
A PORTRANE HOUSE TOOL

The Account Map

Who has to say yes — a one-page instrument for turning hope into a plan on the deals you can't afford to lose.

Hope is not a strategy.

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THE PROBLEM

A champion is not a map

Ask a rep how a big deal is going and you'll hear about a person. "I've got a great relationship with the VP. She loves us." That's a friend. It is not a plan.

Here's what the rep with a friend keeps forgetting. You don't sell to a person. You sell to a committee, and you lose to a single no. It doesn't matter how much your champion loves you if the CFO she never introduced you to, or the procurement lead two floors down, or the incumbent's quiet inside man decides you're a threat. One no, anywhere in the chain, and the deal you felt great about is dead. You just don't know it yet.

Deals die at the no you never mapped — not the yes you already have.

And the vetoes aren't all in one building. The chain runs across parties: the buyer, procurement, legal, the economic buyer, the user, the person defending the system you'd replace — and often a second organization entirely, like an agency, a channel partner, or an outside advisor. A champion in one org is worthless if a blocker in another says no. Map every person, in every organization, who can say no. Then find out what each of them needs to say yes.

Run this for each of your top ten accounts. The map takes twenty minutes and tells you more than a quarter of forecasts.

THE INSTRUMENT

The map — every person who has to say yes

Account: _____ · Deal / value at stake: _____ · Close target: _____

Person · Role · Organization	Can they say no?	Where they stand	What they need to say yes	Our coverage

Can they say no? Veto (kills the deal) / Influence (shapes it). **Where they stand:** Yes / Unknown / No. **Coverage:** Strong / Weak / None. Tag your Champion (wants you to win) and your Coach (tells you the truth).

Coverage summary — the only numbers that matter

People who must say yes (vetoes)

Positions still Unknown

Vetoes you have NOT yet reached (coverage gaps)

Do you have a real Champion? A Coach?

Y / N

The single no you're most exposed to right now

Two leading indicators to run your team on, every week: the percent of top-ten accounts with a complete, validated map, and the number of veto-holders your reps have actually made contact with. Both beat "the pipeline looks good," which is hope.

WORKED EXAMPLE

A \$2M platform sale into a mid-market manufacturer

The rep "feels great" — the plant manager loves them. The map tells a different story. Illustrative.

Person · Role · Organization	Can they say no?	Stands	What they need to say yes	Coverage
Plant Manager — user lead (Buyer)	Influence	Yes ★champion	Won't disrupt his line; makes his numbers easier to hit.	Strong
VP Operations — economic buyer (Buyer)	Veto	Unknown	A hard ROI case; payback inside 12 months; proof it scales to the other plants.	Weak (met once)
Procurement Director (Buyer)	Veto	Unknown	Competitive bids, clean terms, no single-source risk. Wants to feel in control.	None — GAP
Legal / Compliance (Buyer)	Veto	Unknown	Standard contract, data security, no liability surprises.	None — GAP
IT Director — loyal to incumbent (Buyer)	Veto	Leaning No	Not to look wrong for choosing the current system. A face-saving story.	Weak
Outside PE operating partner (Sponsor)	Influence	Unknown	Evidence it moves a value-creation-plan metric this year.	None — GAP

Coverage summary	
People who must say yes (vetoes)	4
Positions still Unknown	4
Vetoes not yet reached (coverage gaps)	3 — Procurement, Legal, and the IT Director is hostile
Champion? Coach?	Champion yes (Plant Mgr). No Coach.
The no you're most exposed to	Procurement — never engaged, holds a veto

The read: this deal is not "going great." It has one enthusiastic yes with no veto power, three unmapped or hostile vetoes, and no coach on the inside to navigate the politics. The forecast says 80%. The map says the real work hasn't started. That gap — between the feeling and the map — is exactly the conversation the rep was hoping to avoid, and exactly the one worth having.