**CI for Sales and CS: Training exercise**

### ℹ️ About this resource

Self-serve resources like battlecards are a great start, but we also need to give our teams a chance to practice their skills in a low-stakes environment.

Yes, sales role play can be awkward. But would you rather practice with a friendly face who’s here to give you feedback, or practice on your $125K ARR account?

I recommend running this at the single team level, with 6-12 participants. Try to have two facilitators for this exercise: One to play the role of the customer, the other to take live notes during the exercise.

### 📚 Training exercise: Your lesson plan

| 10-15 minutesIntroduce top competitors and key ideas for differentiation* Facilitator presents this content as a set up to the exercise
* Hold off on questions for now - make sure you get to the exercise with plenty of time
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| 5 minutesSet up role-play scenario* Show a slide with a real (or realistic) customer scenario
* Include relevant details such as:
* Customer persona
* Vertical
* Buying stage
* Competitors under consideration
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| 5 minutesTeam uses battlecards to prepare for the role play conversation* ⭐️ Tip: Play some instrumental music in the background by selecting “Share computer sound” when you share your screen in Zoom!
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| 15-20 minutesAct out role play conversation* One facilitator plays the role of the customer.
* Set expectations that each person should contribute at least once.
* Set expectations that role plays can be awkward, but it’s about the learning experience in a low-stakes environment.
* Use a “popcorn” style format where you just ask for one idea or question from each participant at a time. Customer responds, then whoever is ready to jump in goes next and keeps the conversation going.
* Set expectations that each person should contribute at least once.
* Have your second facilitator take live notes while the exercise is going on.
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| 15-20 minutesDebrief + open Q&A * End scene and shake out the awkwardness of role play!
* Ask the team to reflect on how they thought it went, start with what worked well, then what would do differently.
* Discuss VARS framework as a structure for handling competitive conversations.
* Have a second facilitator reveal the live notes so the team can see for themselves where they used VARS and where they strayed from it, skipped it a step, or spent too long on a step.
* End with open Q&A about competitive positioning, including any live deal examples and low-tier competitors. (Teams will often want to vent about competition after this exercise - let it happen!)
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***P.s.*** *We've got a whole course on* [*Sales Enablement*](https://certified.productmarketingalliance.com/p/sales-enablement-certified?utm_source=misc&utm_medium=resources&utm_campaign=se-course-template)*, too.*