

BoostUp[!]

The 2024 Forecast Maturity Report

Research-Backed Modeling and Benchmarks

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Introduction

The Problem

Sales forecasts are on average **less than 61% accurate by week 8 in the quarter**, according to our research.

When projections are that far off so deep into a quarter, leaders can't align teams or control performance, and are forced to look backwards to figure out why things happened rather than looking forward to build strategies for growth.

This has a rippling effect, making it difficult to answer other critical revenue questions, like:

- *Are reps focused on the right deals?*
- *What coverage do we need?*
- *How do we build better pipeline quickly?*
- *How do we improve account and capacity plans?*
- *How do we optimize sales?*

Fixing these problems requires, not only better visibility into your machine, but also a map to improve the overall maturity of your people, processes, metrics and systems.

The best-performing teams do this using a common set of tactics, which includes: adopting mechanisms for process orchestration; finding and elevating deal risks proactively; assessing historical trends; enforcing regular forecast submission schedules; implementing detailed deal inspection protocols; and leveraging AI to accelerate revenue results.

The Answer

We've spent thousands of hours and invested 4 years of research into uncovering the best practices those teams deploy to improve forecast visibility, accountability, and accuracy.

That enables them to calibrate their revenue machines, improving both pipeline performance and rep productivity.

And now we've documented those best practices in the first-ever **Forecast Maturity Model** to guide you on how to get the same results.

Sales forecasts are less than 61% accurate by week 8 in the quarter.

The Forecast Maturity Model

The Forecast Maturity Model helps teams assess and enhance their capabilities across various dimensions, provides guidelines to evaluate current forecasting processes against the ideal, and proscribes improvements that help you achieve more consistent and reliable results.

With it, a number of our customers have been able to elevate their ability to make data-driven decisions quickly, reduce errors, enhance operational efficiencies, and improve overall go-to-market planning, with forecast accuracy exceeding 95% by week six. Time to dive in.

**Reach 95% forecast accuracy
by week 4 in the quarter**

See the maturity model overview on page 5

Summary Forecast Maturity Framework

	STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3	STAGE 4	STAGE 5
	CRM-Only Manual with no human judgement	Accountable Forecast call with human judgement	Actionable Forecast call with human judgement + deal evidence	Projectable Forecast call with judgement + deal + trend	Predictive Predict call with judgement + deal + trend + AI
ORGANIZATION Maturity	Manual Efforts Ops Managed & On-Demand	Team Efforts + Sales Estimation of Success (SC)	Collaborative + Insights & Feedback in Forecast (RevOps)	Responsible + Forecast Projection based on History	Accountable + Commitment to Forecasting Outcomes
PROCESS Maturity	Ad-Hoc Stage & Category Forecast Input	Systemic + WoW Forecasting Call Process	Repeatable + WoW Forecasting Assembly Sequence	Cadence + Forecasting Accuracy Review	Democratized + Full Org Involvement in Forecast Confidence
METRICS	CRM-Only Forecast Category Booked Deals	Accountable + Forecast Call Rollup + WoW Forecast Call	Actionable + Forecast Adherence + Submission History	Projectable + Forecast Accuracy + Forecasting Pacing	Predictive + Forecast at Risk + Forecast Projections
TOOLS	CRM-Only CRM Spreadsheets	Accountable + Hierarchy Rollup + Forecast Calls	Actionable + Deal Forecasting + Forecast Assembly	Projectable + Forecast Accuracy + Forecast History	Predictive + AI Forecast Risk + Forecast Projections
Benchmarks:	<60% accurate by week 8	<70% accurate by week 8	<80% accurate by week 8	<90% accurate by week 8	<95% accurate by week 8

Forecast Maturity Stage 1

Organizational Maturity

In Stage 1, organizations have a minimal Ops function supporting a small direct Sales team. They manage workflows manually with a CRM+spreadsheets approach.

Process Maturity

Reps open and close deals, and work with Managers to progress deals from stage to stage consistent with a predefined process. Forecast categories are loosely tied to sales stages, and managers track both overrides and forecast hedging outside of CRM. Forecast calls are made manually, with no human judgment, and forecast accuracy ranges from 30%-60% by week 8, as measured against end of quarter bookings.

Metrics

Metrics in Stage 1 are one dimensional. Pipeline is stage-weighted and forecasts are category-weighted. Some teams also benchmark funnel conversion rates on industry standards.

	STAGE 1	STAGE 2
	CRM-Only Manual with no human judgement	Accountable Forecast call with human judgement
ORGANIZATION Maturity	Manual Efforts Ops Managed & On-Demand	Team Efforts + Sales Estimation of Success (SC)
PROCESS Maturity	Ad-Hoc Stage & Category Forecast Input	Systemic + WoW Forecasting Call Process
TOOLS	CRM-Only CRM Spreadsheets	Accountable + Hierarchy Rollup + Forecast Calls
METRICS	CRM-Only Forecast Category Booked Deals	Accountable + Forecast Call Rollup + WoW Forecast Call

	STAGE 2	STAGE 3
	Accountable Forecast call with human judgement	Actionable Forecast call with human judgement + deal evidence
ORGANIZATION Maturity	Team Efforts + Sales Estimation of Success (SC)	Collaborative + Insights & Feedback in Forecast (RevOps)
PROCESS Maturity	Systemic + WoW Forecasting Call Process	Repeatable + WoW Forecasting Assembly Sequence
TOOLS	Accountable + Hierarchy Rollup + Forecast Calls	Actionable + Deal Forecasting + Forecast Assembly
METRICS	Accountable + Forecast Call Rollup + WoW Forecast Call	Actionable + Forecast Adherence + Submission History

Forecast Maturity Stage 2

Organizational Maturity

In Stage 2, Ops plays a bigger role as a dedicated support function across a larger rep population with multiple managers.

Process Maturity

The Sales team adopts basic Stage, Category and Close Data processes. Sales Stage exit criteria are defined as are Forecast Submission and Cadence protocols. Teams begin formal week-over-week forecast calls, incorporating some human judgment as well as hierarchical rollups. Forecast accuracy at the company level can reach 70% by week 8.

Metrics

Moving to Stage 2 requires a more solid grasp on overall conversion rates at the company level. Leaders track Total Manager and Total Rep calls, as well as funnel conversion based on historical company performance, in-quarter pipeline creation and conversion rates, WoW forecast call variance, and overall accuracy.

AI

In some cases, there's some integration of Conversational AI, with a level of engagement data captured and analyzed.

Forecast Maturity Stage 3

Organizational Maturity

Stage 3 organizations run multi-level sales hierarchies with overlay teams, and have a more well-instrumented Ops team focused on driving sales process adoption and data hygiene rigor.

Process Maturity

Reps and Managers validate and triangulate their gut calls with a set of included deals, soliciting input from across GTM functions (CS, Consultants, SCs), and identify areas of risk via disagreement in opinion. Deal inspection, forecast assembly and forecast submission workflows are defined, with enforced weekly Manager and Rep 1:1s. Forecast accuracy can reach 90% by week 8 at the company level.

Metrics

With a stricter discipline of forecast triangulation, there's also better funnel conversion reporting, and deeper analysis on pipeline risk. Leaders incorporate end-of-quarter variance vs the weekly call, and track pace-adjusted weighting by conversion rates.

AI

AI at Stage 3 is typically calibrated at deal risk assessments.

	STAGE 3	STAGE 4
	Actionable Forecast call with human judgement + deal evidence	Projectable Forecast call with judgement + deal + trend
ORGANIZATION Maturity	Collaborative + Insights & Feedback in Forecast (RevOps)	Responsible + Forecast Projection based on History
PROCESS Maturity	Repeatable + WoW Forecasting Assembly Sequence	Cadence + Forecasting Accuracy Review
TOOLS	Actionable + Deal Forecasting + Forecast Assembly	Projectable + Forecast Accuracy + Forecast History
METRICS	Actionable + Forecast Adherence + Submission History	Projectable + Forecast Accuracy + Forecasting Pacing

	STAGE 4	STAGE 5
	Projectable Forecast call with judgement + deal + trend	Predictive Predict call with judgement + deal + trend + AI
ORGANIZATION Maturity	Responsible + Forecast Projection based on History	Accountable + Commitment to Forecasting Outcomes
PROCESS Maturity	Cadence + Forecasting Accuracy Review	Democratized + Full Org Involvement in Forecast Confidence
TOOLS	Projectable + Forecast Accuracy + Forecast History	Predictive + AI Forecast Risk + Forecast Projections
METRICS	Projectable + Forecast Accuracy + Forecasting Pacing	Predictive + Forecast at Risk + Forecast Projections

Forecast Maturity Stage 4

Organizational Maturity

In Stage 4, geo-based global sales teams operate with complex multi-level organizational hierarchies. RevOps (or Sales Ops) teams are fully scaled and embedded with the org. Sales management provides separate guidance on forecasted deals, amounts and timing.

Process Maturity

Projections are made not just on the basis of forecast calls and deal evidence, but also on historical data, along with triangulation, to ensure accountability. There's more aggressive sales process adherence tracking and reporting, with tightly adopted hierarchical forecasting schedules (i.e. Reps on Monday, first line managers on Tuesday, regional managers on Wednesday, etc) and future period forecasting (NQ forecast). Forecast accuracy is at 90% by week 8 at the team level.

Metrics

Metrics are now broken out by team and product line, and include time/pace weighted forecasts, sales process adoption, and levels of look-back analysis, like closed-lost reasons and pipeline age.

AI

Predictive AI compares current quarter performance against historical data, and highlights deals at risk. AI projections are within 10% accurate by week 6.

Forecast Maturity Stage 5

Organizational Maturity

In Stage 5, reps and managers leverage AI to prioritize deal focus based on highly predictive probability scores.

Process Maturity with AI

AI layers in forecasting at-risk deals, not just closed won deals, allowing teams to more proactively adjust effort and priorities to optimize rep performance. There's higher confidence in projections, with accuracy at 95% by week 6 at the company, team and rep levels. Capacity and account plans are precisely mapped, and generally teams begin forecasting future product usage as well.

Metrics with AI

Deal AI Risk Scores are able to accurately incorporate deal size, days in stage and engagement risk into the projections. Teams run complex What-If Analysis, track time-to-forecast accuracy, and product usage & utilization reporting to support forecasting workflows.

	STAGE 4	STAGE 5
	Projectable Forecast call with judgement + deal + trend	Predictive Predict call with judgement + deal + trend + AI
ORGANIZATION Maturity	Responsible + Forecast Projection based on History	Accountable + Commitment to Forecasting Outcomes
PROCESS Maturity	Cadence + Forecasting Accuracy Review	Democratized + Full Org Involvement in Forecast Confidence
TOOLS	Projectable + Forecast Accuracy + Forecast History	Predictive + AI Forecast Risk + Forecast Projections
METRICS	Projectable + Forecast Accuracy + Forecasting Pacing	Predictive + Forecast at Risk + Forecast Projections

Example: Forecast Maturity Model

	Level 1 CRM-Only <i>Manual with no human judgement</i>	Level 2 Accountable <i>Forecast call with human judgement</i>	Level 3 Actionable <i>Forecast call with human judgement + deal evidence</i>	Level 4 Projectable <i>Forecast call with human judgement + deal evidence + historical trends</i>	Level 5 Predictive <i>Predict call based on human judgement + deal evidence + historical trends + AI</i>
Organization Maturity	Manual Efforts Ops Managed & On-Demand Small direct sales team w/ minimal Ops Reps update deals based Stage and Category progression process Manager overrides / forecast hedging tracked outside CRM	Team Efforts + Sales Estimation of Success Multiple Reps/Mgrs with dedicated Ops Reps provide a Forecast, their gut call for where they will end the Quarter/Month Managers can override or hedge their team Forecast	Collaborative + Insights & Feedback in Forecast (Revops) Multi-level sales hierarchy & overlay teams Ops team focused on driving sales process adoption Reps/Mgrs validate their gut calls with a set of included deals Calls validated by deal team members (Sales Consultants, Customer Success)	Responsible + Forecast Projection based on History Geo-Based global sales team with complex multi-level org hierarchy Fully scaled Sales Ops team embedded within the org Process & pacing change to monthly/weekly Sales Management provides separate guidance on forecasted deals, amounts, and timing	Accountable + Data driven commitment to Forecasting Outcomes Reps/Managers leverage AI to prioritize deal focus based on probability to win or lose
Process Maturity	Ad-Hoc Stage & Category Forecast Input Deals are open and closed by Reps Default CRM fields utilized Sales Stage progression defined Forecast Categories loosely tied to Sales Stages	Systematic + WoW Forecasting Call Process Sales team adopting basic Stage, Category and Close Date processes Custom fields starting to be created for opportunities Sales Stages exit criteria defined Forecast submission and cadence defined Ad Hoc Manager / Rep 1:1s	Repeatable + WoW Forecasting Assembly Sequence Custom fields to support deal insights (Rep Notes, Next Steps) Sales qualification process defined (MEDDPIC) CRM Data Hygiene process defined Deal inspection process defined Forecast calls with deal include/exclude level of detail Weekly Manager / Rep 1:1s	Cadence + Forecasting Accuracy Review CRM architecture/automation to support Upsell, Renewal, and Growth Opportunities Tracking/reporting on sales process adherence Custom fields to support pipeline scrutiny (Manager Notes, Manager Forecast category, Manager Amount override, etc.) Tightly adopted hierarchical forecasting schedule (ie Reps on Mon, first lines on Tues, regionals on Weds, CROs on Thurs, Forecast Review on Fri) Future period forecasting (NQ forecast)	Democratized + Full Org Involvement in Forecast Confidence Data-based triangulation based on historical performance, Sales Team guidance, and AI Prediction AI-Assisted Forecast Submission Forecasting future product usage
Metrics	One Dimensional Forecast Category Booked Deals Stage-weighted pipeline Weighted-category based forecasts Funnel conversion rates based on industry standard	Accountability Forecast Call Rollup WoW Forecast Call Total Manager Call, Total Rep Call Funnel conversion rates based on historical company performance In-quarter pipeline creation and conversion rates WoW Forecast Call Variance Overall Forecast Accuracy	Multithreaded Forecast Adherence Submission History Triangulation of "Gut" Calls (Mgrs, Reps, SCs) Funnel conversion rates based on historical Rep performance Reporting on and identifying pipeline risk Pace adjusted weighting by conversion rates End of Quarter Variance vs. Week N Call	Data Driven Forecast Accuracy Forecasting Pacing Time/Pace Weighted Forecasts Breakout by org, product line, etc. Sales Process Adoption Lookback analysis on metrics like close lost reasons, pipeline age, etc. End of Quarter Variance vs. Week N Deals	Predictive Forecast at Risk Forecast Projections Deal AI Risk Weighted (deal size, days in stage, engagement risk) Forecast What if Analysis Time to Forecast Accuracy Product Usage & Utilization reporting to support Forecasting
AI		Engagement Capture & Analysis	Deal Risk Assessment	Company historical forecast projection model Forecast Change Summary	Rep, Team and Company Projected Forecast based on historical performance AI-supported projected product usage & utilization Deal-level Predictions based on risk factors
Tools	CRM Spreadsheets	Hierarchy Rollup Forecast Calls	Deal Forecasting Forecast Assembly	Forecast Accuracy Forecast History	AI Forecast Risk AI Forecast Projections

Schedule a custom Forecast Maturity readout with our team. What's included:

- Forecast maturity survey
- Forecast maturity heatmap & score
- Identified areas for improvement
- Mapping from current to ideal maturity stage

[Find a time with the BoostUp team here.](#)

What Good Looks Like

The most effective teams share a set of common characteristics and behaviors, regardless of maturity stage.

Alignment

Alignment of the sales and forecast disciplines, which speeds up execution. The way this typically works is the sales process feeds into the forecast process; the work that goes into deal inspection and pipeline management contribute to your forecasting workflows. Sales stage and forecast category rules provide the basic record keeping framework for pipeline management and forecast assembly.

Assembly

Forecast assembly combines the bottom up sales process with human judgment from leaders on their teams rather than on specific deals. Deals included or excluded is the connective tissue that exposes areas of alignment or disagreement. Leader forecast calls follow rep calls; the reps are then held accountable for their human judgment.

Deal Inspection

Consistency is key for effective deal inspection processes, led by first-line management, who balance the need to drive process discipline while creating opportunities for rich conversations on deal strategy and execution. For example, a discussion about budget challenges with one client may open discussions about what other clients have done to free up budget in similar situations.

Cadence

Effectively managed teams have well-defined forecast submission cadences, which consist of at least the following:

- **Early week** rep and manager 1:1s and deal inspection, as well as rep and first line manager submissions, which include an overall call and bottom up projection
- **Mid week** forecast alignment across the sales management layer (by group, region, etc.)
- **End of week** with a CRO-led forecast call

Multiple Vectors

Best-in-class teams universally apply multiple forecast models to arrive at a number, including:

- **Human judgment:** bottoms up, top down, and cross team (rep, manager, extended sales team)
- **Historical performance:** weighted pipeline and funnel conversion
- **Machine forecasting:** historical forecast projection and deal risk analysis

Accountability

Each has a high level of organizational accountability, with clearly documented and regularly communicated guidelines by role. Those guidelines include what is to be done, when, and by whom, based on sales stage, deal behavior, and category definition.

Best-In-Class Deal Reviews

Best-in-class deal reviews consist of 3 lines of questions: What, Who, and When.

WHAT

What's involved in executing the deal, on both the seller and buyer sides, expose blind spots early, and get consensus on key outcomes.

Questions you should ask:

Sales Process: Is it documented and being followed? What correct information is collected? What's missing?

Buying Process: Does your champion know the steps? Are they equipped to own it? Have you flagged the risks?

Problems: What problems can you solve? Is there agreement, and are they urgent for the customer? What competing problems are they also contending with?

Outcomes: What does your customer get for solving those problems? What happens if they don't? Are outcomes aligned to their company vision and goals?

WHO

Determine who's involved, how they're aligned, and the roles they play in making or influencing decisions, and how you're enabling buyers to close deals.

Questions you should ask:

Buying Committee: Who's engaged and and who's not? Why? Do you know the emotional ROI for key people?

Selling Team: Which executives need to be looped in? Who should they be aligned to, when and how?

Friends or Foes: Who is helping? Who are the detractors? What will sway hearts and minds on both ends of the spectrum?

Path to Power: Are you politically aligned to win? Who decides? Who approves? Who signs? Who funds?

WHEN

An objective lens applied to your close dates based on internal and external forces to determine what to forecast and what to push.

Questions you should ask:

Internal: Do you have time to complete key milestones? Are there any constraints within your control?

External: Does the close date align to a compelling event for the customer? Do they have time to complete their key milestones and achieve group consensus?

Risks: Would factors could delay or kill the deal? What have you previously observed with similar customers?

6 KPI's to Measure, Benchmark, Improve

1

Current quarter pacing against weighted targets

Attainment against weighted or linear targets set for each rep on a weekly or monthly basis. See who's pacing ahead of or behind targets, and proactively spot stragglers with time to make adjustments.

2

Historical accuracy on committed pipeline and forecasts

Committed opps close-win above 90%, best-case convert between 33-50%, and forecasted pipeline converts <25% within the quarter as customers are still in the early stages of buying.

3

Funnel stage conversion and progression

The % of opps that moved to the next stage from the current stage, the time spent in each stage, and the % of deals that successfully closed-won, without which you can't optimize funnel performance.

4

Pipeline coverage gap for the current and next quarter

The average pipeline coverage targets from the 3 previous quarters, compared to actual booked pipeline for a true coverage goal. Apply the % to each rep in the current quarter to determine pacing.

5

Pipeline creation pace and contribution from in-quarter pipeline

How much each rep contributes to current pipeline and at what pace, which opps were created within the quarter and the % of pipeline generated. Set a target for in-quarter deals and track progress against goal.

6

Deal-by-deal risk assessment and risk-weighted pipeline

Blended evidence-based deal qualification, like MEDDIC, with AI-enabled risk analysis to create a forecast that reflects current deal quality. Use common risk factors like: minimal contacts engaged, few meetings held, critical steps delayed (i.e. ROI document not been agreed to).

How BoostUp Can Help

Revenue leaders need to be able to make critical revenue decisions more quickly, requiring greater flexibility and trust in their data.

BoostUp delivers an end-to-end AI revenue management system that offers flexibility and trust with superior forecast accuracy, best-in-class time-to-value, and the flexibility to support any use case or revenue model.

Customers like Cloudflare, Teradata, TalkDesk, Workato, Udemy, and SheerID use BoostUp Forecasting to call the right number early in the quarter, BoostUp Revenue Insights to find growth opportunities quickly, and BoostUp Deal Inspection & Rep Coaching to increase revenue per rep.

Sales Leaders get visibility into every facet of revenue regardless of source, improve forecast accuracy with the help of AI, and increase accountability by involving every level of the sales organization.

Ops Leaders eliminate a lot of unnecessary manual work by automating forecasting workflows. Their existing tech stacks integrate with BoostUp without requiring custom fields or objects in Salesforce, which means they get up and running in minutes or days, not weeks or months. They manage advanced requirements such as splits, overlays and multiple forecast models in BoostUp, which other tech cannot do.

If you're interested in learning how BoostUp can help you scale revenue efficiently, schedule time to speak with a rep by [clicking here](#).

You can also watch this [self-guided automated demo](#).

Special thanks to Diana Abreu, Connor Treuhaft, Alice Fonfa, and Jeff Saenger for their contribution to this report.

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