

# HANDLING OBJECTIONS LIKE A BOSS

*EFFECTIVE TIPS AND TECHNIQUES  
TO USE THROUGHOUT THE SALES PROCESS*

IT'S WAY TOO  
EXPENSIVE.

I'M TOO BUSY  
RIGHT NOW...



**NO!**

WHAT'S IN  
IT FOR ME?

# BEFORE YOU CAN LEARN TO PROPERLY HANDLE AN OBJECTION, GRASSHOPPER, YOU MUST FIRST UNDERSTAND WHAT AN OBJECTION IS



NO, WE'RE NOT TALKING ABOUT THE SURFACE-LEVEL. WE'RE NOT TALKING ABOUT THE TYPE OF OBJECTION OR WHAT YOUR PROSPECT HAS ACTUALLY SAID. WE'RE TALKING ABOUT THIS:

## WHAT IS AN OBJECTION?

**AN OBJECTION IS THE WAY A PROSPECT VOICES A NEGATIVE EMOTIONAL RESPONSE TO YOU OR YOUR PRODUCT.**

Once you understand this, you're free to realize that handling an objection is less about winning an argument than about soothing a disruptive emotion. You're not arguing a case in front of a trial court. You're a supportive parent, trying to get at the root of the emotions causing your prospect to throw up a roadblock that may make no logical sense at all.

**PRO-TIP** ASK WHY. SAY A PROSPECT BRINGS UP A PRICE OBJECTION FOR THE FIRST TIME 6 WEEKS INTO THE SALES PROCESS. YOU COULD RESPOND BY SAYING SOMETHING LIKE THIS:

*"Michelle, I hear you. It's not a small amount of money. But I'm curious. You've known about our prices for at least a month and this is the first time you're bringing it up. Why do you think it's causing you concern now?"*

# THE 4 TYPES OF OBJECTIONS

(AND HOW TO HANDLE EACH ONE)



## 1 PROSPECTING OBJECTIONS

Prospecting objections happen early in the sales process. In the prospecting phase to be exact. (Good thing we explained that, huh?) They can be particularly abrupt, since the prospect is saying they don't even have time to hear you out, let alone consider what you have to say.

**Shout-out + Must-read:** We've cooked up our own objection playbooks based on our experience and what has worked best for us (and we're pretty proud of it). But, we have also drawn much inspiration from the excellent frameworks found in Jeb Blount's book, *Objections*. We believe in giving credit where credit is due and we can't recommend that book highly enough!

### HOW TO HANDLE PROSPECTING OBJECTIONS

STEP	EXAMPLE SCRIPT
<b>Take the emotion out of it.</b> Use a prepared script to handle the specific objection you're getting. This will give you a second to emotionally rebalance and take control of the conversation.	Prospect: <i>"I'm too busy right now."</i> You: <i>"I totally understand. I figured you might be."</i>

STEP	EXAMPLE SCRIPT
<p><b>Say something unexpected (but not totally crazy!)</b></p> <p>Your prospect has reflexively objected to speaking with you because they've dealt with thousands of salespeople in their lives, most of whom were bad at their jobs and were selling bad products. Can you blame them?</p> <p>Now it's time to shake them out of their comfort zone and force them to think about whether you're a different breed and whether you actually have something of value to share.</p>	<p>You: <i>"This is an insane time of year for you guys. I'm calling to try to figure out a time to call that works best for you and your team."</i></p>
<p><b>Ask again. And ask one more time for good measure.</b></p> <p>Ask your prospect again for what you wanted when you first called. (Probably a meeting to discuss your offering.) If they throw out another reflexive objection, repeat the process and include another ask at the end of it.</p>	<p>You: <i>"How about a 10 minute call later this afternoon at 4:30?"</i></p> <p>Prospect: <i>"I have a meeting at that time."</i></p> <p>You: <i>"Want to squeeze in a call right after you're done with that one?"</i></p>
<p><b>Don't refuse to take no for an answer...</b></p> <p>At some point, the rules of civility require you to take no for an answer and back off. Don't be that person who just keeps pushing until the prospect curses you out and mentally writes you off. You're better off gracefully backing down...</p>	<p>Prospect: <i>"No, that's my last meeting of the day. I want to get home right after that."</i></p> <p>You: <i>"No problem at all. Well, I hope you have a great day. By the way, before I go..."</i></p>
<p><b>But have a backup plan!</b></p> <p>If you're asking for a meeting and your prospect just doesn't have the time, consider asking if it's cool if you send them some information about your product. Or ask if you can sign them up for your newsletter. Ideally, you want to get something out of the conversation.</p>	<p>You: <i>"I'd like to get your permission to send you some info about how Product X might save your firm some money. Is it alright if I send that to your email and check in with you in a couple of weeks to get your thoughts?"</i></p>



## 2 BS OBJECTIONS



A BS objection is one that frequently comes up early in the sales process. It's an artificial barrier to buying invented by the prospect that bears no relation to whether they want the product.

So, for example, a buyer might say something like, *"I haven't heard of you before"* because, in their mind, they only want to buy from well-known companies. At the end of the day though, you know they'd be happy to buy from an up-and-coming startup if the price and product are right.

### HOW TO HANDLE BS OBJECTIONS

For these sorts of objections, we're going to use the **ADF framework**:

#### ACKNOWLEDGE

Recognize the objection and suggest that you'd be happy to address it at a later point if, after hearing your presentation, the prospect is still interested in an answer.

#### DEFER

Defer answering the objection as you move through the rest of the presentation.

#### FORGET

When you ask for questions at the end of your presentation, if you're not asked about the initial objection again, fuhggeddaboutit! Congratulations! This means the material you went over in your presentation, squashed the BS objections.

# 3 NEXT-STEP OBJECTIONS

A next-step is simply an agreement from the prospect to carry out the next step of the sales process, whatever that step might be. A next-step *objection*, therefore, is an objection to moving forward.



## HOW TO HANDLE NEXT-STEP OBJECTIONS

The trick to handling next-step objections lies in understanding what motivates them. They arise when your prospect doesn't see value in moving the process forward. When they ask themselves, *"What's in it for me?"* they come up blank.

And that's why you need to demonstrate the clear and concrete value they'll realize by taking the next step with you.

For these objections, we don't have a framework for you. Well, we do, if you consider a one-step process to be a "framework."

**All you need to do is the following:**

### STEP INTO YOUR PROSPECT'S SHOES AND ANSWER THE QUESTION, *"WHY SHOULD I DO THIS?"*

Why should they attend a demo, provide you with competitor collateral, or sit down for another call? What's in it for them? Chances are, if you can't think of an answer, neither can they.

It's important to have an answer to this objection lined up before you get on a call. It doesn't make much sense to stutter and stammer over a next-step objection when you actually have your prospect on the line, only to email them 5 minutes later saying, *"Wait! Now I know why you should meet with me again! Here's what I should have said..."*



# 4 LANDMINE OBJECTIONS



Landmine objections are those that occur during your attempts to close the deal. We call them landmines because they lay buried throughout the sales process, waiting to blow up your deal if they aren't properly defused before you get to the close.

These are brutal objections because they occur so late in the process. Chances are you've already sunk hours into pursuing this lead, conducted demos, underwent extensive client research, and everything else involved in closing a sale. Only to have it blow up in your face right at the end!

We've got two strategies for you to deal with landmines. One is proactive, the other is reactive. Together, they'll give you a great chance to cheat sales death and get your deal.

## THE PROACTIVE APPROACH: SWEEPING THE BATTLEFIELD

Every sales organization has a sales process. Part of every sales process is customer discovery. And it seems that EVERY salesperson is tempted to skip or skimp on the discovery phase of the process. It seems like a universal impulse to skip necessary steps and find shortcuts to the close. But there are no shortcuts.

Customer discovery throughout the sales process is what will uncover the landmines that lie in wait for you at the closing stage. Questions about your customer's needs, problems, fears, objections, and objectives will reveal all sorts of potential issues that will otherwise pop up only at the end (where they're much deadlier).

**PRO-TIP** You've heard of **ABC: Always be closing**. Who hasn't? Even non-salespeople know it (and seemingly never stop reminding you about it when you mention you're in sales). **But we have another ABC for you: Always be curious.** Always be curious about your customer, throughout the entire sales process. Always ask questions about what they need and want. Always try to get a little deeper into their heads. This is how you'll find and disarm those landmine objections before they go off.

## THE REACTIVE APPROACH: SURVIVING THE BLAST

So, you were a bad salesperson. You skipped some steps in your process or you skimmed on customer discovery as you moved your prospect to the close. Or maybe a totally unanticipated issue was lying in wait, one that you couldn't possibly have seen coming.

Either way, you're moving in for the close when, all of a sudden, "BOOM!"

The prospect sets off a landmine objection: *"I personally love the deal but I can't justify your prices to my boss."*

What do you do now? Slink home and tend to your wounds? Not yet! There's still ways to salvage this deal. Yes, you should have uncovered the objection during the discovery phase but the omission doesn't have to be fatal.

**Instead, try the following framework:**

### 1. REGROUP

First, **regroup**. You were probably thrown for a loop by the objection but it's important to get your feet back underneath you. Do this by taking some time to empathize with your prospect and understanding their objection.

### 2. REPHRASE

#### **Rephrase the objection.**

Here, you're trying to clearly define and simplify their objection. If they've come back to you with, *"I've got to run this up the flagpole to my bosses. Call me next week."*, it's time to ask what - in particular - they or their bosses might need to think further about.

What issue(s) require further consideration? Then, repeat the rephrased objection back to them. *"So what you're saying is that you're not sure if we can get the deal done in time for you to hit your quarterly numbers?"*

### 3. REFRAME

#### **Reframe the objection in the context of the broader deal.**

Show the prospect that their concerns, while valid, pale in comparison to the benefits of the deal. You're trying to bring everything into proper perspective here.

### 4. REAPPROACH

#### **Reapproach with another ask.**

Confidently ask to close again, this time assuming you'll get a yes.



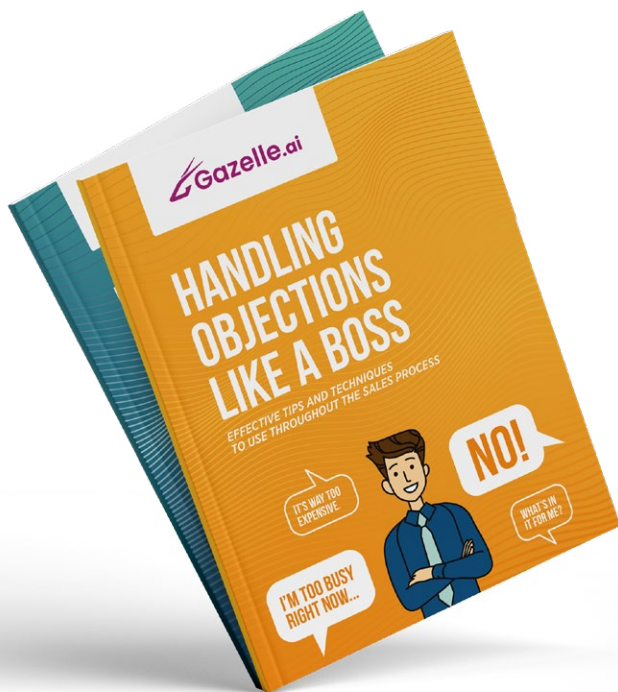
# WHAT *DOESN'T* WORK

## LAWYERING YOUR PROSPECT

Don't try to argue your way around an objection. You're not Johnnie Cochran. That glove *definitely* doesn't fit. An objection isn't an invitation to debate.

## GETTING EMOTIONAL

Don't let your emotions get the better of you. If you're angry, annoyed, frustrated, even at your wit's end, remember what you're there to do: make a sale.



NOW THAT YOU KNOW HOW TO HANDLE OBJECTIONS LIKE A BOSS, STAY TUNED FOR OUR NEXT GUIDE, ***CLOSING LIKE A BOSS!***

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