

DIGITAL ADVENTURES / SALES × AI × LEADERSHIP

# Which sales KPIs lead to better decisions?

Mario Pufahl · 26 September 2026

## Start with the decision

Before adding to a dashboard, define the decision you want it to support. Should the team prioritise different customers? Do you need to concentrate resources on a deal? Or identify where opportunities stall? Without that question, a number initially creates only more monitoring work.

## Distinguish activity, progress and outcomes

Calls and meetings show effort. They do not yet demonstrate progress in a buying decision. A jointly confirmed next step, a clarified decision criterion or a validated business case may tell you more about an opportunity. Revenue and margin show the result. Leadership needs the connection between these levels.

## Define each metric precisely

Specify what is counted, which data source is authoritative and who owns data quality. For a win rate, for example, the period and cohort must be consistent. Dividing opportunities won in one month by those created in that month can distort the picture when sales cycles differ. Use consistent definitions and compare comparable cohorts.

## Four questions for your next pipeline review

1. What change do we see?
2. Which explanation is supported by customer signals?
3. What action follows?
4. When will we review its impact?

This sequence prevents the discussion from stopping at a description of the numbers. Record the agreed action and its owner together.

## An example of a management decision

Suppose many opportunities remain in the proposal stage for a long time. Producing more proposals will not automatically solve the problem. First check whether decision criteria, stakeholders and a shared timeline are clear. You could make a review of these points mandatory before approving proposals. Then observe whether opportunities progress more clearly. This is an illustrative example, not a customer reference.

## Start small and usefully

Choose one recurring decision and a few relevant metrics. Document definitions, data sources, owners and review frequency. After several reviews, assess whether different or better decisions are actually being made. Remove metrics that trigger neither an action nor a relevant question.