



Managing Resistance with Prospects

Selling with Confidence

Hire ❖ Develop ❖ Retain

Overview

- Why Objections Occur
- Types of Objections
- Legitimacy of Objections
- The Inquiry Method
- The Pivot Method

Why Objections Occur

Objections are signs of confusion, concerns, the sorting out of options, subconscious cognitive biases, risk aversion, cognitive overload, and the fear of change. They are a natural part of the human decision-making process. In most cases, objections are a sign that your prospect is still engaged. With engagement and objections come emotions, both from our customers and from us as sale reps.

It's important to remember that **objections** are not **rejections**. It's not personal, it's not intentional, it's just human nature. Attempting to protect yourself from "rejection" by not asking for a commitment or not reaching out will leave you with an empty calendar, a weak pipeline, and a lot of "maybes".

The Science Of Resistance

- **Emotion First, Logic Second**
 - When hit with an objection of any sort, our emotions take over before we even know what hit us. And it's the same way for our prospects. So when working through this resistance – we need to understand and feed their emotion while controlling our own.
 - When you try to resolve an objection with logic, without first considering its emotional origin, it's like arguing with a wall. In this state, you trigger psychological reactance.
- **Change is Scary**
 - Humans don't like change. This status quo bias is the top reason stakeholders throw out objections and deals stall in the late stages of the sales process.
 - Ask questions during discovery about the desire to change, what might hold them back, or how we might provide programs that would complement rather than displace that vendor.
 - Trust, however, is the one emotion that breaks the gravitational force of the status quo.
- **There's Always a Bias**
 - At the end of the day, it's important to remember that there's always going to be a bias. Using these biases to your advantage is the difference between making the sale or walking away empty-handed wondering what happened.
 - Availability Bias
 - It's important to find reasons to meet with your prospects and provide them with additional information and insight as often as possible. You must control and keep your message top of mind. This gives you the upper hand and takes advantage of the availability bias.
 - Negativity Bias
 - When you ask most people what they like about something, you leverage the negativity bias to your advantage. Most people will respond with a few positives and quickly shift to negatives. For example, when asking about an installed competitor: "John, tell me; what do you like most about ABC vendor?"
 - Status Quo Bias
 - The number-one reason why buyers choose not to move forward with you is not price, product specs, delivery windows, or any of the things salespeople too often blame. It's the fear of negative future consequences. Buying a new product or switching vendors carries a real risk for stakeholders.



- **Micro-Commitments are the Way to Go**

- The more we can get a prospect to say yes, the more likely they are to feel comfortable and give their trust.
- Ultra-high-performing sales professionals help stakeholders move past their status quo bias by helping them acclimate to change through priming and micro-commitments.
- An example of the priming process is introducing the stakeholder to the next step you plan to ask for at the beginning of a sales call rather than surprising them at the end of the conversation. Priming change is also accomplished during discovery through artful questions that allow the stakeholder to talk about a desired future state.

Four Types of Objections

Objections come in many forms and fashions. Some are direct, others more subtle. But most objections fall into four types:

- **Prospecting Objections**
 - These would be heard when cold calling, trying to make a new connection, set an initial meeting, or during any new business acquisition effort.
 - On any prospecting interaction, one goal should be to get to a yes, no, or maybe as quickly as possible.
 - It's critical to determine if the "objection" is truly an objection.
- **Red Herrings**
 - A red herring is something your stakeholder does, says, or asks that distracts you from your focus, is misleading, or diverts your attention from the objective of your sales conversation.
 - Red herring objections usually occur at the beginning of a sales meeting or stop a scheduled event from even occurring.
- **Micro-Commitment Objections**
 - Occurring at any phase of the buying process, an objection to a micro-commitment might be a "no" to next steps, more time, additional presentations, or getting passed on to a DM.
- **Buying Commitment Objections**
 - Buying commitment objections come at the end of the buying process and usually arise around the subjects of payment, contracts, next steps.
 - Skipping steps in the sales process exponentially increases the probability that you will hear these objections at the close.

Legitimacy of Objections

Not all resistance is an objection. We often hear prospecting resistance because we've triggered our prospects into a "default mode" or we're serving as an unexpected interruption in their day. Before managing that resistance, we'll need to determine if it is really an objection.

Prospecting resistance comes in 3 forms

- **Reflex Responses**
 - A default statement they've repeatedly used
 - EX. Quick Hang up, "Not Interested"
- **Brush Offs**
 - Not a yes, not a no, but not right now
 - EX. "Send me an email"
- **True Objections**
 - Something that warrants pause and a further discussion
 - EX. "We just signed a contract with another vendor"



Activity #1

Determine if the following statements are reflex responses, brush offs, or true objections.

Objection	Reflex Response	Brush Off	True Objection
I'm not interested			
Happy with what we have			
We don't have the budget			
I'm too busy/ I don't have time			
I'm not the right person			
Send me an email			
We just did this with another vendor			

The Pivot Method

If the resistance you're hearing is not an actual objection, you can simply create a ledge to disrupt their logic and pattern and continue with the conversation. The Pivot Method is best for this type of resistance (reflex responses and brush offs). Use the 3-step process below to manage this resistance.

Acknowledge

- Make them feel heard and seen
- This does not mean "agree"

Lower Their Guard

- Use empathy to reduce fight or flight response

Transition with a Question

- Use an open-ended question or phrase to bridge to discovery

Group Activity

Determine if the following statements are reflex responses, brush offs, or true objections.

Objection	Acknowledge	Lower Their Guard	Transition with a Question
I'm not interested			
We're happy with what we have			



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Activity #2

Determine if the following statements are reflex responses, brush offs, or true objections.

Objection	Reflex Response	Brush Off	True Objection
Send me an email			
We're Good			

The Inquiry Method

The Inquiry Method is best for objections that have validity to them, that warrant a deeper understanding and further conversation. Use the 4-step process below to manage true objections.

Isolate and Confirm the True Objection

- Use a simple phrase or question to drill down to the real hesitation

Clarify the Concern

- Ask questions to determine the "why" behind the objection

Assure and Empathize

- Put yourself on the same side of the table

Provide Resolution

- Respond positively with a solution

Group Activity

Determine if the following statements are reflex responses, brush offs, or true objections.

Objection	Isolate and Confirm	Clarify	Assure and Empathize	Provide Resolution
I don't have time				
We just started this with another vendor				

Activity #3

Determine if the following statements are reflex responses, brush offs, or true objections.

Objection	Isolate and Confirm	Clarify	Assure and Empathize	Provide Resolution
We don't have the budget for anything				
I'm not the right person				



Key Takeaways

- Practice Makes Permanent
 - Write out common objections you hear and how you'll handle them
 - Listen to recordings to evaluate
- Determine R,B,O
 - Recognize whether the resistance you're hearing is a reflex response, brush off or a true objection
- Choose Your Method
 - Pivot – reflex responses and brush offs
 - Inquiry – true objections
- Keep Emotions in Check
 - The party who exhibits the most emotional control wins



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