

VAC Narrative and Playbook Development Case Study



Medical device company sought tactical support to help its sales team engage with VACs more effectively.

Background and Objectives

The client's surgical business had grown through acquisition, including two recent acquisitions of percutaneous devices. While surgeons see value in these technologies, they come at a higher price than traditional laparoscopy devices. This dynamic has caused a challenge with the Value Analysis Committee (VAC), which is typically looking for clear health economics evidence to balance any proposed price premium. The result for the client has been a slower than desired sales cycle and lower success rate than what was projected.

The client had conducted several research studies, KOL interviews, and workshops to develop draft VAC Packs that support its initial pilots and broader roll outs. The client engaged BCE to help synthesize and align the data already collected with customer requirements, and to refine its VAC engagement strategy.

Approach

BCE began with a thorough review of the client's work to date to understand the available product clinical data, related clinical research, existing marketing collateral, and current sales process. This allowed us to distill the key points in the value proposition and construct a clear, five-point narrative to guide clinical and economic buyers through the product adoption value proposition. We linked these elements to relevant supporting data, and identified gaps where they existed.

BCE then conducted a targeted set of ~10 blinded customer interviews to validate and refine the client's conclusions. These interviews allowed BCE to collect unbiased reactions to the client's value proposition and VAC narrative, and better understand which elements resonated and where there were gaps or weaknesses. We also collected insight into best practices for VAC presentations and examples of effective approaches for engaging VAC stakeholders.

After defining the narrative for the client's specific products, BCE analyzed and defined best practices for VAC engagement and developed a "Playbook" to support the client's sales team.

Outcomes

BCE found that VACs need to be logically walked through the category narrative to successfully sell beyond clinical value, and identified the five pillars of a successful narrative for the client's devices. We identified several data points that would strengthen the narrative if available in the future to help the client prioritize data collection.

We created a guide and overview of the Value Analysis Committee— what it is, how it works, and what engagement opportunities exist – to support the client's sales team training efforts. One of the themes throughout the Playbook was the high level of variation present across VACs in how they are set up and how they behave. While there is variation, the Playbook focused on defining a typical environment and highlighting areas of deviation.

The Committee 1 Process C

The Committee 1 process varies from entity to entity, but typically (and in well-run Committee 1s) there is a [Redacted] meeting where the group gets together and [Redacted]. This could stretch to [Redacted] or be as frequent as [Redacted]. Meetings typically last XX-XXX minutes where a mix of new business [Redacted] will be discussed as well as old business (where products still in the Process 4 or [Redacted] will be discussed). Typically, [Redacted] are discussed in each portion of the meeting.

Products up for Process C are selected in the order of [Redacted] after clearing initial hurdles, unless an influential Role 1 identifies a time-sensitive reason to [Redacted]. In which case, the Role 1 works with Role 2 to fast-track the Process C. This happens rarely and requires at least one of the following to be true: 1) [Redacted] or 2) [Redacted].

The steps from there include a Process 3, Process 4, Process 5, and Process 6.

Potential points of variation include:

- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- Team X organized

Committee 1 process best practices:

- [Redacted]
- 3-4 [Redacted]
- [Redacted] team
- [Redacted] for manufacturers
- [Redacted]

Engaging the Committee 1

Engaging a Committee 1 requires identifying Operator 1s, [Redacted], and being [Redacted]. Garnering Operator 1 (or two) is a necessary first step – having multiple Role 1 voices from different departments will drive a stronger Committee 1 presentation. However, unlike a traditional Role 1 [Redacted], there are three goals of this initial Role 1 interaction:

- Articulate the Group 1 benefit
- Confirm [Redacted] and in doing so enable a Role 1 to [Redacted] when the time comes
- Capture a [Redacted] to a Stakeholder 1

Without success in this initial step, manufacturers run the risk of making a Discussion 1 without having an opportunity to [Redacted], [Redacted], or anticipate [Redacted].

Looking holistically, the Committee 1 engagement process moves from the initial Role 1 interaction through Stakeholder 1 engagement, [Redacted], and preparation for the Process C. While the process can vary, typical best practices are highlighted below:

	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
Customer Engaged	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role 1 Role 6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role 4 Role 6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All remaining Committee 1 members Primarily Role 4, Role 7, Role 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Committee 1 members Primarily Role 1 and Materials/Role 2
Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use existing Role 1 relationship [Redacted] individual on Committee 1 Seek [Redacted] if possible Create [Redacted] for [Redacted] Enable [Redacted] with Stakeholder 1 Get [Redacted] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct Discussion 1s for reviews of Stakeholder 1 benefit Assess Factor 1 unmet need Capture Process 3 Identify [Redacted] for future discussions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> [Redacted] after initial Stakeholder 1 feedback [Redacted] conduct Discussion 2s with other members Frame discussions as [Redacted] Use prior relationships to [Redacted] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver Deliverable 1 [Redacted] Utilize prep work to [Redacted] Offer clear Process 4 with [Redacted] Ease Role 2 concerns on Process 6 benefits Be [Redacted]