

3 Ways To Accelerate Your Vendor Selection Process



Finding a vendor to solve a business need is often treated as an analytical task – pick one that checks the most boxes and provides the biggest “bang for the buck.” However, several other factors should feed this decision. Vendor selection is not only about choosing the right platform, but also about picking the right partner who closely fits the firm’s culture and offers complementary services. Often, organizations find themselves in a precarious situation when extensive analyses conducted over several months do not yield decisive outcomes. Here are three ways to accelerate the process and reach a viable option.

1. UNDERSTAND INFLUENCER MINDSETS

Large projects bring together stakeholders with multiple perspectives, including operations, technology, front-office and marketing, among others. An influencer within these groups will have strong opinions that can contradict the quantitative outcome. Some examples are...

- What worked at my prior organization is the best solution now.
- What failed in the past won’t work for this situation.
- Change is too disruptive and too risky.
- My objective is to be a change agent, for better or for worse.

Not only do you need to understand these differing viewpoints, but also the willingness to consider all ideas. Influencers typically hold a rigid mindset or a flexible mindset. Those with a rigid mindset are unlikely to be swayed, whereas those with a flexible view are receptive to new information.

Ultimately, recommendations will be more likely to resonate if they align with the rigid mindset biases and contradict the flexible mindset biases. A recommendation is unlikely to move forward if it contradicts the bias of a rigid mindset influencer. To accelerate the process, use the 80/20 rule: 80% of the effort needs to convince 20% of the influencers who need it. Determine who these individuals are up front and focus on building a solid, uncontroversial business case.

2. GUIDE YOUR DECISION-MAKERS ALONG A JOURNEY

To accelerate the vendor selection process, use the sponsor’s vision and build a journey map (roadmap) for your project to keep everyone on target. Amid competing business as usual (BAU) activities, a roadmap constantly orients stakeholders’ actions towards the objective. With each step of the process, update your decision-makers along the way. A correction to the path may be needed due to circumstances beyond the view of your project team. By checking in with the decision-makers periodically, you will build credibility with them on the more minor decisions and make that final leg of the journey achievable.

3. PARTNER WITH A KNOWLEDGEABLE CONSULTANT

Internal resources combined with external perspective provides the best possible outcome for vendor selection. Internal resources understand the culture and influencer mindsets, while external resources bring new ideas and objectivity. Your consultant should offer a breadth of knowledge and tools. In fact, be wary of those who demonstrate a strong bias towards a single solution.

HOW MERADIA CAN HELP

Meradia has developed frameworks to accelerate vendor selection through qualitative and quantitative analyses.

In partnering with Meradia, you will expedite the journey to your target destination. Our consultants can help address the concerns of rigid mindset individuals with biases, assist with building out the roadmap and provide the expertise and tools to streamline the effort.

For further insight on our approach to vendor analysis, read [“RFP Blues: Hitting the High Notes”](#) by my colleague and Meradia’s Director, Mark R. David, CFA.

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About Meradia

Founded in 1997, Meradia provides strategic advisory and implementation services to the investment management industry. Our team of experts has a global reputation for excellence leading and executing transformational and operational initiatives across the entire investment process. In pursuit of unparalleled credibility and client service, we seek to be the dominant niche provider of investment operations and technology consulting services. We align front, middle and back-office organizations and technical platforms with your business’s direction and vision.

