



Overcoming Buying Objections

Selling with Confidence

Hire ❖ Develop ❖ Retain

Overview

- The Science of Resistance
- Types of Objections
- Why Buying Objections Occur
- Where we Struggle as Sales Professionals
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The Science of Resistance

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".

- **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 (Addressed in [Managing Resistance with Prospects Course](#))

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.



Using the ANT Method to Address Red Herrings

- A – Acknowledge
 - Make them feel heard and seen
 - This does not mean “agree”
- N – Notate
 - Either literally take a note or tell them you will add to the agenda
- T – Transition
 - Move to the next phase of your sales process

Unlike other objections, these are best to be ignored. You must avoid getting drawn into the red herring as it will pull you from your process and can derail the whole meeting. Instead of addressing the situation right away and causing more friction, acknowledge the concern, note the concern, and transition to the next step of your process. You can very simply state “I’ll add that to our agenda”. The trick here is to NOT bring up the red herring unless the client does.

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.

Using the MMA Method to Address Micro-Commitment Objections

- M – Minimize
 - Reduce the emotional size of the stakeholder’s objection
- M - Maximize
 - Emphasize the value of your proposition
- A – Ask
 - Confidently ask for the next step in the process

By making the next step seem less intense and highlighting the value that you/your solution provides, you’ll decrease the fear the decision maker may have in taking that next step.

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.

The rest of the course and material outline how to work through buying objections.

Why Buying Objections Occur

Buyers do not enjoy making decisions, and there are endless reasons why someone will freeze up when it’s time to take a next step. Here are the most common reasons why buying objections occur.

- Don’t Want to Make a Decision
- Fear of Commitment
- Not Enough Value / Not the Right Fit
- Not Qualified
- Didn’t Connect with You

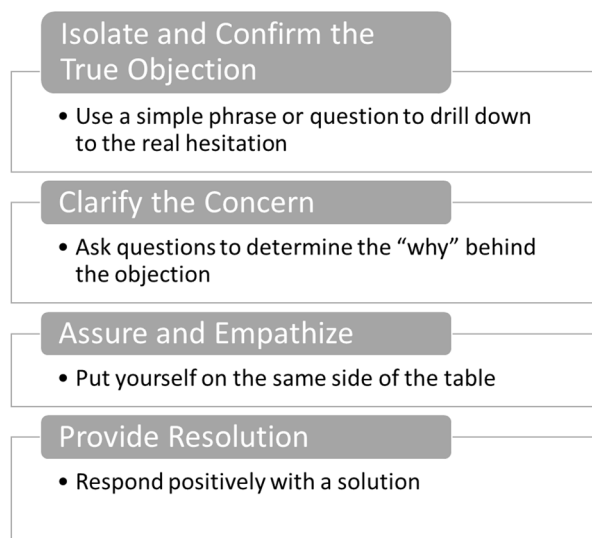


Where we Struggle as Sales Professional

While we often know resistance will come at the end of a sales meeting, it can still be a struggle to hear someone tell you “no.” Your heart rate increases, blood pressure rises and the common impulse is to push back, tell them why they should be saying “yes” to us and get the win. Our inclination to rush straight from the objection to a response often comes out more like a rebuttal. When trying to resolve an objection with logic before dealing with the emotional origin of the objection, it’s triggering even MORE resistance from your client. Objection handling requires a lot of emotional and impulse control.

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.



Uncovering the Real Resistance

It’s not that we must OVERCOME an objection. It’s that we must FIND the TRUE objection. It’s rare that a client or prospect will initially come forth with their true concern. It’s often masked or not divulged at all. Before we can even clarify an objection, we’ll need to isolate and confirm the key objection that is holding them back from a decision.

We determine the real resistance through a method called “peeling the onion”. Just as an onion has layers, objections have layers. You’ll repeatedly a simply phrase like “what else” or “in addition to that” or “apart from that” in an effort to determine where the hold up is.

Once they have confirmed that if a single concern was resolved, they’d be able to do business with you, you’ll then know you have the true objection. It’s then time to clarify the validity of and reason behind that objection. Use open ended questions to bring a prospect into a space of sharing how and why they are feeling this resistance. When done correctly, you can often enter what is known as a self-disclosure loop. In a self-disclosure loop, your stakeholder is unimpeded from sharing information about themselves, their business, etc.



Why Empathy Matters

Empathy is the great connector. When managing resistance and objections, it is critical that we place ourselves on the same side of the table as our decision makers, and the vehicle we use to do this is empathy. Simple phrases like “me too” or “others I’ve worked with used to have that same challenge” can go a long way. If this does not come naturally or you’re looking to systemize empathy, using the classic “feel, felt, found” structure can be particularly effective.

- Feel – acknowledge how they are feeling
- Felt – show empathy by sharing that you/others have felt the same way
- Found – share a positive experience or outcome that came after the resolution of that concern/pain/feeling

Responding Positively

When responding to an objection, you should be offering a resolution that puts them at ease. While our inclination is to rebuttal, it’s critical that we remain emotionally neutral and focus our responses how we can remedy their concerns.

Here are a few things to keep in mind:

- The response is the comforting solution to the issue.
- This is not a strong-arm way to convince them
- This is a GREAT time to pull out “hard evidence” - case studies, testimonials, referrals, reviews, ROI’s
- Have your contingency plan in place

Categorizing Resistance

Now that you’ve learned a streamlined process to managing buying objections, strong sales professionals practice this methodology in a variety of scenarios, so they’re prepared for anything. But with so many objections, it will be difficult to come up with hundreds of questions and responses. All resistance can be categorized into 6 silos:

- Money
 - Cashflow
 - My Price or The Price
 - Saving or Profiting
- Features and Benefits
 - Logistics
 - Performance/Service
 - Value
- Trust
 - New/Existing Relationship
 - Competitor
 - Reputation/Reviews
- Timing
 - Seasonality
 - Other Priorities
 - Contracts/Constraints



- Complacency
 - Not a Priority
 - Lack of Direction
 - Good Enough Mentality
- Stall
 - Fear of Commitment
 - Looking for Validation
 - Information Overload

The first three categories can be overcome through skill and patience. The last three categories can be significantly more difficult as you have less influence. They might also bring about the realization that the client is not fully qualified, in which it's likely time to move on.

Key Takeaways

- Self Assess
 - What isn't working about my current tactic?
 - Am I asking enough questions? Did I give up too soon?
 - Were they even qualified?
 - How did I not show enough value?
- Plan
 - Learn 1 go-to response for each of the top 6 buying objections
 - Use the Prep Template to plan your approach
- Practice
 - If this is uncomfortable, it's because you haven't practiced
 - If you don't have meetings to practice, book them or role play
- Remind
 - Adjust your mindset and always focus on helping
 - Put yourself on the "same side of the table"



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Missouri

12851 Manchester Road
Suite 150
St. Louis, MO 63131

Indiana

450 E. 96th Street
Suite 500
Indianapolis, IN 46240

Florida

43 Skyline Drive
Suite 1001
Lake Mary, FL 32746

Illinois

300 Hamilton Blvd
Suite L110
Peoria, IL 61602