GTO Sales Playbook

Building Apprenticeship & Traineeship Workforce Partners

PROGRAMMED by PERSOL

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PROGRAMMED by PERSOL

Positioning Programmed as a trusted GTO Partner

Overview

At Programmed, our success in growing apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities depends on every team member’s ability to confidently engage employers, build trust, and clearly articulate the value of partnering with a GTO.

This Sales Playbook has been designed to support staff in all roles— to consistently deliver high-quality employer conversations that lead to conversion.

Whether you are Business Development, Area Manager, Field Advisor, operations and support function positions, you play a critical role in shaping how employers perceive Programmed.

Every interaction is an opportunity to educate, influence, and inspire businesses, particularly SMC clients to see apprenticeships and traineeships not as complex obligations, but as strategic investments in their workforce.

Our Objective

The primary objective of this playbook is to equip you with the knowledge, language, and confidence to position Programmed Apprenticeships & Traineeships (PAT) as a trusted workforce partner and convert employers into committed host organisations for apprentices and trainees.

Our goal is to make the GTO model easy to understand, remove perceived barriers, and clearly demonstrate the real, measurable value we deliver.

Why This Matters

SMC employers are often the backbone of the industries we support, yet many have limited experience with structured workforce development programs.

They may have concerns around time, cost, risk, and administrative burden.

Our role is to simplify the process, mitigate those concerns, and provide a solution that enables them to grow their business while contributing to skills development across their sector.

By effectively engaging employers, we:

- Create meaningful career pathways for apprentices and trainees
- Address critical workforce shortages for our clients
- Strengthen long-term partnerships and repeat business opportunities
- Reinforce PAT’s reputation as an industry leader in training and workforce solutions

A Whole-of-Team Approach

Converting an employer into a host is rarely the result of a single conversation, it is a journey supported by multiple touchpoints across the business.

- Business Development (BD) teams open the door and position the opportunity
- Operations and delivery teams reinforce trust through execution and service quality
- Support teams enable seamless onboarding and employer experience
- Leadership and subject matter experts provide credibility and strategic alignment

Consistency across all these interactions is critical. Employers should hear a clear, aligned message regardless of who they speak to within Programmed.

Our Role as Trusted Advisors

We are not just selling a service—we are advising businesses on how to build sustainable workforces. This requires:

- Understanding each employer's business, challenges, and goals
- Asking the right questions to uncover workforce gaps
- Recommending tailored apprenticeship and traineeship solutions
- Clearly explaining how the GTO model reduces risk and administrative burden
- Demonstrating ongoing support from recruitment through to completion

Setting the Foundation for Conversion

This playbook will guide you through:

- How to identify and prioritise small and medium-sized client (SMC) opportunities
- How to confidently explain apprenticeships, traineeships, and the GTO model
- How to handle common objections and concerns
- How to articulate PAT's value proposition
- How to move employers from interest to commitment

Ultimately, our goal is simple: help employers say "yes" with confidence.

Internal Business Collaboration

Strong employer partnerships are rarely built by one person alone. They are built through collaboration across Programmed, where relationships, insights, and opportunities are shared to deliver better outcomes for customers.

Our philosophy is simple:

- No one person owns a customer — customers are Programmed by Persol customers.
- Every interaction with a customer reflects on the broader business and creates opportunities beyond an individual portfolio, region, or business unit.

Why Collaboration Matters

Customers increasingly expect integrated workforce solutions and consistent experiences across locations, business units, and service offerings. Collaboration enables us to:

- Expand relationships across multiple service lines and locations
- Increase customer value through broader workforce solutions
- Improve customer experience through coordinated engagement
- Reduce duplication and internal competition
- Strengthen customer retention through deeper partnerships
- Leverage Existing Relationships and Internal Networks

Before engaging a customer, ask:

- Does another Programmed team already have a relationship?
- Is there a National Account Manager (NAM) involved?
- Are there existing services already delivered into the business?
- Is there internal knowledge that could strengthen my approach?

National Account Managers, operational leaders, recruiters, field teams, and support functions often hold valuable customer insights that create warmer entry points and stronger credibility.

Examples include:

- Using National Account Manager relationships to gain introductions into new business units or sites
- Partnering with other Programmed divisions to uncover workforce opportunities
- Leveraging operational teams to identify workforce challenges customers may not openly discuss
- Sharing market intelligence and customer insights across teams

How to Collaborate Effectively

Approach collaboration with a mindset of shared success:

- Engage early — involve relevant stakeholders before customer meetings where appropriate
- Share information openly and update systems consistently
- Avoid competing internally for ownership of opportunities
- Create joint account plans for strategic customers
- Introduce internal specialists when they add value

Remember:

Customers do not see separate business units — they see Programmed.

Building Rapport Through Internal Connections

Existing relationships accelerate trust.

Examples:

- “We already support another part of your business, and I wanted to understand whether there may be opportunities to create consistency across your workforce approach.”
- “I’ve been speaking with our team who currently support your operations, and they mentioned workforce growth may be a focus area.”
- These approaches create familiarity, credibility, and reduce the feeling of a cold approach.

Success Measure

Collaboration success is not measured by individual ownership.

It is measured by:

- Growth of the customer relationship
- Expansion across services and regions
- Improved customer outcomes
- Increased workforce opportunities
- Long-term partnership value

One customer. One Programmed approach.

Pre-Call Mindset and Preparation

Your mindset determines the quality of the conversation. The goal is not to “sell apprentices/trainees” — it is to **diagnose workforce problems and position a smarter solution**.

Get Clear on Your Outcome

Before calling, decide what success looks like:

- Ideal: Book a meeting / site visit
- Secondary: Uncover a future opportunity + timeline
- Minimum: Learn something valuable about their workforce

Shift your thinking:

- From → “I need to pitch GTOs”
- To → “I need to understand how they manage talent and where it breaks down, and the key pain points impacting their business”

Don’t go in cold – Prepare your thinking

Based on your research, form a *best guess* about their situation.

Example:

- “They are growing and struggling to find skilled labour”
- “They’ve tried apprentices/trainees before but had retention issues”
- “Their supervisors are overloaded with admin and compliance”

How to use it in conversation: "I could be wrong, but we’re seeing a lot of businesses in your space struggling with [X]—how is that impacting you?"

Why this works: It sounds informed without being assumptive.

Understand Your Buyer Persona

You’re not just calling a company—you’re speaking to a role with specific priorities.

Operations Manager: productivity, reliability, output

HR / People & Culture: compliance, retention, onboarding

Owner / GM: cost, growth, risk reduction

Tip: Tailor your language

- Ops = "keeping jobs on track"
- HR = "reducing admin and compliance burden"
- GM = "scalable workforce and lower risk"

Define Your "Why Them?"

Be ready to answer (even if unspoken): - Why should this employer take this call?

Strong reasons to reach out:

- New project or contract win
- Active hiring ads
- Industry shortage pressure
- Referral / similar client success

Example opening angle: "I saw you're hiring multiple apprentices/trainees at the moment—many companies doing that are finding the admin and supervision quite demanding and adding pressure to their current role"

Prepare 2–3 Relevant Insights (Not a Pitch)

Bring value *before* asking for anything.

Examples:

- "We're seeing apprenticeship/traineeship drop-off rates increasing due to lack of structured mentoring"
- "Some employers are shifting to GTO models to reduce risk around first-year attrition"

Rule: If your opening sounds like a brochure—you'll lose them.

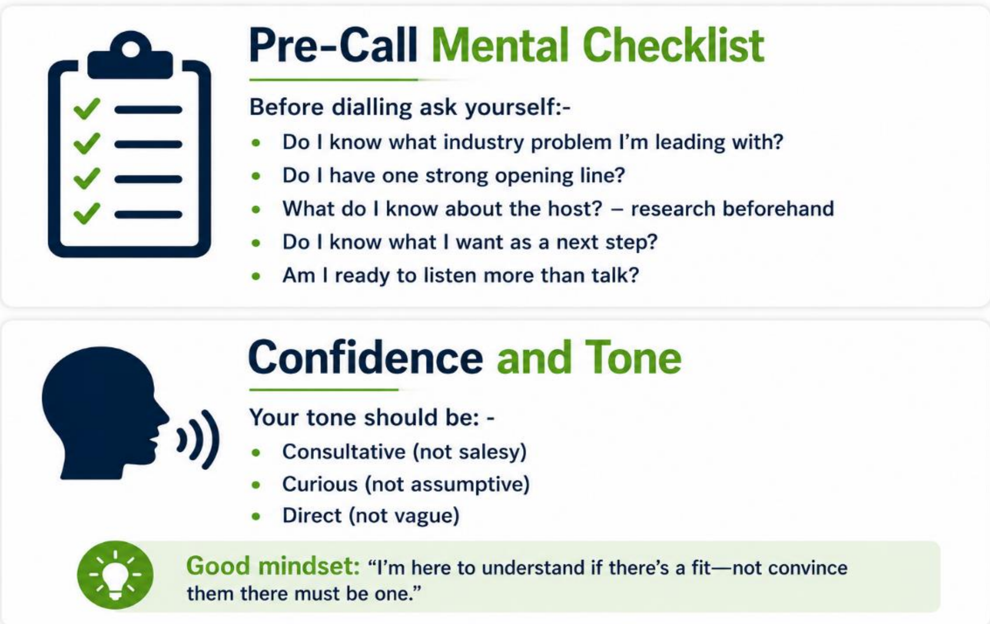
Know Your Proof Points

Confidence comes from evidence.

Be ready to quickly reference:

- A similar client in their industry
- Measurable outcomes (time saved, retention improved)
- Scale (number of apprentices/trainees managed)

Example: "We're currently supporting several businesses similar to yours who moved away from direct employment to reduce admin and improve retention."



Discovery Questions (How to Run a High-Impact Conversation)

The quality of your discovery determines whether you win or lose the opportunity. Your goal is to move from **surface-level information → real business problem → measurable impact → agreed next step**.

Start Broad, Then Narrow

Begin with open questions to get them talking, then progressively go deeper.

Example flow:

- "Can you tell me a bit about your current workforce structure?"
- "How are apprentices or trainees currently part of that mix?"
- "What challenges are you running into with that setup?"

Good vs Weak:

- **Good:** Open, exploratory, lets them explain
- **Weak:** "Do you need apprentices/trainees?" (too binary, kills conversation)

Go Beyond the First Answer (Probe Deeper)

Most buyers give surface-level answers. Your job is to explore further.

Use follow-up prompts like:

- "Can you expand on that?"
- "What's driving that issue?"
- "How long has that been happening?"
- "What have you tried so far?"

Mini dialogue:

- Client: "It's hard to find good apprentices/trainees"
- BD: "What does 'good' look like for you—and where are you seeing the biggest gaps?"
- Client: "Reliability and attitude mostly"
- BD: "How does that show up day-to-day for your supervisors?"

Uncover the Impact (Make the Problem Real)

If there's no impact, there's no urgency.

Ask:

- "How is that affecting your productivity or output?"
- "What happens if that continues over the next 6–12 months?"
- "Does this impact your supervisors or team capacity?"
- "Is there a cost or delay attached to that?"

Translate to metrics where possible:

- Delays, rework, overtime, supervisor time, missed bids

Example: "If you can't get enough reliable apprentices/trainees, what does that mean for project timelines or workload on your senior staff?"

Explore Current Process & Gaps

Understand how they currently operate before positioning change.

Questions:

- "Walk me through how you hire and onboard apprentices/trainees today"
- "Who manages payroll, performance, and compliance?"
- "Where does it become time-consuming or risky?"
- "What would you change if you could?"

Listen for gaps:

- No structured onboarding/mentoring
- Supervisor overload
- Compliance uncertainty

Identify Risk & Friction Points

GTO value often sits in reducing risk and admin burden.

Questions:

- "What risks or concerns do you have when taking on apprentices/trainees?"
- "Have you had any challenges with retention, performance, or compliance?"
- "How confident are you in managing Fair Work / training requirements?"

Map to value:

- Risk → We employ
- Admin → We manage payroll/compliance
- Retention → We support/mentor

Future-Focused Questions (Create Opportunity)

Shift from current problems to future thinking.

Questions:

- "Where do you want your workforce to be in 12–24 months?"
- "If you had a steady pipeline of talent, what would that change for your business?"
- "What projects could you take on with more capacity?"

Outcome: They start selling *themselves* on the idea.

Budget & Decision Clarity (Subtle Qualification)

Avoid direct pressure—keep it conversational.

Questions:

- "How do you typically budget for apprentices or trainees?"
- "Who else would usually be involved in a decision like this?"
- "What would you need to see to feel confident moving forward?"

Tip: Phrase as curiosity, not interrogation.

Listening Signals (What Good Sounds Like)

You're on the right track when you hear:

- Specific frustrations (not generic comments)
- Examples of past issues
- Emotional cues (frustration, pressure, urgency)
- Mentions of time, cost, or risk impact

Red flag answers:

- "Everything's fine"
- "We're sorted" → Response: "That's great—what's working particularly well for you?"

Full Example Call Flow (Putting It All Together)

Opening: "We're speaking with a number of businesses in your space about apprentice/trainee challenges—keen to understand how you're currently managing it."

Discovery: "How is your workforce structured today?" → "What challenges are you seeing with apprentices/trainees?" → "How is that impacting your supervisors or delivery?" → "How are you managing recruitment, payroll, and compliance today?" → "What would a better setup look like for you?"

Transition: "Based on what you've said about [admin load / risk / retention], this is where we typically support businesses…"

Close: "Would it be worth mapping out what this could look like for your team in more detail?"

Discovery Call Cheat Sheet

OPEN (30 seconds)

- "Have I caught you at a bad time?"
- "We're working with businesses in [industry] around apprentice/trainee hiring challenges—just wanted to understand how you're currently managing that."

DISCOVERY FLOW (Guide Only – Keep it Natural)

Current State

- "How is your workforce structured today?"
- "Are you currently using apprentices or trainees?"

Challenges

- "What's been the biggest challenge with that?"
- "Where does it create the most pressure for your team?"

Impact

- "How is that affecting productivity or delivery?"
- "What does that mean for your supervisors or senior staff?"

Process

- "How are you currently managing recruitment, payroll, and compliance?"
- "Where does it become time-consuming?"

Risk / Gaps

- "Any issues with retention, performance, or compliance?"
- "What concerns do you have when bringing on apprentices?"

Future Opportunity

- "What would a strong pipeline of apprentices allow you to do?"
- "What are your growth plans over the next 12 months?"

TRANSITION TO VALUE

- "Based on what you've said about [problem], this is where we typically support businesses…"

CLOSE FOR NEXT STEP

- "Would it be worth setting up a quick session to map out what this could look like for your team?"
- "Does [day/time] work?"


QUICK COACHING REMINDERS
Aim for 70% LISTENING / 30% TALKING
Don't rush to solution—stay in problem space longer
Always link their words → your value
Always leave with a booked next step
LISTEN
Understand their world
DISCOVER
Uncover real challenges
CONNECT
Link to your value
COMMIT
Agree on the next step
Great conversations build trust. Trust creates opportunity.
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Key Sales Angles (Value Proposition)

Your role is not to list features—it is to **translate employer problems into clear business value**. Each angle should connect directly to something they have said.

Reduce Hiring Risk (Core Anchor)

Message: We remove the risk of direct employment.

What this means to employers:

- No long-term employment risk
- Easier exit if performance isn't right
- Reduced exposure to Fair Work and compliance issues

How to say it: "A lot of employers we work with wanted the benefit of apprentices/trainees without the long-term employment risk—so we employ them, and you host them."

Best used when you hear:

- Hesitation about commitment
- Past bad experience with apprentices/trainees
- Small or scaling businesses

Reduce Admin & Time Burden

Message: We take care of the heavy lifting.

What this means to employers:

- No payroll or HR admin
- Less supervisor time spent on paperwork
- Streamlined onboarding and compliance

How to say it: "Based on what you mentioned about admin taking up your supervisor's time, we manage payroll, compliance, and performance support—so your team focuses on getting the job done."

Best used when you hear:

- Supervisor overload
- HR constraints
- Complaints about paperwork

Improve Retention & Quality

Message: Better support = better outcomes.

What this means to employers:

- Structured mentoring support
- Performance management assistance
- Better candidate matching

How to say it: "One thing we consistently see is improved retention because apprentices/trainees have structured support, not just supervision."

Best used when you hear:

- "We've had bad apprentices/trainees before"
- Retention or performance issues

Flexibility & Scalability

Message: You can scale without risk.

What this means to employers:

- Start small (pilot model)
- Scale up with demand
- Adjust based on workload

How to say it: "Most clients start with one apprentice/trainees and scale once they see it working for their team."

Best used when you hear:

- Uncertainty about future workload
- Project-based businesses

Access to Talent Pipeline

Message: We do the sourcing for you.

What this means to employers:

- Pre-screened candidates
- Faster hiring
- Reduced recruitment effort

How to say it: "Instead of advertising and screening yourself, we provide access to candidates already assessed for suitability."

Best used when you hear:

- Difficulty finding people
- Time spent recruiting

Compliance & Peace of Mind

Message: We manage the complexity.

What this means to employers:

- Fair Work compliance
- Training contract management
- Safety obligations supported

How to say it: "We ensure everything is compliant—from contracts through to employment obligations—so you're not exposed to that risk."

How to Deliver Value (Simple Formula)

Always connect like this:

- "You mentioned [problem]…"
- "What we do is [solution]…"
- "Which means for you [business benefit]"

Example: "You mentioned your supervisors are stretched. We manage the admin and employment side, which means your supervisors spend more time on productivity, not paperwork."

Rapport-Building Techniques

Rapport is what determines whether the employer engages or shuts down. The goal is to **sound relevant, credible, and easy to talk to—not like a salesperson**.

Lead With Relevance (Not a Pitch)

Start with something specific to them or their industry.

Examples:

- "I noticed you've recently taken on a few new projects…"
- "We're seeing a lot of businesses in your space struggling to find reliable apprentices/trainees right now…"

Why it works: Shows preparation and makes the call about *them*, not you.

Use Industry Language

Speak in terms they use every day.

Examples:

- Construction: "keeping jobs on track", "site supervisors"
- Manufacturing: "production targets", "downtime"
- Business/admin: "capacity", "workload"

Tip: Mirror the words they use—this builds subconscious trust.

Show Genuine Curiosity

People engage when they feel heard—not sold to.

How to demonstrate:

- Ask follow-up questions
- Let them finish speaking
- Acknowledge what they say

Example: "That's interesting—how has that been working for your team so far?"

Acknowledge Challenges Early

Normalise their problems so they feel understood.

Examples:

- "A lot of employers we speak to are finding it hard to retain apprentices/trainees"
- "We often hear supervisors are stretched managing both work and admin"

Why it works: Reduces defensiveness and opens conversation.

Mirror Tone and Pace

Adapt to their communication style.

- Fast-paced → Be concise and direct
- Slower → Take time, build conversation

Goal: Match their energy, not force your own.

Use Small Agreements

Get early buy-in with simple, low-pressure questions.

Examples:

- "Does that sound familiar?"
- "Is that something you're seeing as well?"

Outcome: Builds momentum in the conversation.

Position Yourself as a Peer, Not a Seller

You're there to share insight—not push a product.

Language shift:

- From: "We offer…"
- To: "What we're seeing with businesses like yours is…"

Example: "We're seeing a number of employers move away from direct employment because of admin and risk—interested to see if that's something you've considered."

Build Credibility Subtly

Reference experience without overloading.

Examples:

- "We're working with several businesses similar to yours…"
- "We support a number of employers in [industry]…"

Tip: Keep it short—don't turn it into a pitch.

Discovery Questions (Core of the Sale)

Workforce & Growth

1. "What projects or growth plans do you have over the next 6–12 months?"
2. "Where are you seeing the biggest skills gaps?"

Current Hiring Approach

1. "How are you currently bringing in apprentices/trainees or entry-level talent?"
2. "What’s worked well—and what hasn’t?"

Pain Points

1. "What are the biggest challenges with hiring or managing apprentices/trainees?"
2. "How much time does onboarding employees and admin take your team?"

Risk & Compliance

1. "How do you currently manage compliance, payroll, and supervision requirements?"

Future Readiness

1. "How important is building a long-term talent pipeline for your business?"

Qualification Signals (Know When to Lean In)

Qualification is about identifying where there are **real need, timing, and likelihood to act**. Your goal is to prioritise high-potential employers and avoid wasting time on low-probability deals.

Strong Positive Signals (Lean in Hard)

Growth & Demand Indicators

- Recent or upcoming projects
- Hiring ads or workforce expansion
- Overtime / workload pressure

What to say: "It sounds like you've got a fair bit of work coming up—how are you planning to resource that?"

Operational Pain

- Supervisors stretched
- Admin becoming unmanageable
- Inconsistent apprentice/trainee performance

What to say: "When that pressure builds, where does it impact your team the most?"

Workforce Gaps

- Skills shortages
- Reliance on subcontractors or temps

What to say: "Is that something you'd prefer to bring in-house over time?"

Medium Signals (Nurture & Develop)

- They've used apprentices before
- Some frustration but no urgency
- Open to ideas but non-committal

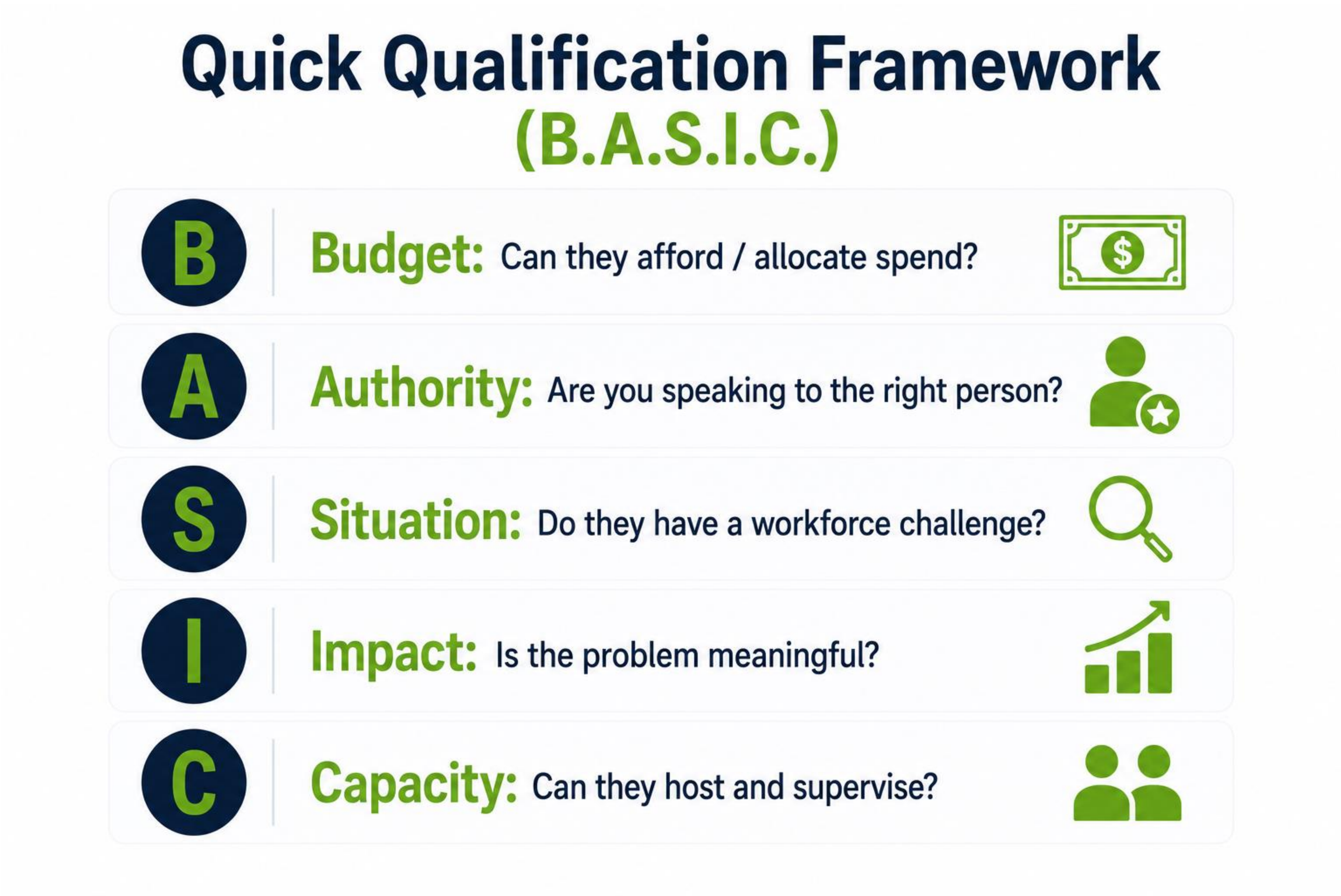
Approach:

- Educate
- Share insights
- Book future-focused conversations

Red Flags (Disqualify or Park)

- No capacity to supervise
- No hiring need in next 6–12 months
- Very cost-driven with no value focus
- Negative mindset ("apprentices don't work")

How to handle: "It sounds like now might not be the right time—would it be okay if I checked in again when your workload changes?"


Quick Qualification Framework
(B.A.S.I.C.)
B
Budget: Can they afford / allocate spend?
A
Authority: Are you speaking to the right person?
S
Situation: Do they have a workforce challenge?
I
Impact: Is the problem meaningful?
C
Capacity: Can they host and supervise?

Call Structure (High-Performance Framework)

A strong call follows a **logical progression**. Do not jump ahead—each step earns the next.

Structure Overview

1. **Opening (Hook)** – Gain permission and relevance
2. **Rapport** – Build trust quickly
3. **Discovery** – Understand their situation
4. **Impact** – Make the problem meaningful
5. **Value Connection** – Position solution
6. **Proof** – Build confidence
7. **Close** – Secure next step

Step-by-Step Breakdown

Opening (0–30 sec)

- "Have I caught you at a bad time?"
- "We're speaking with businesses in [industry] around workforce challenges…"

Goal: Earn 2–3 minutes of attention

Rapport (30–60 sec)

- Relevant observation
- Industry insight

Goal: Show credibility quickly

Discovery (2–5 min)

- Ask structured, open questions
- Let them talk

Goal: Understand problems and context

Impact (critical step)

- Explore consequences of the problem

Goal: Create urgency and relevance

Value Connection

- Link their problem to GTO model

Formula: "You said… → We do… → So you get…"

Proof

- Reference similar clients
- Share outcomes briefly

Goal: Reduce perceived risk

Close (Next Step)

- Be clear and confident

"Let’s set up time to explore this properly—does Thursday or Friday suit?"

Call Script Examples (Multiple Scenarios)

Cold Call – Standard Version

1. "Hi [Name], it's [Your Name] from Programmed—have I caught you at a bad time?
2. We're working with a number of businesses in [industry] who are struggling to find and retain reliable apprentices, and we support by employing them and placing them with host employers.
3. Just quickly—how are you currently managing your apprentice or trainee pipeline?"

Cold Call – Insight-Led Version

1. "Hi [Name], it's [Your Name] from Programmed—have I caught you at a bad time?
2. We're seeing a lot of companies in [industry] finding it increasingly difficult to retain apprentices due to workload and supervision pressures.
3. I was interested to understand—how is that impacting your business at the moment?"

Warm / Referral Call

1. "Hi [Name], I was referred to you by [referrer/company].
2. They mentioned you might be looking at ways to build your workforce, particularly around apprentices.
3. Keen to understand what you're currently doing in that space and whether there's any opportunity to support."

Re-Engagement / Dormant Client

1. "Hi [Name], it's [Your Name] from Programmed—we've spoken previously.
2. We're currently supporting a number of businesses in your space again due to increased demand, so I thought it was a good time to reconnect.
3. How are things looking from a workforce perspective at the moment?"

Handling Pushback Early ("Not interested")

1. "Totally understand—I hear that a lot initially.
2. Just so I don't keep calling at the wrong time—how are you currently managing apprentices?"

Transition to Value Example

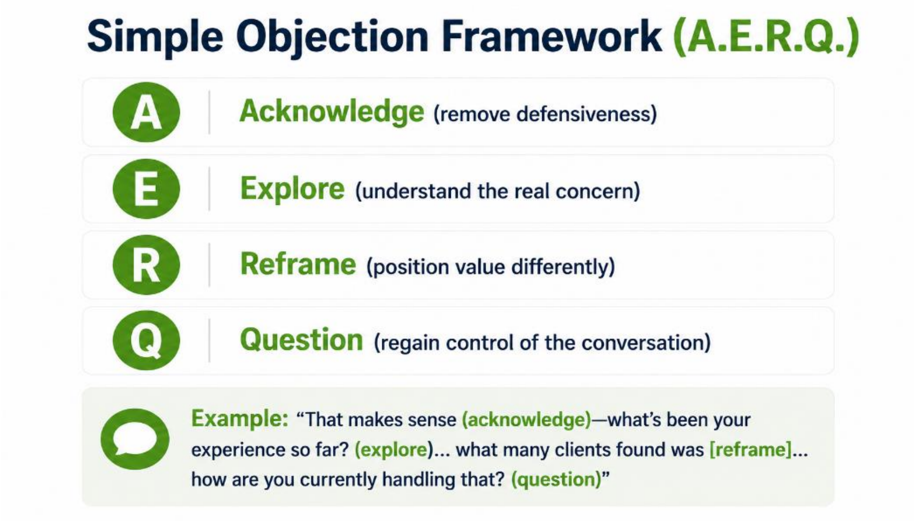
1. "Based on what you've said about your supervisors being stretched and admin taking time, this is exactly where we support businesses—by employing and managing the apprentice so your team focuses on productivity."

Closing Script Examples

1. "Would it be worth a 20-minute session to explore what this could look like properly?"
2. "Let's start with a quick meeting and see if there's a fit—does Thursday or Friday suit?"
3. "If it makes sense, we could look at starting with one apprentice as a pilot and go from there."

Objection Handling Examples (Turn Resistance into Opportunity)

Objections are not rejection—they're **signals of uncertainty, risk, or lack of clarity**. Your role is to acknowledge, explore, and reframe.



Common Objections & Strong Responses

"We hire directly"

1. "That makes complete sense—most of our partners used to as well. Out of interest, how much time does your team spend managing payroll, compliance, and performance?"
2. "What typically drove them to change was the admin and risk—how is that for you currently?"

"Too expensive"

1. "Totally understand—cost is always a factor. When you look at your current model, what costs sit behind recruitment, onboarding, admin, and turnover?"
2. "Most clients find it becomes comparable once those are factored in—would it help to walk through that?"

"No need right now"

1. "That's fair—when you do need staff, what usually triggers that?"
2. "Are you expecting any changes in workload or projects over the next few months?"

"We've had bad apprentices/trainees before"

1. "That's something we hear a lot—what specifically went wrong?"
2. "A big reason businesses move to a GTO model is the added support and performance management—how were those managed previously?"

"We don't have time to manage them"

1. "That's exactly what many businesses say—that's where we take a lot of the burden off your team. Where is it taking the most time currently—onboarding, admin, or supervision?"

"Send me information"

1. "Happy to—just so I send something useful, what specifically would you want to understand more about?"
2. "Would it make sense to run through it quickly first so I can tailor it to your situation?"

"We already use another provider"

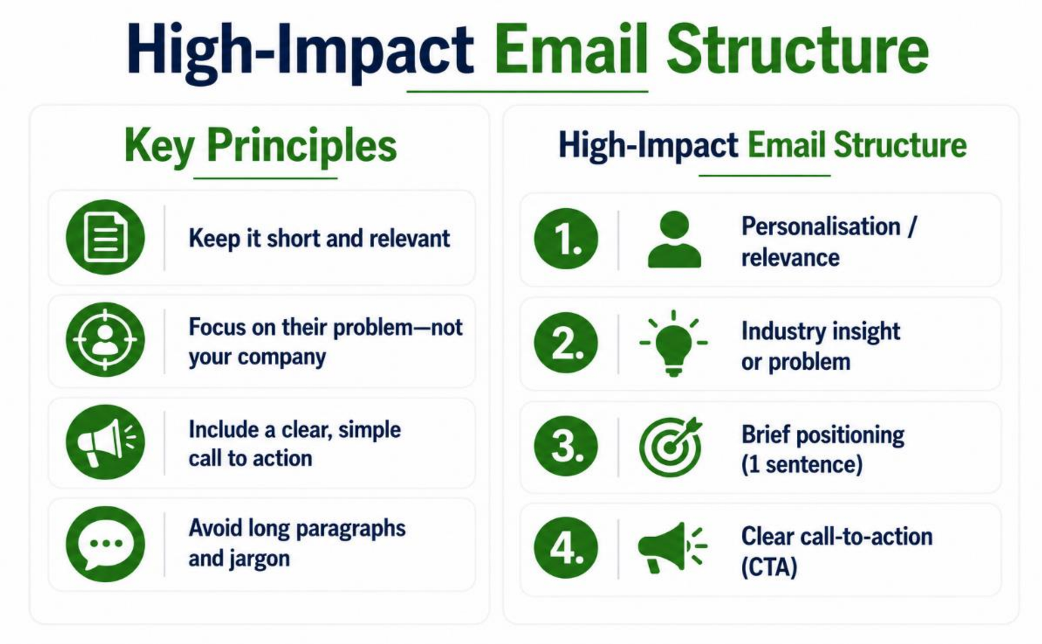
1. "That's great—you're already seeing the value. Out of interest, what do they do well—and where could it be improved?"
2. "If there was something that could be done better, what would that look like?"

Mindset for Objections

- Don't defend—**explore**
- Don't react—**stay calm and curious**
- Every objection is a chance to **deepen discovery**

Email Outreach Examples (Drive Responses, Not Just Sends)

Your email should **spark interest and earn a conversation—not explain everything**.



Initial Outreach (Problem-Led)

Subject: Quick question on your workforce planning

Hi [Name],

I noticed you're currently hiring—many businesses in [industry] are finding it challenging to not just recruit apprentices/trainees but retain and support them effectively.

We work with employers to manage the employment, admin, and support side—freeing up supervisors and reducing risk.

Would you be open to a quick 15-minute conversation to explore whether this could support your team?

Regards,

[Your Name]

Industry Insight Email

Subject: What we're seeing in [industry]

Hi [Name],

We're seeing increasing pressure across [industry] with skills shortages and supervisor capacity—especially when managing apprentices.

Some businesses are shifting to a GTO model to reduce admin and improve retention outcomes.

Keen to understand how you're currently managing this and whether it's becoming a challenge.

Would a short chat be worthwhile?

Follow-Up Email (Value Add)

Hi [Name],

Just following up—happy to share examples of similar businesses we're supporting and how they've reduced admin workload and improved apprentice/trainee outcomes.

Let me know if you'd like me to send through a quick overview or run through it together.

Breakup / Final Follow-Up

Hi [Name],

I haven't been able to connect—totally understand if now isn't the right time.

If workforce planning or apprentices/trainees become more of a focus, happy to reconnect down the track.

Otherwise, I'll leave it with you for now.

Regards, [Your Name]

LinkedIn Message Examples (Start Conversations, Not Pitches)

LinkedIn is not for selling—it's for **starting relevant, low-pressure conversations**. Your goal is to sound natural, informed, and easy to respond to.

Connection Request (Initial Invite)

Option 1 – Insight-Led

"Hi [Name], we're speaking with a number of businesses in [industry] around workforce and apprentice/trainee challenges—keen to connect and share insights."

Option 2 – Observation-Based

"Hi [Name], noticed you're involved in [role/company]—we're working with similar businesses on apprenticeship/traineeship workforce challenges. Thought it would be great to connect."

Option 3 – Simple & Clean

"Hi [Name], I work with employers in [industry] supporting apprentice and trainee pipelines—keen to connect."

First Message After Connection (Do Not Pitch)

Option 1 – Curiosity-Based

"Thanks for connecting [Name]—out of interest, how are you currently managing apprentices or trainee pipelines?"

Option 2 – Insight-Led

"Appreciate the connection. We're seeing a lot of businesses in your space struggling with retention and supervision capacity—how is that looking for you at the moment?"

Option 3 – Soft Engagement

"Great to connect. Always useful to understand how different businesses are approaching workforce planning—what's been the biggest challenge for you recently?"

Follow-Up Message (Add Value)

Option 1 – Insight + Question

"One thing we're consistently seeing is supervisors spending more time on admin than productivity when managing apprentices/trainees. Is that something you're seeing as well?"

Option 2 – Light Value Add

"Working with a few businesses similar to yours at the moment—many have shifted how they manage apprentices to reduce admin and improve retention. Curious if that's something you've looked at before?"

Transition to Conversation

Once engaged, move naturally to a discussion.

Examples:

- "Sounds like there's a bit to explore there—would it be worth a quick 15-minute chat?"
- "Happy to share what others are doing—keen to run through it together?"

Re-Engagement Message (If No Response)

Option 1 – Light Touch

"Hi [Name], just circling back— I am keen to understand how you're currently managing apprenticeship pipelines when things get busy."

Option 2 – Value Reframe

"Hi [Name], we're seeing increasing pressure around workforce capacity in your space— I'd be happy to share what others are doing if useful."

What Good Looks Like

A strong LinkedIn message should feel:

- Natural (not scripted)
- Relevant (based on their role/industry)
- Curious (question-led)
- Easy to reply to

Meeting Conversation Prompts (Run High-Value Meetings)

Your goal in a meeting is to **move from interest → clarity → commitment**.

Keep the conversation structured but natural.

Set the Agenda (First 60 seconds)

- "To make this useful, I was hoping to understand your current workforce setup, where the pressure points are, then share how others are addressing it—does that work?"

  Goal: Set control + align expectations

Deep Discovery (Go Beyond The Surface)

- "Walk me through how your workforce is structured today"
- "Where are you seeing the biggest constraints right now?"
- "What's creating the most pressure for your supervisors or team?"

Follow-up prompts:

- "Can you expand on that?"
- "What's driving that issue?"
- "What have you tried so far?"

Impact & Consequences (Create Urgency)

- "How is that affecting productivity or delivery?"
- "What happens if that continues over the next 6–12 months?"
- "Is there a cost, delay, or risk attached to that?"

Goal: Turn problems into business impact

Future State (Create Opportunity)

- "If you had the right pipeline of talent, what would that unlock?"
- "What would success look like 12 months from now?"
- "What projects could you take on with more capacity?"

Decision & Readiness

- "What would you need to see to feel confident moving forward?"
- "Who else would typically be involved in a decision like this?"
- "What would a realistic timeline look like?"

Transition to Value

- "Based on what you've said about [problem], this is where we typically support businesses…"


MEETING
OUTCOMES
(Always aim for one)
Agreed next step
(meeting, proposal, pilot)
Clear buying process
(who, when, how)
Disqualify respectfully if not a fit
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(meeting, proposal, pilot)
Clear buying process
(who, when, how)
Disqualify respectfully if not a fit
Great meetings create clarity. Clarity drives momentum.
FOCUS
FOCUS

Closing Techniques (Convert Conversations into Action)

Closing is about **confidence and clarity—not pressure**.

Soft Close (Low Pressure)

- "Would it make sense to explore this further?"
- "Is this something worth looking at in more detail?"

  Best used when: early-stage interest

Assumptive Close (Confident Next Step)

- "Let’s lock in a session to map this out properly"
- "Does Thursday or Friday morning work best?"

  Best used when: strong need identified

Problem-Based Close (Most Effective)

- "Based on what you’ve shared about [problem], it sounds like this is impacting your business—should we take the next step and map out a solution?"

Pilot Close (Reduce Risk)

- "Let’s start with one apprentice and test it—then scale if it works"

  Best used when: hesitation around commitment

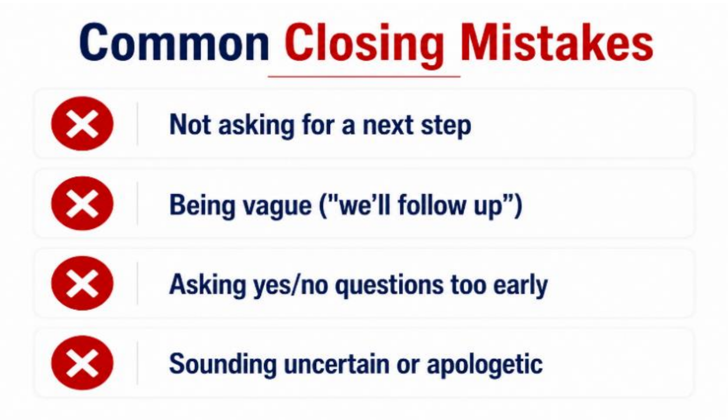
Time-Based Close

- "If you’re looking at [project/timeline], we should get ahead of this—does it make sense to plan now?"

Decision-Clarity Close

- "What would you need to see to move forward?"

  Goal: Identify barriers



Best Practices (What High Performers Do Differently)

Lead the Conversation

- Take control of structure and flow
- Set clear expectations early

Stay in Discovery Longer

- Don’t rush to pitch
- The more you understand, the easier it is to sell

Focus on Business Outcomes

- Talk in terms of productivity, time, cost, risk
- Avoid product-heavy language

Use Customer Language

- Mirror their words and phrasing
- Makes your message feel relevant and relatable

Quantify Where Possible

- Time saved
- Reduction in admin
- Improved retention

Use Proof Selectively

- Reference similar clients
- Share short, relevant examples (not long stories)

Always Close for a Next Step

- Every interaction should move forward
- No vague endings

Follow Up with Purpose

- Add value (insights, examples)
- Reference previous conversation
- Set a clear reason for reconnecting

Be Consistent

- Multiple touchpoints are required
- Most deals are not won on the first interaction

Simple Framework to Remember

R.E.A.C.H. Framework

R — Research
(Preparation drives relevance)

Before any outreach, gather insight that allows you to sound informed and credible.

What to look for:

- Recent projects, contracts, or expansions
- Job ads (signals hiring pressure)
- Workforce size and structure
- Industry skill shortages

Practical example:
"I saw you recently secured the [project]—are you finding it challenging to source enough skilled workers to support that growth?"

Goal: Enter the conversation with context, not a cold pitch.

E — Engage
(Earn attention in the first 30 seconds)

Your opening determines whether the conversation continues.

Strong engagement techniques:

- Personalised observation
- Relevant industry insight
- Problem-led opening (not product-led)

Examples:

- *"We're seeing a lot of construction businesses struggling to secure reliable apprentices/trainees right now—how are you managing that?"*
- *"Many employers I speak with are spending too much time managing admin around apprentices—has that been your experience?"*

Goal: Make them feel understood quickly.

A — Ask
(Diagnose before you prescribe)

High-quality questions uncover real needs and build trust.

Layered questioning approach:

1. Surface level: *"Are you currently hiring apprentices/trainees?"*
2. Deeper: *"What challenges have you had with that?"*
3. Impact: *"How is that affecting your team's productivity or growth?"*

Pro tip: Pause after asking—let them talk.

Goal: Fully understand their pain before positioning a solution.

C — Connect Value
(Translate problems into benefits)

Tie what they've said directly to the GTO value proposition.

Structure:

- *"You mentioned [problem]..."*
- *"What we do is [solution]..."*
- *"The benefit for you is [impact]..."*

Example: *"You mentioned onboarding and admin is taking up a lot of your supervisor's time. We employ and manage the apprentice/trainee for you—so your team focuses purely on productivity, not paperwork."*

Add proof:

- *"We recently supported a similar business to reduce admin time by 30% while improving retention."*

Goal: Make the value feel tailored and tangible—not generic.

H — Handshake
(Secure a clear next step)

Every interaction should end with momentum.

Options for next steps:

- Book a meeting
- Site visit
- Candidate introduction
- Proposal discussion

Examples:

- *"Let's set up 20 minutes to map out what this could look like for your team."*
- *"Would it make sense to start with one apprentice/trainee as a pilot?"*

Pro tip: Be specific with timeframes

- *"Does Thursday or Friday morning work best?"*

Goal: Convert interest into action.

Simple Reminder
Research builds credibility → Engage earns attention → Ask builds trust → Connect shows value → Handshake drives action

We're not just filling roles.
We're creating talent today for tomorrow.
Every apprentice and trainee you invest in today becomes the skilled, motivated professional who drives your business forward tomorrow.
Build careers. Strengthen teams. Create your future workforce.
PROGRAMMED
Apprenticeships & Traineeships
Empowering people. Strengthening businesses.
Creating your future workforce.