Aventi Group

# PLAYBOOKS THAT REALLY WORK — FOR BOTH SELLERS & BUYERS

Tips for developing a key sales enablement tool that truly delivers

> “A sales playbook is a living, breathing, ongoing source of truth that sellers rely on as part of their arsenal.”
>
> **SRIDHAR RAMANATHAN**, COO & CO-FOUNDER, AVENTI GROUP

Sales enablement applies rigorous methods and metrics aimed at improving the competency of sales professionals so they can deliver great results. An effective program typically includes sales coursework, playbooks, training modules, call scripts, competitive battlecards, cheat sheets, and more. One of the key drivers — indeed, the cornerstone — of any effective sales enablement program is the playbook.

This strategic asset serves as a foundation for all other sales enablement content and programs, be it collateral, coaching, or SKO events. The objective is to systematize the best practices of an organization’s top performers, so that every salesperson wins more and closes faster. In short, to enable every sales rep to replicate the performance of top sales reps and sell just like the best.

## Get inside the buyer's head.

Playbooks that enable sellers to optimize the buyer experience are those that work best. Each section of the playbook should align with each stage of the sales cycle from the buyer's perspective — from top of funnel to closing. Create playbook content that demonstrates your understanding of the buyer's world and their industry. Content that teases out their pain points and induces them to tell their story.

In a sense, you want to reverse engineer what buyers are trying to achieve throughout the buying process and enable your sales reps to help them reach their objectives. Content development is a strategic, buyer-centric process that needs continuous refreshing. Don't get hung up on speeds and feeds, rather, focus on the buyer's needs.

Who's running the show? Product marketing typically plays the lead role because they're the people who best understand the buyer's perspective. To get a complete, well-rounded view, of course also solicit input from sales reps, front line managers, customer success stories, solutions architects, and whoever else can provide insight into the buyer's mindset.

"The most effective sales playbooks are built around your top performers' sales tactics and the way their prospective customers navigate the buying process."

**DANIEL ZAMUDIO, CEO, PLAYBOOX & AUTHOR OF SALES PLAYBOOKS SALESPEOPLE LOVE (AND USE)**

## What do sellers want?
## Relevant content, easily accessed.

While playbook development needs to be buyer-centric, keep in mind that the sales playbook asset itself is only useful if it ever gets used. What your salesforce wants, no surprise, is content that helps them win more often and make their numbers.

They want tools that help them execute great conversations throughout the sales process — from qualifying prospects and discovery to closing the deal. Salespeople love having tips and best practices at their fingertips, especially easy-to-access resources they can quickly scan before a meeting or call to help them brush up on value props and discovery questions.

> “If I had more time, I would have written a shorter letter.”
>
> **ADAGE OFTEN ATTRIBUTED TO MARK TWAIN, BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, CICERO, AND OTHER PERSONALITIES.**

What they don’t want is an encyclopedia. If your playbook isn’t user friendly, with too many words and pages and too hard to navigate, it won’t get used. It needs to be precise and consumable at the time of need. And if key concepts can be conveyed visually instead of with words, all the better.

# Making playbooks that sellers love: Do's and don'ts.

What are some best practices? The don'ts are easy: avoid marketing hype, be honest. Sales reps don't appreciate being blindsided by having to defend bogus claims. No long-form dissertations, it's not a white paper. And don't use too many personas, which tend to muddy the waters.

**As for the do's:**

### Provide relevant information at the right moment in the sales cycle.

Focus on enabling sellers to uncover specific needs, position the solution, articulate the value proposition, and help buyers build a business case for their internal audiences. Clearly explain the problems, attitudes, and concerns of the most likely buyers. Create no more than four personas targeting the most likely prospects, including a key decision-maker(s). Sellers will be able to gather new info as they conduct their pitches to keep personas and value props updated.

### Make it easy to access — and fast.

Your playbook will be used in preparing for calls and also during conversations. So it has to be accessible and easy to navigate. Consider using technologies that let you produce interactive playbooks where reps can find exactly the information needed, exactly when they need it. By letting reps provide feedback in real time, an online playbook can become a living document that is easily refreshed.

### Keep it fresh and up to date.

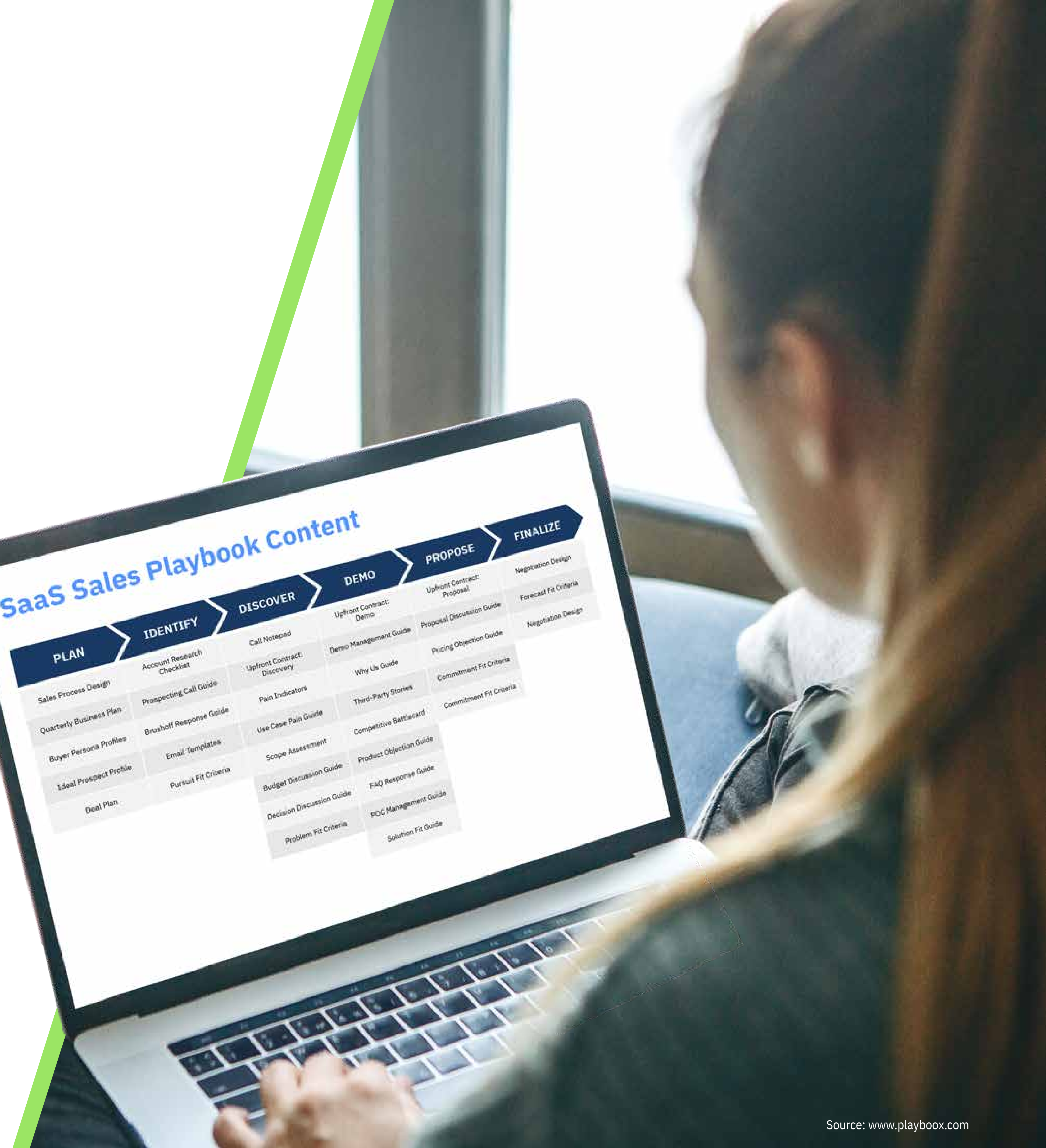
As sales learns more about who buys, who doesn't, and why, playbooks need to incorporate new learnings. Likewise for product features and functionalities as they evolve, new product intros, and any changes in the competitive landscape. The playbook needs to be fine-tuned to incorporate the latest messaging, positioning, competitive analysis, market trends, personas and products, and value propositions to accommodate changing realities. And be sure to inform all sales teams when any updates are made available.

**Check out page 7 for our recommendation on specific technology tools that help you create playbooks sellers love**

> "The best sellers talk less and ask more."
>
> **DANIEL ZAMUDIO, CEO, PLAYBOOX**

## A complete sales enablement system.

The sales playbook is more than a tool. It's a strategic, living system that is central to an organization's Go-to-Market and a critical asset for executing growth strategies. As shown in the example below, content should be developed across the sales cycle. There are numerous sales methodology resources available online to help you determine the right path and corresponding content required to meet the needs for your business.




Source: www.playboox.com

## Tools, intelligence, and research.

Your product marketing and sales teams will be the primary sources of insight and strategy for developing your playbook. Once they are rolled out, many organizations integrate their playbooks with Salesforce or other CRM applications to enhance their effectiveness and usability. When it comes to fine-tuning your plan, gathering intel, and developing content, there are several resources that can help. Of course, Aventi provides critical sales enablement services (tools, training, and strategy) to help you on  your path. We also recommend the following technology solutions for your sales enablement:

**GONG**
Stop losing winnable deals

**CRAYON**
Activate competitive intelligence inside your organization

**klue**
Competitive intelligence that wins business

**SEISMIC**
Make every buyer engagement count

**HIGHSPOT**
Improve the performance of your customer-facing teams

**BRAINSHARK**
Prepare your teams today to win more tomorrow

**MindTickle**
Use data-driven readiness to develop winning sales teams

**allego**
Transform your organization with interactive enablement technology

**PLAYMAKER** PREPARE TO WIN!
Leverage playbooks and Salesforce to win more often

## On-Demand Product Marketing

Successful sales enablement is key to revenue growth, yet organizations are often short on expertise and resources. That's why we founded Aventi Group, the first product marketing agency solely dedicated to world-class Go-to Market execution for high-tech clients. Our extensive team of Silicon Valley marketing veterans delivers fast access to an on-demand, scalable team with broad domain expertise. We are product marketing experts that have successfully run high-performance teams at startups, mid-sized firms, and large enterprises.


**About the Aventi Group**

Aventi Group is an on-demand product marketing agency dedicated to bringing world-class go-to-market execution talent to high-tech B2B clients. We have an extensive team of product marketing professionals – giving our clients fast access to an on-demand, scalable team with broad domain expertise. Our experts have run high performance teams at every level, in every category – from startups to mid-sized firms and large enterprises. Clients include SAP, Adobe, Fortinet, HP, Malwarebytes, ServiceNow, Okta, Palo Alto Networks and Zendesk. Founded in 2008, Aventi Group is based in Silicon Valley, California.

For more information visit **www.aventigroup.com** and follow us on **LinkedIn**.

**Contact us for a quick assessment of your sales enablement strategy versus industry best practices.**

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