

# Run This Cost Pressure Session with Your Team



## A 60-minute framework to align priorities, strengthen supplier strategy, and improve cost decisions

Cost pressure is not just a sourcing issue. It is a leadership challenge.

Tariffs, input volatility, and supplier dynamics are shifting faster than most teams can consistently respond. Without a shared approach, teams default to reactive decisions, inconsistent negotiations, and missed opportunities.

This working session gives you a simple way to bring your team together, align on what matters, and create a more consistent approach to cost and supplier decisions.

### What You Can Do with This

Use this session to step out of reactive mode and create alignment across your team. In 60 minutes, you can clarify priorities, improve how decisions are made, and identify where your current approach needs to change.

### What's Inside

- A 60-minute agenda you can run with your team
- Discussion prompts to guide productive, focused conversations
- A priority-setting framework to focus effort where it matters most
- Decision filters to improve consistency and confidence
- A “what to stop doing” exercise to free up capacity and reduce noise

### When to Use This

- Preparing for contract renewals or negotiations
- Responding to new tariffs or input cost changes
- Aligning cross-functional stakeholders
- Resetting priorities



# Your 60-Minute Cost Pressure Session

BUSINESS

Agenda

PROJECT



This agenda is designed to help you move quickly from discussion to alignment. Keep the conversation focused, practical, and grounded in current challenges.

## Set the Context (10 min)

Start by aligning on what is actually happening, not just what feels urgent. This ensures the conversation is grounded in reality, not noise.

- What cost pressures are we seeing right now?
- Where are we reacting vs. leading?

## Identify What Matters Most (15 min)

Narrow the conversation to the areas that truly require attention. The goal is not to cover everything, but to focus on what will have the greatest impact.

- Which cost drivers are impacting us the most?
- Where do we have the least visibility?
- What requires immediate action vs. monitoring?

## Align on Approach (15 min)

Inconsistency is often a bigger issue than capability. Use this time to align on how your team will operate moving forward.

- How are we currently handling contract negotiations?
- Where are approaches inconsistent across the team?
- What needs to change?

## Prioritize and Simplify (15 min)

Translate discussion into focus. This is where you define what actually gets attention over the next 30 days.

- What is your top priority for the next 30 days?
- What work is currently misaligned to that priority?

## Close and Assign Ownership (5 min)

End with clarity. Without clear ownership and next steps, alignment breaks down quickly.

- What decisions were made?
- Who owns what next?
- Are there areas where additional training or tools are needed?





# Tools to Strengthen the Conversation

These tools help you move beyond discussion and create a more consistent, repeatable approach across your team.

## Priority-Setting Framework

This framework helps your team focus on what actually matters under cost pressure, not just what is most visible. Focus on:

- High financial impact
- High exposure to volatility (tariffs, commodities, regions)
- Strategic supplier relationships
- Contract renewals or decisions that require near-term action

If an initiative does not align to one of these, it likely does not require immediate attention.

## Decision Filters

Use these filters to improve consistency and confidence in how decisions are made across your team. Before acting, ask:

- Do we understand the cost drivers behind this change?
- Are we reacting to a supplier narrative or leading with data?
- Does this align with our current priorities?

These questions help reduce reactive decisions and create a more disciplined approach to cost management.

## Discussion Prompts

Use these prompts to push beyond surface-level updates and uncover where action is needed.

- Where are we overpaying and why?
- Where are we most exposed to external shifts?
- Where are we inconsistent as a team?

## “What to Stop Doing” Exercise

This is where capacity is regained. Most teams add new priorities without removing existing work.

Ask your team:

- What work is not contributing to your top priority?
- What can be paused, reduced, or eliminated?
- Where are we spending time that does not impact cost, risk, or supplier outcomes?

The goal is not just clarity. It is creating space to execute what matters most.





# Bringing It Together

## Cost pressure is not a one-time event.

It is an ongoing part of how you operate.

The advantage does not come from reacting faster. It comes from aligning your team, structuring your decisions, and leading supplier conversations with clarity and confidence.

### Next Step

If you want to strengthen how your team approaches cost, negotiation, and supplier strategy, ISM offers group training designed to build capability and consistency across your organization.

**Explore group training for your team**  
[Group Training & Corporate Training Catalog](#)

## Additional ISM Resources

### [ISM Corporate Program](#)

Extend alignment beyond a single session with structured development, benchmarking, and shared capability across your team.

### [Total Cost Solution training and platform](#)

Build a consistent, repeatable approach to cost analysis and negotiation across your team.

### [Cost intelligence and supplier insight platform](#)

Strengthen your team's position in supplier conversations with clear visibility into cost drivers and pricing inputs.

