

How to evaluate lead response—not just response time

A quick reply can still lose the sale when it ignores the question, creates another handoff or never offers a next step. Use this guide to review the complete response a real prospect receives by phone, web form, email or text.

Start with one realistic inquiry

- Choose a question a genuine prospect would ask before booking or buying.
- Use the channel customers are invited to use: phone, web form, email, text or chat.
- Record the submission or call time and the exact response—not assumptions about what should happen.
- Do not combine several unusual requests into one test.

1. Access and acknowledgement

- Could the prospect find the correct contact path without searching several pages?
- Did the form or voicemail confirm the inquiry was received?
- Did the confirmation set a truthful expectation for what happens next?

2. Response speed

Record the elapsed time to the first useful human response. Keep channel and business hours in context. Speed is one observation, not the whole score.

- Note automated acknowledgement separately from a human answer.
- Record missed calls, transfers, voicemail and callback timing.
- If the response arrives later, note whether it recognizes the delay.

3. Answer quality

- Did the response answer the actual question?
- Was it accurate, specific and written in plain language?
- Did the person ask a useful question before recommending or quoting?
- If they did not know, did they own the follow-up instead of guessing?

4. Ownership and handoffs

- Did the prospect have to repeat information after a transfer?
- Was one person or team clearly responsible for the next step?
- Did internal notes preserve the original question and context?

5. A clear next step

- Was a specific appointment, estimate, visit or conversation offered?
- Did the prospect know who would act, through which channel and by when?
- Was it easy to accept, decline or ask another question without starting over?

6. Follow-through

- Did every promised call, email, quote or link arrive?
- Did follow-up reflect the inquiry, or read like a generic sequence?
- Did the final message close the loop when the prospect was not ready?

Score the pattern

Classify each moment as **Reliable**, **Inconsistent**, **Missed** or **N/A**. Test several ordinary inquiries before treating one interaction as a pattern. Compare like-for-like channels and scenarios, then coach the earliest recurring point where the journey stops.

Go deeper by channel

Use the [phone inquiry scorecard](#) for call handling or the [digital inquiry checklist](#) for forms, email and text.