

CAN WE PUT THE SINK ON THE CEILING?

The brief should start the conversation, not end it.

You could measure up, work out the fixings and send a quote. Or ask: "What are you trying to achieve, and why does the sink need to be there?" That is where partnership starts. And no, tecch doesn't fit kitchens. The same principle applies to projects and technology.

01. THE REQUEST

Listen before you judge

An unusual request is not automatically a bad one.

The customer may understand a constraint or a problem we have not yet seen.

Ask what is driving the request, what has already been tried and why this solution feels right to them.

The first job is to understand their thinking, not defend our own.

02. THE PROBLEM

Find what needs to change

A request for a new system may really be about duplicated work, slow decisions or unclear responsibilities. New technology may not solve the underlying problem.

Work together to establish what is not working, who it affects and what a better outcome would look like.

Agree the problem before committing to the solution.

03. THE CHALLENGE

Question it together

Useful challenge is not "we know better". It is asking whether the proposed approach will achieve the outcome the customer needs.

Explore alternatives, explain the consequences and invite them to challenge our assumptions too. The customer brings operational knowledge.

We bring a different perspective and the questions that test the thinking.

The aim is a better answer, not proving who is right.

04. THE PARTNERSHIP

Recommend what is right

The answer may be a smaller project, a simpler process or making better use of what already exists. It may be completely different from the original brief.

We should always recommend the best path, even when that means less to sell, then agree the way forward together.

A request should not become a project simply because we can price it and it's commercially attractive.

Otherwise we are not a partner, only a supplier.

The brief tells us what the customer has asked for.

Partnership means working together to understand the problem and find the right answer.



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