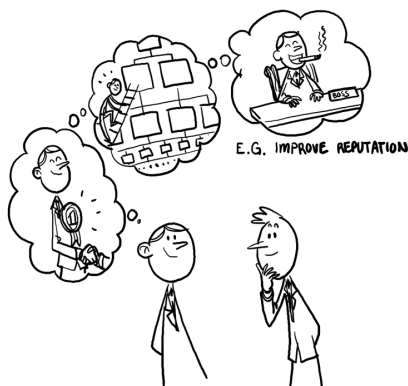
## 3. Personal goals

What do people want from the project for themselves?

They might be motivated by a bonus for on-time project completion. Or, having the chance to get a desirable assignment or a position.

In one of our bids for a sales transformation project, the project leader really wanted to improve his reputation inside the company. His recent project to introduce CRM software had not gone well. By demonstrating how our solution would dramatically improve CRM utilisation and help him recover his reputation, he became a very strong supporter.

So understanding customer needs is really about understanding people.

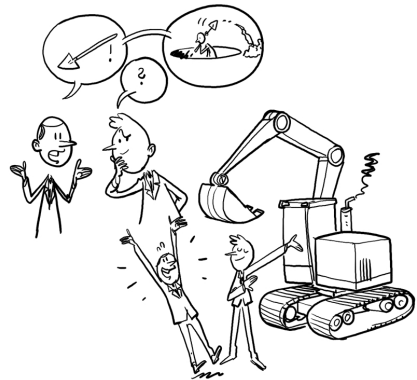


## 1. Business goals

The improvement each person is trying to achieve with the project.

Why is this so difficult to understand? Because, quite often, customers express their goals in terms of the solution they already have in mind.

The ability to use your know-how and challenge the customer with good questions is an excellent way to help them define their real needs, and ensure that you are solving the right problem.



## 2. Decision criteria

The characteristics of a vendor or solution that each person in the decision-making process uses to select the best one. What you often find is that decision criteria vary widely at different levels.

So, it's critical to understand them, to ensure that you present relevant strengths.

