

Benchmark  
Report  
by



# Quota & Coaching ●

# Is coaching moving the needle when it comes to quota?

95%

**of sales organizations  
dedicate time to one-on-one  
coaching sessions**

95% of sales leaders report that reps in their organization are coached in one-to-one sessions. It's a standard expectation across industries and in sales organizations large and small.

But are sales organizations using it to reach their basic goals like meeting quota? How are they using technology to improve coaching and maximize ROI? And where do sales organizations differ in their use of coaching?

To find out, we surveyed sales leaders at sales orgs as small as 1-10 reps and as large as 200+. We asked how they're doing with quota now, how they feel about the future, and the role coaching and technology plays in winning deals.

These are the results.

# Demographics

Business leaders from over 200 organizations were surveyed to complete this report.

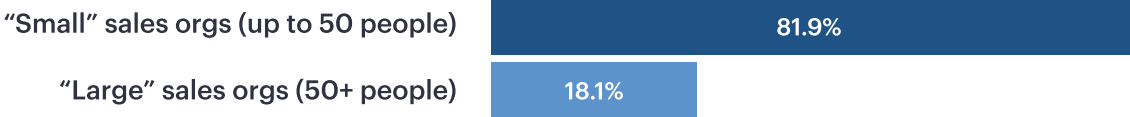
For the purpose of this study on Quota and Coaching, only data from respondents responsible for Inside Sales or Business Development was included.

Respondents were free to choose multiple answers for all questions displayed as bar graphs.

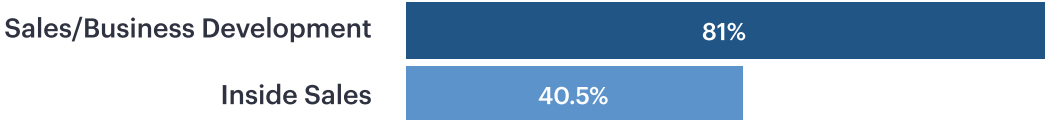
This survey was completed with the help of



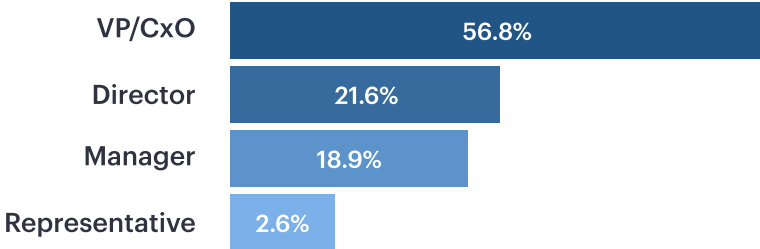
## Size of sales organizations included in the survey



## Scope of respondents’ responsibilities (selected at least one)



## Roles of respondents



54%

Quota

attainment

# Quota: ambitions vs. reality

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**79% of sales organizations are certain they'll meet  
quota in 2021**

**Only 54% met quota in 2020**

# Quota: ambitions vs. reality

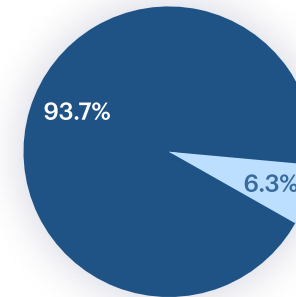
Optimism is high for 2021:

94% of sales orgs are planning for growth and 79% are “somewhat” or “very” certain that they’ll meet quota in 2021.

Only 3% of small sales orgs decreased their projection for 2021, while that number is 5 times bigger for large companies.

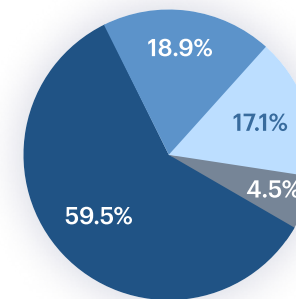
In 2020 only 38% of sales teams exceeded quota overall, and an additional 16% just made the mark.

## What's your 2021 forecast?



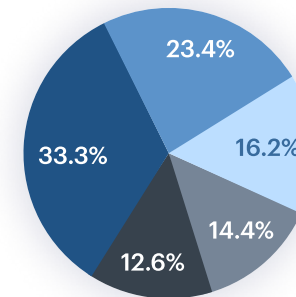
- Plan for growth
- Decreased the projection

## How certain are you that your team will be able to meet quota in 2021?



- Somewhat certain
- Very certain
- Not certain
- Extremely uncertain

## How well did your sales org meet quota in 2020?



- Underachieved slightly
- Overachieved slightly
- We met our quota
- Overachieved significantly
- Underachieved significantly

# Challenges in meeting quota

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**1/3 of leaders say incomplete data is a major barrier  
to meeting quota**

# Challenges in meeting quota

When it comes to challenges in meeting quota, poor lead generation is the most common complaint from all sales leaders.

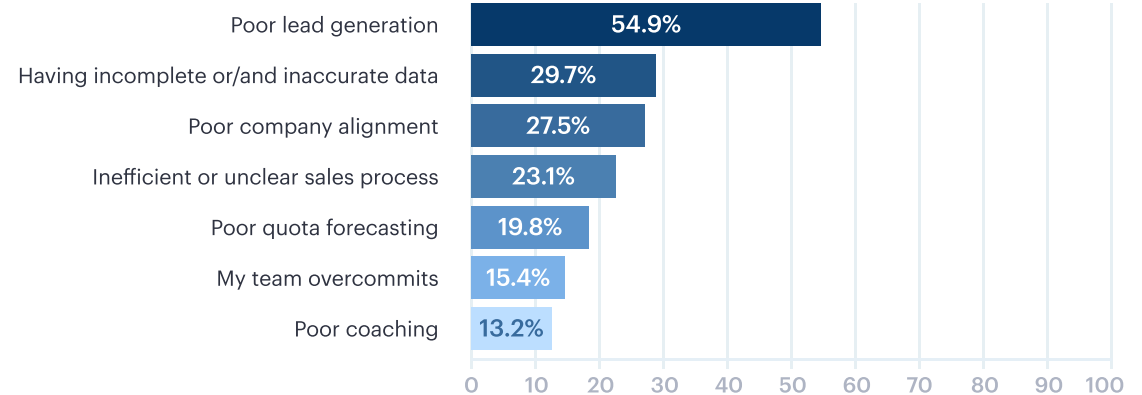
Other challenges were mostly related to structural or technology problems:

- Incomplete/inaccurate data
- Poor company alignment
- Inefficient or unclear sales process

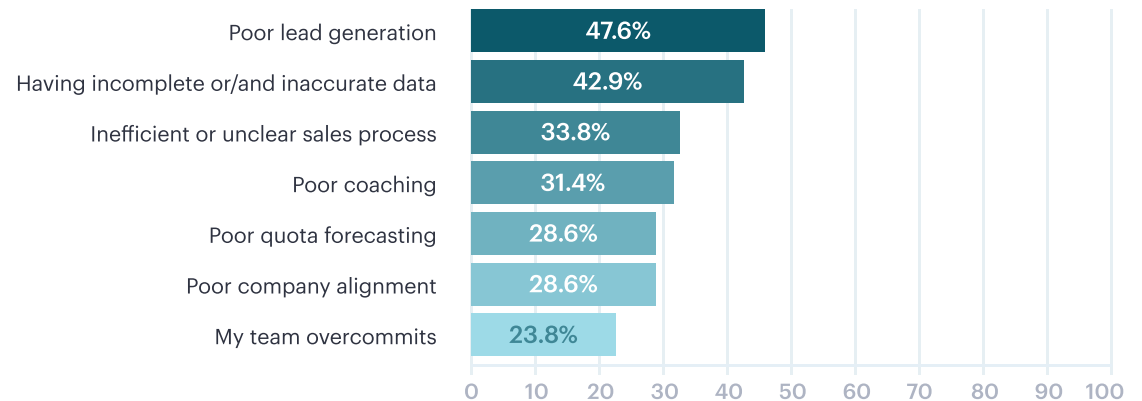
Overall, only 16% of sales leaders blame poor coaching for inadequate quota attainment, but it's a bigger concern at large organizations, where 31% reported it was a challenge.

## What are the main challenges you and your team face in meeting quota?

### Small organizations



### Large organizations





# Top insight to help close deals

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How to prioritize deals with a greater chance  
of winning

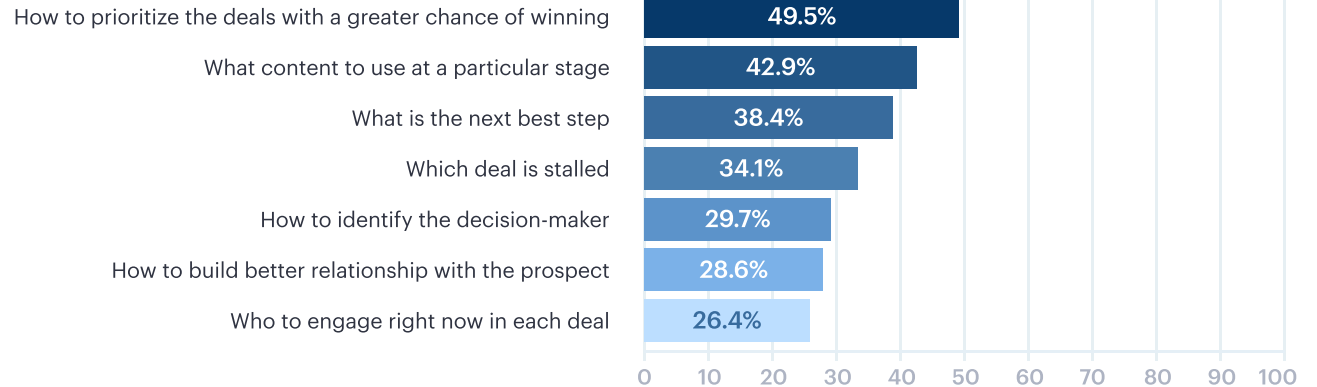
# Top insight to help close deals

56% of all sales leaders across the board reported needing to know how to prioritize deals that have the best chance of actually being won. This number is even larger—over 71%—with large organizations.

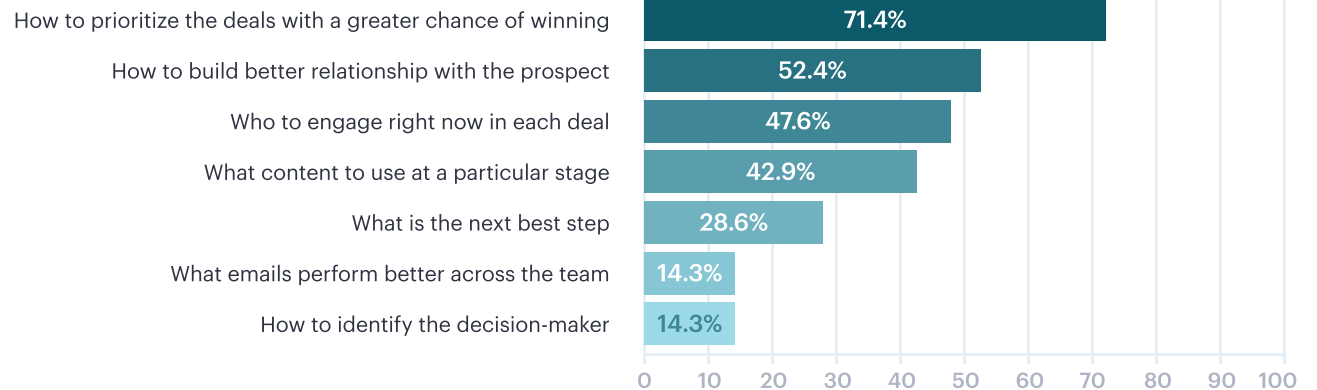
Smaller orgs also suffer from process-related problems like which content to use and what to do next. Larger orgs have more trouble building strong relationships.

## Name the top 3 insights that you feel might have helped you and your team close more deals

### Small organizations



### Large organizations



# Deal prioritization

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**91% of organizations prioritize by deal size**

**12% of organizations use deal scoring**

# Deal prioritization

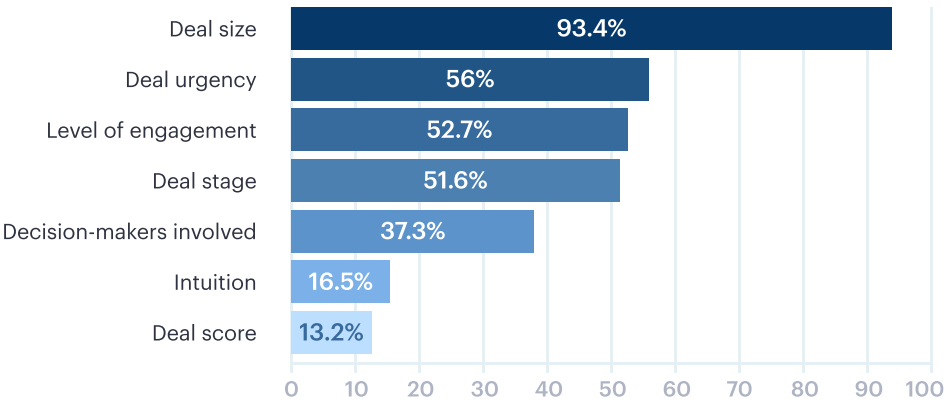
Large and small orgs are quite similar when it comes to how they prioritize deals, with deal size and deal urgency most common.

Although a majority of sales leaders cited “Knowing how to prioritize deals with a greater chance of winning” as an insight that would lead to more wins, relatively few use or rely on a deal scoring system.

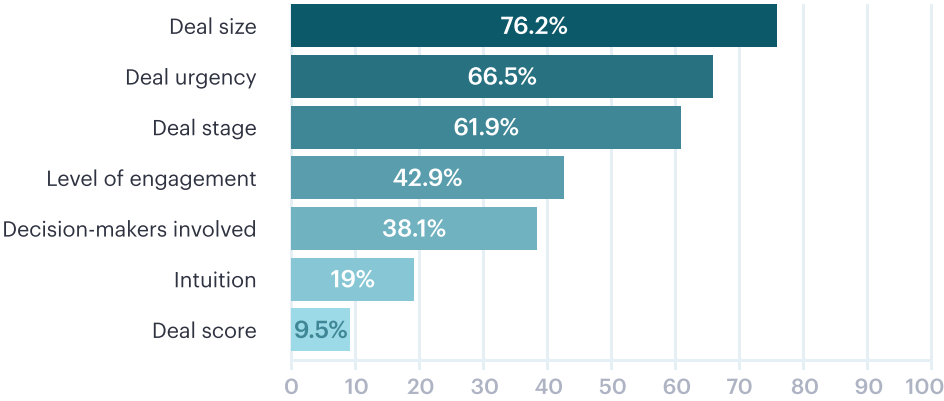
In fact, sales leaders reported intuition more often than deal score as a method of prioritizing deals.

## How do you and your team prioritize which deals to focus on?

### Small organizations



### Large organizations



“ad-hoc”

Coaching

“time-consuming”

# Challenges with coaching

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**61% of sales leaders call time constraints their biggest challenge with coaching**

**26% of sales leaders are not sure how to measure coaching results**

# Challenges with coaching

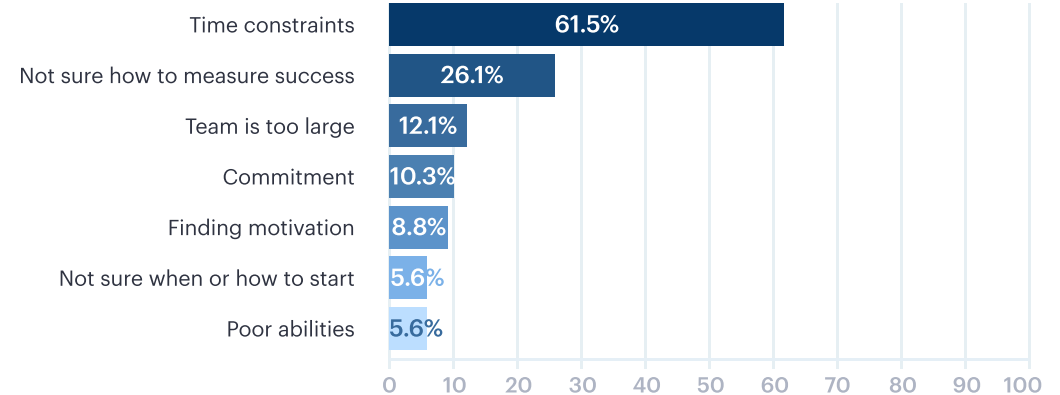
Organizations large and small point to time constraints as their biggest challenge with coaching.

26% of sales leaders also report not knowing how to measure the success of coaching.

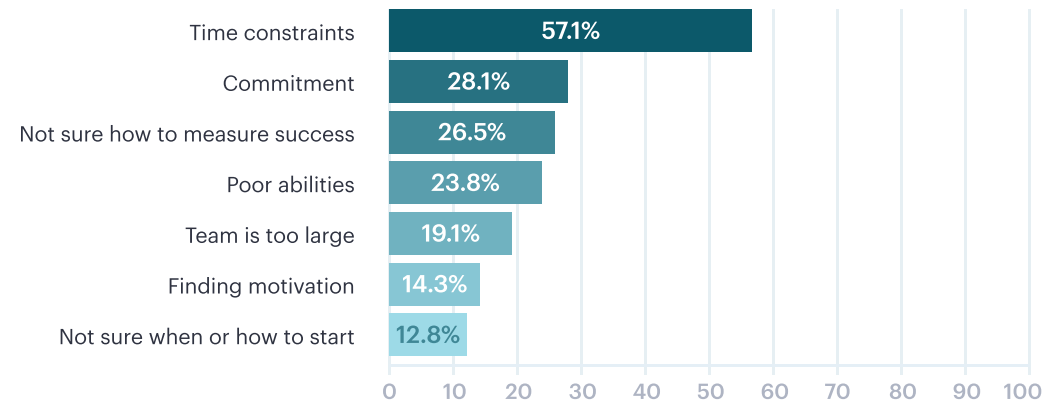
Sales leaders at large organizations were much more likely to point to lacking abilities and low incentive as challenges to coaching, while small organizations reported fewer challenges overall.

## What is your biggest challenge with coaching?

### Small organizations



### Large organizations



# How coaching is done

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1/2 of coaching is completely ad-hoc



# How coaching is done

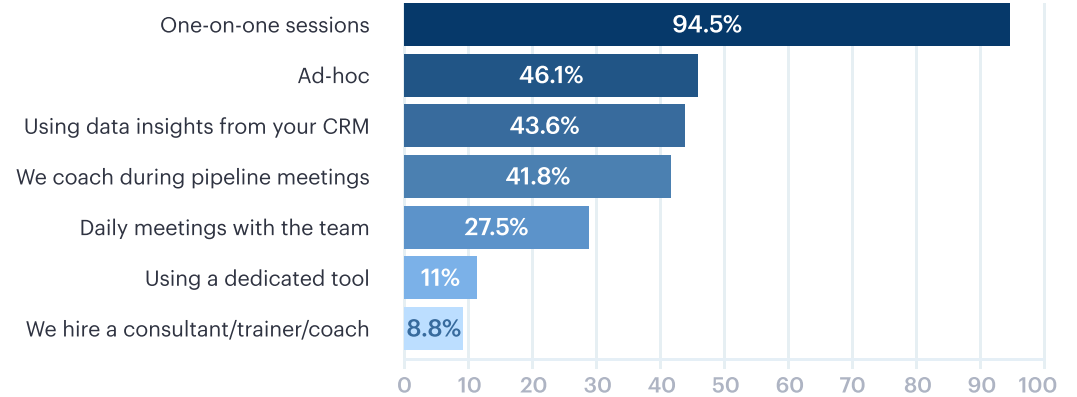
Results again show that larger organizations are more data and tech-driven, with 72% of sales leaders from large orgs reporting using data from CRM to drive their coaching, compared with only 44% from smaller orgs.

Alarming, 50% of all respondents describe coaching as “ad-hoc”.

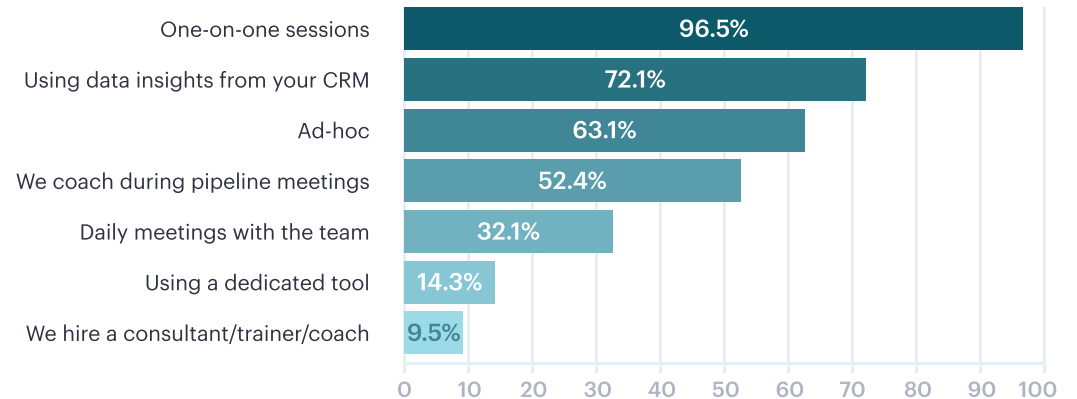
Almost all sales leaders (95%) report that their org still conducts one-on-one training sessions with reps. Considering that half of coaching is conducted ad-hoc and more than a quarter is not being measured, it is expected that sales leaders consider coaching a time drain.

## How do you coach your team?

### Small organizations



### Large organizations



# Coaching for

# Quota

# Top reasons for lost deals

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Poor qualification

Weak relationships

# Top reasons for lost deals

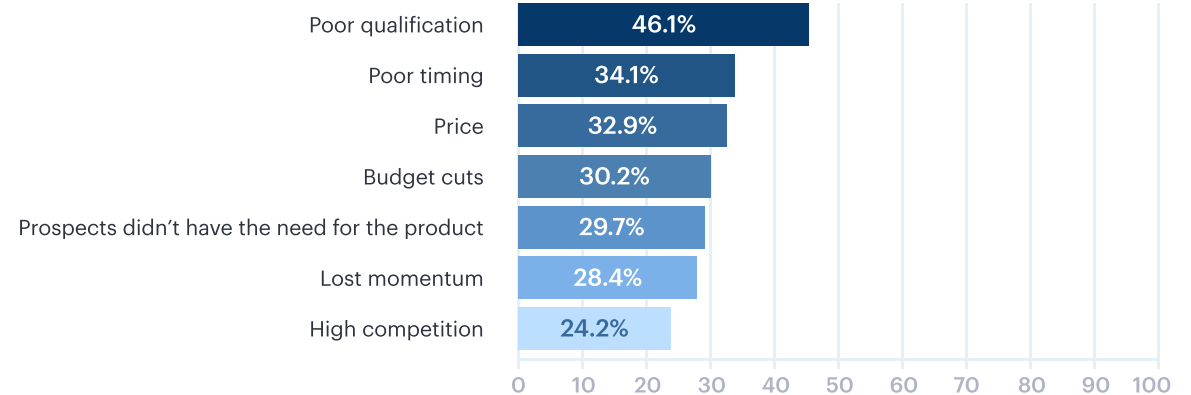
Large and small organizations are split on the reason for lost deals. Small orgs cite poor qualification more often, while large orgs most commonly blame weak relationships.

Results again show large orgs with better processes (and better qualification), but weaker relationships.

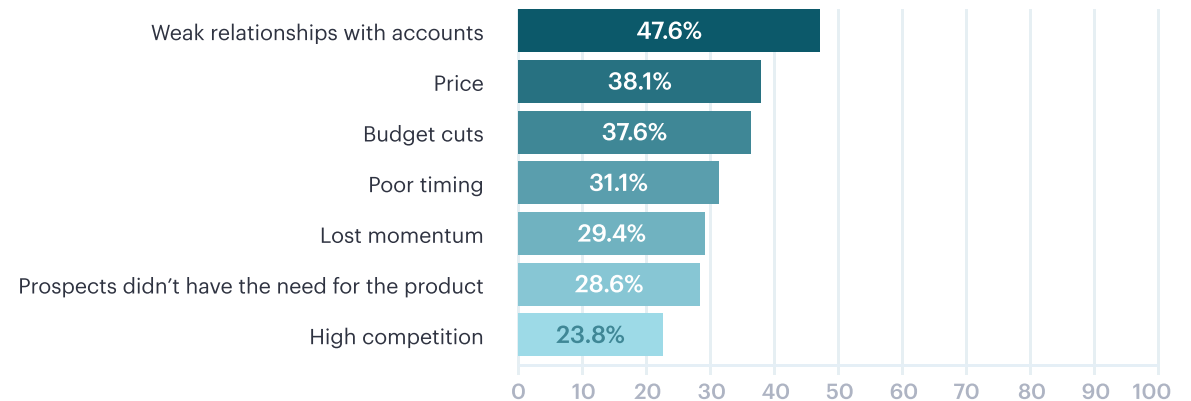
Both of the top failure points that sales leaders listed as deal blockers—poor qualification and weak relationships—could be improved with coaching.

## What do you feel are the top 3 reasons for not winning a deal?

### Small organizations



### Large organizations



# Correlating activity and success

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**87% of sales leaders say they can  
correlate the activity in a deal with the odds of winning**

**This contradicts with the struggle  
to prioritize deals with a greater chance of winning**

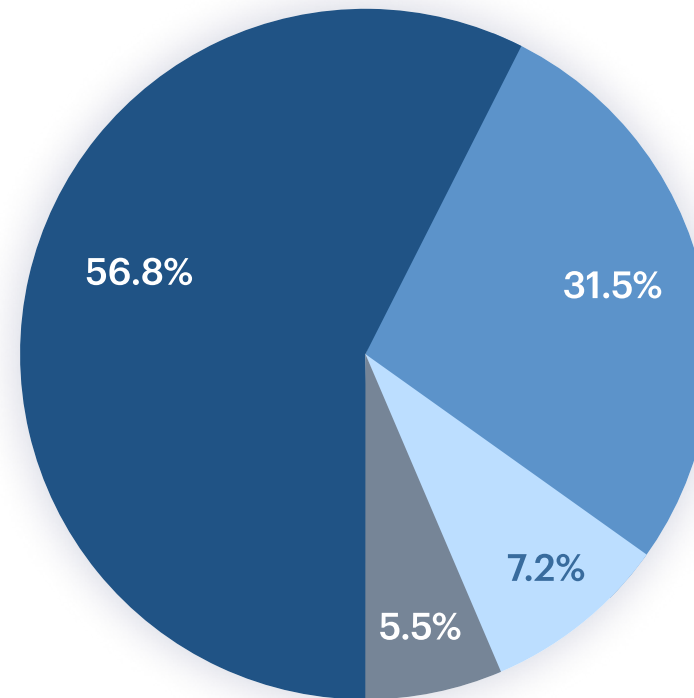
# Correlating activity and success

Sales leaders from all sales organizations are optimistic about their ability to connect the dots between deal activity and wins, with 87% of all leaders “somewhat” or “strongly” agreeing.

This conflicts with the 57% of leaders that reported needing to know how to recognize which deals would actually close.

For many organizations, sales remains an intuition-based art instead of a data-driven science.

I can correlate deal activities with deal success.



# AI guidance through deals

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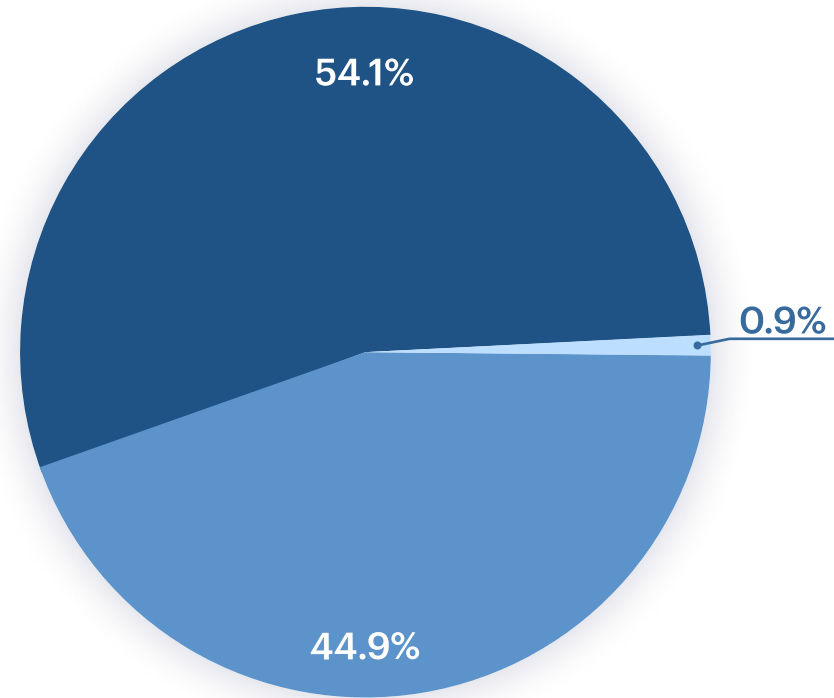
**Despite 54% of all respondents believing AI is ready to help with points like deal prioritization and coaching, sales is still mostly driven either by intuition, or outdated practices of sales management**

# AI guidance through deals

Overall, sales leaders are looking forward to a future where AI provides assistance to sales teams throughout the sales cycle.

54% of all respondents agree that technology is powerful enough to guide teams to more wins today.

## How do you feel about AI being able to guide sales organizations towards closing more deals faster?



- Agree, the technology is ready for that
- Someday, but not yet
- I think it's beyond AI's capabilities



# Conclusions

**54%**

## **of sales leaders agree that AI is ready to guide their teams through deals**

Sales leaders go into 2021 with high optimism about what they can achieve and how their sales cycles operate. Yet that optimism conflicts with the data on challenges and pain points, where confidence seems to be based on an intuitive feel for their sales cycles.

While 95% of sales orgs conduct individual coaching, half of them develop it on the spot, and a quarter doesn't measure the outcomes at all. Problems with data accuracy, the ad-hoc nature of coaching, and deal prioritization have all been successfully addressed by sales technology, yet sales teams still consider these their main obstacles to quota attainment.

These contradictions tell a story of conflicted sales leaders and a sales industry at the boundary line between intuition-based and data-driven sales.

However, the situation is about to change: 54% of respondents agreed that AI technology is already advanced enough to guide teams to more wins today, indicating a readiness to transform sales processes into a data-driven digital experience.

# Get a Demo

to find out how Revenue Grid  
can help you coach for quota

Get a demo

