

WHAT SHOULD BE GREEN BY NOW?

The color each Deal Management criterion should reach before a deal leaves each stage. If a criterion is red late in a deal, you don't have a criteria problem, you have a process problem. When a deal stalls, mark where you are, then look left.

CRITERIA / LEAVING STAGE	01 DISCOVERY Build Current State understanding deep enough to create contrast in Demo.	02 DEMO Create the highest possible contrast between Current State and Desired Future State.	03 SOLUTION ALIGNMENT Lock the full requirements of all stakeholders so criteria stop drifting.	04 BUSINESS ALIGNMENT Harden Why Change and Why Now into something executives will defend.	05 GO / NO GO Arrive at a clear decision with executive sponsorship confirmed.	06 PROPOSAL TO CLOSE Document what's already agreed, finalize terms, and get to signature.
CURRENT STATE	GREEN Workflow, where it breaks, who feels it, early metric-level impact.	GREEN Validated across more than one viewpoint.	GREEN Stays green.	GREEN Baseline consistent across stakeholders.	GREEN Green.	GREEN Green.
DESIRED FUTURE STATE	YELLOW Directional outcomes, not yet defensible.	YELLOW Outcomes and needs specific; early agreement on what good looks like.	GREEN Criteria shaped and locked; buyer agrees on what good looks like.	GREEN Stays green.	GREEN Green.	GREEN Green.
CHANGE JUSTIFICATION	YELLOW Early Why Change hypothesis, back-of-napkin.	YELLOW Outcome documented for each major criterion.	YELLOW Why Change grounded, not yet executive-hardened.	GREEN Why Change and Why Now documented, portable, tied to priorities and a timeline.	GREEN Green.	GREEN Green.
STAKEHOLDERS	YELLOW Red early; yellow as you loop discovery with new stakeholders.	YELLOW A coach, end users interviewed, criteria shaped with a technical buyer.	YELLOW Most of the core buying team agrees; champion behaviors appear.	YELLOW Green except economic buyer sign-off, which comes at Go / No Go.	GREEN Executive sponsor and economic buyer sign off.	GREEN Green.
BUYING PROCESS	RED Red is fine here unless it's a fast inbound deal.	YELLOW Commitment to a real evaluation and how it will run.	YELLOW Backwards timeline started; MAP drafted.	YELLOW Business decision process tracked in a MAP.	YELLOW Turns green when procurement and legal are aligned.	GREEN Legal and commercial lane mapped: who signs, in what order, what happens if redlines come back.
COMPETITION	RED Red or yellow. Status quo and active alternatives known.	YELLOW Clearer view of what you're displacing and the alternatives.	GREEN Differentiators agreed. You're Vendor of Choice.	GREEN Buyer can explain why you win.	GREEN Green.	GREEN Green.
PULSE CHECK	<i>"Is what I described actually the problem, or are there layers underneath we haven't gotten to yet?"</i>	<i>"Based on what you've seen, does the solution justify changing now that everyone would support?"</i>	<i>"If we locked the solution requirements today, is there anyone who'd push back on what we've agreed to?"</i>	<i>"When [EB/ES] looks at this, what's the first question they're going to ask?"</i>	<i>"At this point, is there any reason this doesn't move forward?"</i>	<i>"Before we start the redline process, are there any terms in your standard agreement that other vendors have pushed back on or found unusual?"</i>

RED We don't know
YELLOW We think (assumed, not validated)
GREEN We know (evidence, buyer-confirmed)

MEDDPICC: M, I → Current State · Dc → Desired Future State · M, I → Change Justification · E, Ch → Stakeholders · Dp, P → Buying Process · Co → Competition