SOURCING TOOLKIT · NO. 1

The Pre-Negotiation Gate

The negotiation is won or lost before the supplier walks in. Ten questions to answer first, each graded by the quality of the evidence behind your answer.

Grade every answer. **F** Fact: you can show the document. **E** Estimate: reasoned from partial data. **O** Opinion: you believe it, you cannot show it. Leave the boxes empty if you have no answer.

#	QUESTION	GRADE	AI'S ROLE
	THEIR SIDE · what they know and want		
1	**What does it cost them to make this, and how do you know?** Opinions about price are free. Evidence about price wins.	F E O	CHALLENGE
2	**How much do you matter to them?** Your share of their revenue, their plant, their attention.	F E O	HUMAN
3	**Where else could they sell this capacity, and how fast?** A supplier with a full order book negotiates differently.	F E O	CHALLENGE
4	**Who decides on their side, and what have they been shown?** The person in the room is rarely the person who signs.	F E O	HUMAN
	YOUR SIDE · what you will do if this fails		
5	**If talks fail, what exactly do you do on Monday?** GATE Name the supplier, the price, the date. "We will find someone" is not an answer.	F E O	HUMAN
6	**At what point do you walk away, and who agreed it?** GATE Set it before the meeting. Nobody sets it well across the table.	F E O	HUMAN
	THE DEAL · what you will put on the table		
7	**Can you name three different deal structures you would accept?** Not three prices. Three shapes: volume, term, spec, index, payment.	F E O	DRAFT
8	**What will you give, in what order, at what cost to you?** A concession ladder. Every give is matched to a get.	F E O	DRAFT
9	**What is your opening, and the one fact that makes it credible?** An opening with no fact behind it is only an ask.	F E O	CHALLENGE
10	**What will you record so the next round does not start at zero?** Position, reasoning, concessions. Capability should not leave with people.	F E O	DRAFT

THE GATE · COUNT YOUR F GRADES

STOP. Question 5 or 6 is not a Fact. Do not hold the meeting. You are not negotiating, you are hoping.

DISCOVER. Fewer than 7 Facts. Hold a discovery meeting. Keep price off the table and go and get the facts.

GO. 7 or more Facts and both gates clear. Open with a structure, not a price.

WHERE AI FITS

DRAFT. Let it produce a first version. You edit.

CHALLENGE. Ask it to attack your answer or play the supplier. Never to supply the answer.

HUMAN. Your commitments and your read of people. Keep them out of the prompt.

By Lovleen Chadha · CTO, qapp.ai
Found a flaw, or improved it? Tell me: Lovleen.Chadha@qapp.ai

qapp.ai
AI for High-Stakes Procurement Decisions