

Make The MOST™

User Guide

**For MTM Opportunity Dashboard Version 8
Document revision 2**

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Introduction

Make The MOST™ is a sales tool for opportunity selling.

If each one of your sales is a campaign, that is if it takes time and effort to make it happen, then this method is for you. If the sales come to you (e.g. in a shop) or each sale happens in one event (e.g. telephone selling) then MTM is not for you (except to help you with bigger deals you may do). If your sales are at the other extreme, if you have a small number of accounts with whom you maintain a relationship and make a series of deals, then MTM is useful as one part of your preferred account management system - MTM will help you to run those deals but it won't do the whole account management for you. If it seems a bit heavy for what you do, see MtM Lite at the end of this guide.

If you are selling, MTM looks at each opportunity in your portfolio and assesses it hard, realistically, pragmatically. It compares each deal to others. By looking at a dashboard across all your opportunities you can make the hard calls about where to put your efforts, and where to qualify out. By focusing on the most winnable deals you will lift your success rate and reduce your cost of sale - when you do need resource you'll have no trouble getting it. So you can Make the MOST.

If you are a sales manager, you'll have worked out by now that such a tool is equally useful to you as to an individual salesman. You can assess each of your team's book of business. And you can assess your own portfolio across the whole team. Make The MOST of your sales team.

At the heart of MTM is a simple dashboard tool. It uses MS-Excel xlsx format. No other software to buy and install.

Make The Most™ User Guide

And it is free. There is this MTM User Guide on how it works and how to use it, also free.

What's in it for us? We want to sell you our New Ways of Selling training courses, which build on the MTM tool to teach you a full methodology for opportunity selling. If you want them, after you have tried and proven the MTM tool, visit www.makethemostsales.com.

But all you need for now to start boosting your sales effectiveness is the free Make The MOST™ Opportunity Dashboard. Try it now and see how simple and effective it is at analysing and improving your opportunity sales portfolio.

How it works

Here's how it works:

Say you are currently winning 20% of the opportunities you chase (or 5% or 50% - it doesn't matter - the principle works). 2 out of 10. If you could

- have more time to devote to each opportunity, to make more calls, do more planning, check and review letters and proposals and presentations
- get more access to support resources from your company: your boss's time in front of clients, technical people, demos and presentations, pilots and trials, money for trips and events and meals
- get some pressure off you (but not too much: some pressure is good for winners)

...If you could have that help, could you win one more of those ten opportunities? You can.

The MTM Opportunity Dashboard gives you an objective view of how well you are positioned and how well you are progressing with each opportunity. Sit back and study your Opportunity Dashboard, often in discussion with your sales manager, and kill off two of every ten opportunities.

Walk away. Save your ammunition. Focus on the other eight. Devote resources to those eight. Win 3 out of 10 instead of running yourself ragged getting 2 out of 10. Make The MOST of your opportunities and your available resources.

This is one of the hardest things for many sales people to do - to let go of an opportunity that has a pulse (or even if it doesn't). Don't flog a dead horse (or an alternative saying: if the horse is dead, dismount). Or maybe you get on well with them, but the reality is they are never going to buy. It's not hard for the best sales people: they know when to qualify out. With MTM you will too.

What if you don't have enough opportunities to be qualifying out, or don't want to just now?

MTM will still help you to take a "battlefield view" of your opportunities, to see where the serious weaknesses are, where to concentrate some efforts.

In all cases MTM helps:

You will have more time to devote to each opportunity.

You will have a formalised objective assessment of your opportunity to argue your case for supporting resources.

You will know where your weaknesses are, where you are exposed. You will be blind-sided less often. Sales managers don't like surprises.

Your win rate will go up: in this example from 20% to nearly 40% (3 out of 8 remember). Your colleagues back winners. You will be asking for resource less often and bringing back results more often.

You will enjoy selling more. You will Make The MOST.

Here's a tip: This is only a little book. For now you **only need to read pages 5-20**. That's 16 small pages, big type, pictures ... won't take you long.

Another tip: all the tips are coloured like this.

Using MtM

There are many scenarios where you can use this tool:

- When an individual or team are working on their sales planning: which sales to focus on, which ones to let go, what needs to be done.
- When planning a call or visit: what do we need to find out or get closed.
- When making work visible: the status of our opportunities.
- As a discussion tool at sales meetings.
- When reviewing portfolios to determine where to put resources, and which opportunities to drop.

Getting started

If you are reading this, you have probably already downloaded the MTM Opportunity Dashboard. If not, get it now from www.makethemostsales.com.

The Opportunity Dashboard is a spreadsheet. It tracks opportunities, i.e. potential deals. Don't put all your leads in here. An opportunity is a qualified live prospect who you are dealing with.

Open the spreadsheet in Microsoft Excel and follow along.

Tip: The white fields are for you to enter data. Pale blue areas are protected.

Preparing the spreadsheet

Name

In the field A3, where it says “name”, enter the name of the portfolio of sales opportunities you want to manage.

This might be your name, or the name of a sales team, or the name of one client account.

Make The MOST™ Opportunity Dashboard

name

Quota

If you want to track progress against quota, enter your sales quota (i.e. target) in cell C13.

	Value \$,000
Quota \$,000 <input type="text"/>	Quota %

Tip: We've set it up in units of \$1000 but you can change that (see “*Collating spreadsheet*”).

Tip: you might want to use anonymous “code” names for you and especially for your opportunities. That way you can share your spreadsheet with other people for advice on using the MTM method.

Tip: check with your organisation before sharing your spreadsheet with anyone, whether it is anonymised or not.

Recording opportunities

In row 3 is a row of fields. Name each opportunity in this portfolio.

There is room for 24 opportunities. That ought to be enough for anyone to handle at once 😊

--	--	--	--

Tip: ...but if you are a bit handy with MS-Excel you know how to copy and paste new columns (see “*Adding more opportunities*”).

Code

In row 5 you can record any code or number you assign to each opportunity.

Note

In row 7 you can write some brief comments.

Tip: if you have set the Traffic Light (see page 11) to anything other than green, you really should say why in this field

Close date

In row 9 you can specify the estimated close date of each opportunity. Enter in whatever format you have Excel set up for (usually mm/dd/yy or dd/mm/yy). It will convert it to day-month-year.

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Today is	1-Aug-09	Close date	12-Oct-09
		Days to go	70

Row 10 will then display the number of days left.

Today is	1-Aug-09	Close date	12-Oct-09
		Days to go	72

Tip: The number of days to go changes colour when the date is getting near, or has passed and the deal is late. You can change the threshold number of days (see [Collating spreadsheet](#)).

Value

In row 12 you can specify the estimated value of each opportunity.

Value \$,000	400
Quota %	100%

Tip: We've set it up in units of \$1000 but you can change that (see [Collating spreadsheet](#)).

Once you enter a value for the deal, if you have specified your quota in cell C13 then row 13 will now display the percentage of quota that this deal represents.

Value \$,000	400
Quota %	33%

Tip: You can change the thresholds at which it likes the amount of the deal: the percentage field in row 13 changes colour for medium and big deals (see [Collating spreadsheet](#)).

Tip: Cell C23 tells you the total of the percentages of quota, i.e. what percentage of your quota all the opportunities represent.

Progress

There are seven fields in rows 15 to 21 where you can record your progress on the opportunity. The spreadsheet comes with seven stages predefined:

emotional	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
solution fit	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
business case	<input type="checkbox"/>
approval	<input type="checkbox"/>
signed	<input type="checkbox"/>
delivered	<input type="checkbox"/>
paid	<input type="checkbox"/>

- emotional (decision made)
- (we have a) solution fit
- (there is a) business case
- (we have got decision-maker's) approval
- (contract is) signed
- (solution is) delivered
- (they have) paid.

Tip: You can change the names of each step (but not how many). See [Collating spreadsheet](#).

Tick them off as you go. The values can be:

- Empty = not yet
- Yes = done
- No = isn't going to be happening

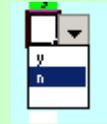
Tip: The 'tick' fields have a selection menu. Click on the field and you will see a little black down-arrow on a grey background.

Click on it



and you will get a list of possible values.

Click to choose.



Or you can type the value in manually straight into the field without using the menu at all: type “y” or “n”.

Either way the field will colour-code itself green or black for yes or no.

Tip: if you want to return the field to empty (colour white), just click on the cell and press delete.

Assessing an opportunity

Probability

In row 23 you estimate a probability of winning the deal.

Probability %

100%

Some people dislike such a subjective number; some organisations use them; some even have formal methodologies to calculate them.

Tip: The value is preset to 100% so if you don't like using probabilities just leave it that way.

This probability affects the “Total % quota” number in cell C23. For each “Quota %” in row 13, it is multiplied by this percentage weighting, and the resulting weighted percentages are summed to get cell C23.

Total % quota

43%

Traffic Light

In row 25 you can set a traffic light to red, yellow or green to indicate how well you (or your boss 😊) think the opportunity is tracking.

Traffic light



Green means all is going well, yellow means cause for concern, and red means something needs to be done to save the opportunity else it will be lost.

Tip: this field works by using a selection menu. Click on the field and you will see a little black down-arrow on a grey background.

Click on it and you will get a list of possible values.

Click to choose.



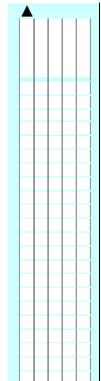
Tip: if you want to return the field to colour white, just click on the cell and press delete.

Tip: the word “red” “yellow” or “green” appears in the field as well as the colour so you can don’t have to print in colour.

Assessment

You can store up to five assessments for each opportunity, in each of the five columns below the assessment graphs.

Using these five columns you can track the history as the opportunity develops.



Tip: if you do more than five assessments for one opportunity, you will need to either copy older assessments to the left using copy-and-paste, and drop the oldest one, or you can keep overwriting the fifth column with the latest assessment. Or if you don't care about history don't ever use anything but the left-hand column and just update it each time you assess.

There are five groups of five questions to answer when assessing an opportunity. Each group looks at one aspect of the opportunity:

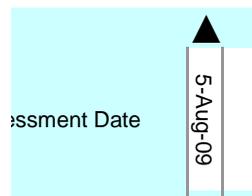
- **Relationship** Can we influence their decision?
- **Conditions** What are we up against?
- **Business** Will this get approved?
- **Motivation** Do they want to do this?
- **Delivery** Can we provide what they want?

For each question the answers can be:

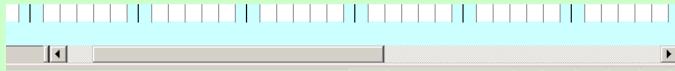
- Empty = don't know (yet)
- Yes
- No

So here's how to go about an assessment:

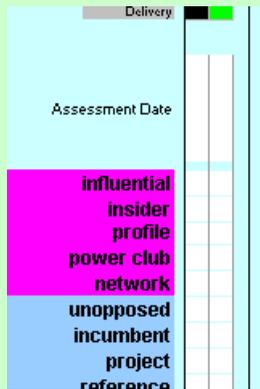
Record the date of this assessment in the lefthand of the five white fields in row 44. Enter in whatever format you have Excel set up for (usually mm/dd/yy or dd/mm/yy). It will convert it to day-month-year.



Tip: You can use the scrollbar at the bottom right of the spreadsheet



to scroll the opportunities across until the column you are working on is next to the questions



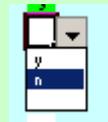
Then consider each of the twenty-five questions for this opportunity, and work your way down the column answering them.

Tip: The answer fields have a selection menu. Click on the field and you will see a little black down-arrow on a grey background.



Click on it

and you will get a list of possible values.



Click to choose.

Or you can type the value in manually straight into the field without using the menu at all: type “y” or “n”.

Either way the field will colour-code itself green or black for yes or no.

Tip: if you want to return the field to empty (colour white), just click on the cell and press delete.

Tip: the fastest way to record an assessment is to type “y” or “n” and press enter, which takes you down to the next question.

Here is a brief explanation of each question. For more detail and techniques to analyse them, visit www.makethemostsales.com.

R1	influential	
Were we influential in shaping this deal? Did we influence their thinking?		
R2	insider	
Do we have an insider within the organisation who will (a) help us, or even better (b) openly support us?		
R3	profile	
Do we have a good profile/reputation in their organisation?		
R4	power club	
Are the people making this decision part of the “power club”, those in the inside circle with the real power of the organisation?		
R5	network	
Does our network of connections reach into their organisation? Do we know people there?		
C1	unopposed	
Are they considering or talking to any competition? Are there any competitors incumbent or active in		

		there? Do the competitors know about this deal?
C2	incumbent	
		Do we already have any products or people in there?
C3	reference	
		Do we have a relevant reference?
C4	differentiator	
		<i>In their opinion</i> , do we have a real differentiator from competitors?
C5	health	
		Are they in good shape financially?
B1	processes	
		Do we know their approval processes that this deal will have to go through?
B2	funds	
		Do they already have access to funds now?
B3	business case	
		Have we developed a compelling business case?
B4	contract	
		Do we have an existing contract with them that this can be appended to or based on?
B5	project	
		Is this a formal project, a planned piece of work?
M1	milestone	
		Is there a milestone to be met, a deadline, a line in the sand, an imperative?
M2	real money	
		Does this have hard benefits? Does it save or make them real money?
M3	reduce risk	
		Does this reduce a recognised risk for them?
M4	strategic	
		Is this considered strategic to them?
M5	winner	

Will this make the decision-maker and/or approver look a winner?		
D1	requirements	
Do we have clear requirements? Do we meet them?		
D2	resources	
Do we have enough available resources to deliver?		
D3	risk controlled	
Do we have control over all risks?		
D4	previous	
Have we done this before?		
D5	good business	
Is this good business for us?		

Tip: Your team may soon start to use the question numbers as a shorthand code: “Have we got B1?”

Worksheet



Behind every cold clinical analysis lies a story to be told. The MTM Opportunity Dashboard includes a template assessment worksheet. Use a copy of it for each opportunity to make a note of why you answered each question the way you did. Especially useful to jog your memory when asked to explain them by your boss 😊.

Tip: if you use it on a tablet or laptop, the Y/N field for each question has a dropdown and will colour-code.

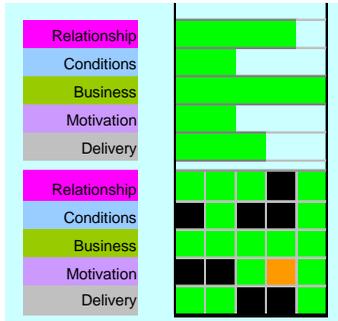
Tip: the worksheet is designed to print out on two pages for those who like to work with hardcopy.

Tip: You can change all the thresholds (see [Collating spreadsheet](#)).

Then there are the two assessment charts.

MTM Bars

The top five bars are horizontal bar-graphs of how many yes answers you have under each heading “Relationship”, “Advantages” etc.



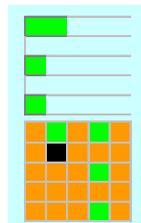
MTM Grid

The bottom grid is a map of your answers: green for yes, orange for blank and black for no.

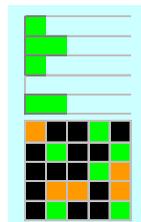
If there is lots of green then you know you are in good shape. This deal is definitely winnable and worth concentrating on. This assessment provides support for requests to your company for more resources.



If there is lots of orange then you don't really know what shape you are in. You need to put in some work to get more information, and you need to ask yourself whether this deal is winnable in the short term.



And if there is lots of black then you really need to ask yourself if this deal is winnable. Your efforts could be better spent on some other opportunity, or finding more of them.



Tip: All of the charts – all five rows and columns, the whole box – and the summary of how many yes, no and unknown answers, they all apply to the one assessment with the black arrow above it (it is not one column of chart for each assessment underneath it).

Tip: As you get more practiced at using the MTM Opportunity Dashboard you may learn to recognise more subtle patterns in the charts.

Analysis

Every no answer is a risk. In most opportunities, any “no” can be overcome. But as the risks pile up, the probability that this is not going to happen increases. In any accident, more than one thing went wrong. There is no exact science around how many no answers will destroy an opportunity, but they do provide a good measure of danger, and of the effort required to bring it home. Risks need to be either removed or controlled to win.

Every unknown answer is an uncertainty. Uncertainty also adds up. The more unknowns you have – especially as time runs out – the more you are flying blind. You just don’t know if the opportunity is winnable or not. Uncertainty needs to be reduced to make good decisions.

Every yes answer is another step to closing the deal, another defence against competition, and another piece of evidence to get support.

Now go back and reconsider the Percentage probability in row 23 and the Traffic Light in row 25.

Reviewing your dashboard

It is tempting to think that, because the MTM Opportunity Dashboard is a spreadsheet, we could assign a score to each opportunity to pick which ones to focus our energies on.

But the world is more complex than that. Sales is not a science.

The MTM Opportunity Dashboard allows you to get a view across them all. It provides a formal objective framework for making decisions.

But you (often with your manager) need to make those decisions. No tool can do that for you.

How often you review depends on how long your sales cycles are in your industry, how many opportunities you have, and where you are in your sales period (quarter, year...).

All of these review comments apply equally whether it is your own personal portfolio of opportunities or those of your team – this tool works whether you are a sales person or a sales manager.

Portfolio

Manage each opportunity in the context of the other opportunities you have. Don't get too attached to any one opportunity - manage the health of the herd. How does the overall portfolio look?

Do you have enough strong opportunities?

Will you make quota on what you have? See cell C14 for "Total % quota" – what all your opportunities add up to as a percentage of your total quota, after they have been weighted by the expected probability of winning each deal.

Qualification

Three qualification decisions to make in any review:

- Should you qualify out of some opportunities?
- How many?
- Which ones?

MTM helps with the last question.

To pick your weakest opportunities, compare the graphs. With only a little experience and practice you will soon be able to see which ones to shed. Look at these factors:

How much overall green is there in the MTM Bars? How much time left to fill them out some more?

Is there any one row of the MTM Grid with lots of black? This means a big area of weakness, even if the other rows are all OK. Without the MTM tool, it is easy to only see the “green” in an opportunity. This tool makes you face up to the weaknesses. Fix them or get real.

Lots of black means work to do to remove or mitigate the risks. Lots of orange means work to do to find out the answers. Can it be done in the remaining time? Or better to move on?

Advances

Where will you concentrate your efforts on the remaining opportunities? Which opportunities and where within those opportunities?

Does each risk/weakness you have identified need to be fixed or can you live with it?

How much effort will you devote to these opportunities and how much to generating new ones?

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Getting help

Registration

If you did not register when you downloaded the MTM Opportunity Dashboard from www.makethemostsales.com, you might like to do so now. Amongst other things, this will notify you when there are new versions of the MTM Opportunity Dashboard or this MTM User Guide. You will also get tips and ideas for using MTM.

Community

Registration also gets you access to the MTM community where you can link up with other MTM users and with us at Teal Unicorn to help you out with any issues you run into, to share ideas, and to discuss sales in general.

Please remember to protect your company's confidentiality when using this forum. We accept no responsibility for anything you say, or for what you hear from others.

Support

We are a small company. Other than the website, we cannot offer free individual support for MTM, sorry. Paid support services are available on request at www.makethemostsales.com. If that link does not work for you, try www.tealunicorn.com/mtm. Or find us on twitter [@rob_england](https://twitter.com/rob_england) [@drcherryvu](https://twitter.com/drcherryvu).

What next

As you get more mature in your use of Make The MOST you will want more information and advice.

You can find sales training based on MTM at www.makethemostsales.com.

More stuff you can do

If you look closely you will see each opportunity is made up of seven columns of the spreadsheet. Always keep the seven together and work with them as a group.

Sorting

Because the spreadsheet uses multiple columns, with merged fields, you cannot sort the opportunities. Sorry. Please contact us if this is an issue and we will consider a sortable version.

Backing up

For heaven's sake, keep backup copies. One way to do this is for the sales manager to require a copy emailed to them every week.

Adding more opportunities

Go to menu Home>Format>Protection (or right click the worksheet tab) and unprotect the sheet.

Select seven columns that make up an opportunity (between a pair of vertical black divider lines). It is important to get all seven, not just the five middle columns.

Copy.

Select the column just to the right of where you want to put a copy of them.

Right click and "Insert copied cells".

We recommend you protect the sheet again.

Tip: don't set a password on the sheet protection unless you really feel you need to. If you do, please write it down somewhere.

Deleting opportunities

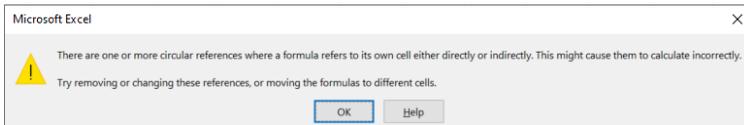
Because of the odd way that Excel does cell protection, you need to clear each block of white cells separately, sorry.

We may add a button to each opportunity to do this in future. We have avoided having macros in the sheet so far.

Archiving opportunities

Once opportunities are closed many of you will just want to delete them out. You can print the dashboard off to keep a record on file, and all of the information here will usually be on record elsewhere.

But if you want to preserve it, copy the seven columns, and paste them to the Archive worksheet. Excel will give an error about cell formulas but your data is preserved.



Forcing data

Say you want to save a spreadsheet with “Today is” date fixed at some day. Or you want to overwrite the percentage of quota with a fixed value as it was at some point in time.

Go to menu Home>Format>Protection (or right click the worksheet tab) and unprotect the sheet.

Now you can change the value of any field.

We recommend you protect the sheet again.

Tip: don't set a password on the sheet protection unless you really feel you need to. If you do, please write it down somewhere.

Collating spreadsheets

If you are a sales manager you will probably want to maintain your own spreadsheet across all the opportunities of your team.

You *can* copy and paste from their spreadsheet to yours, but consider transcribing the data manually instead. This might seem tedious, but the text in the name field can be copied and pasted quickly. By manually setting the flags for assessment and lifecycle, you take a quick moment to think about each one as you do.

Customising the spreadsheet

The Lookups worksheet of the spreadsheet controls all the thresholds and modifiable values. It is hidden. Go to

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Home>Format>Hide&Unhide, or right click the worksheet tab.

You can control when it gets excited about (colour codes) the value of a deal, as a percentage of quota

Value of the deal:

small <	0.20 <	medium <	0.50 <	big
---------	--------	----------	--------	-----

You can change when it alerts for number of days to go (or past) compared to the predicted close date

Days to go:

very late <	-90 <	late <	-30 <	warning <	30 <	OK
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You can vary what to type in for yes or no. For example for other languages, or some people prefer “+” and “-”.

Yes y	<input type="text"/>
No n	<input type="text"/>

You can change the units of value

Units of value

(money) that the Quota and Value fields use. This is just a text field that is used in the caption for Quota and Value – it doesn't have any actual effect on any calculations. You can change the currency symbol and/or the number of zeroes. You fat cats may like to change it to “\$M”.

Quota \$,000

You can change the thresholds for colour-coding the summary counts of yes, no and unknown answers

	Yes	Unknowns	No
>	<input type="text" value="20"/>	<input type="text" value="10"/>	<input type="text" value="10"/>

and the number of days out from the expected close date that we start counting the unknown answers

start counting unknowns days out from close

You can even design your own lifecycle if you don't like the names we gave to the seven steps

sales lifecycle:
emotional
solution fit
business case
approval
signed
delivered
paid

Tip: Hide the sheet again when you are done.

Tip: Customising these values may not be something you want all sales staff doing. You can set a password on this worksheet. Go to menu Tools>Protection and unprotect the sheet. Select all cells in the sheet. Go to Format>Cells and set all cells to Locked. Now go back to Tools>Protection and protect the sheet again – it will prompt for a password.

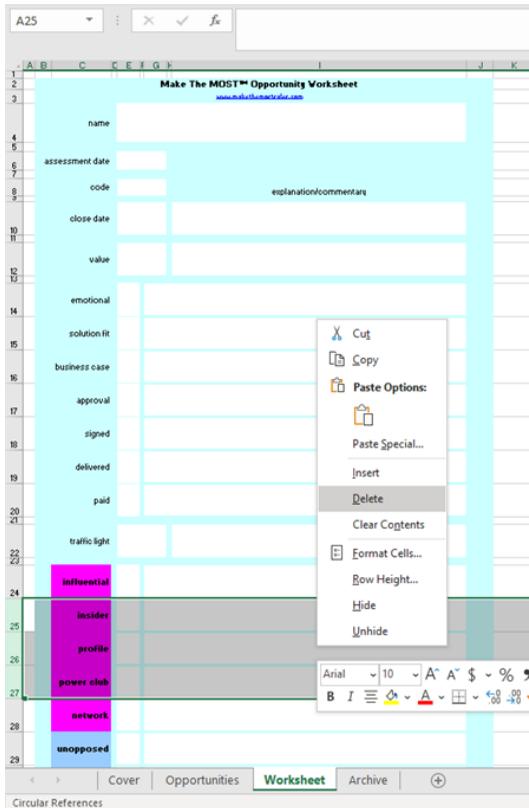
Or more simply: ask them not to.

MtM Lite

Does the dashboard seem too heavy for your selling? Perhaps your opportunities are smaller and faster moving, and you don't have time to find out everything.

Unprotect the Worksheet, and delete the questions that don't make sense in your world. Then use it on a tablet or printed out to help you during an opportunity. Don't use the dashboard.

You can still use the Worksheets to help you focus, to close more, and to review your portfolio.



Technical stuff

The Make The MOST™ Opportunity Dashboard is a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet.

The sheets are protected, but there is no password (except the cover page).

It was created using MS-Office 2003, but the lack of any special features or macros means it should work with many earlier versions of MS-Excel and all later ones. The only complex features used are Validation Lists, Names and Conditional Formatting. Please tell us if you find a version of MS-Excel that is not supported.

Right now Google Sheets do not have enough features to support the Make The MOST spreadsheet.