File by FIFO — Objection Handling Guide

Quick reference for common objections and how to respond.

Price Objections

"It's too expensive"

Understand first: > "Too expensive compared to what? Help me understand what you're comparing to."

If they say "other software": > "Most HR software is R15,000–R50,000 per year for basic features. File starts at R5,000 because we focus specifically on disciplinary management—we do one thing really well instead of trying to do everything."

If they say "doing nothing": > "Doing nothing is free until it isn't. One CCMA case—legal fees, management time, potential payout—easily R50,000 to R200,000. File is essentially insurance that costs less than one bad outcome."

"Can we get a discount?"

Standard response: > "Our pricing is already based on employee count, so smaller companies pay less. For companies under 50 employees, R8,000 per year works out to less than R15 per employee per month. That's the cost of one cup of coffee."

For multi-year commitment: > "If you're open to a 2-year commitment, we can offer 10% off. Would that work for your budget cycle?"

Never: - Give arbitrary discounts that devalue the product - Negotiate against yourself

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"We need to think about it"

Dig deeper: > "Of course. What specifically would you want to think through? Sometimes I can address those concerns now."

Common real reasons: - Need budget approval → Offer to join their internal pitch - Need to consult partner → Offer to do second demo with them - Not convinced on value → Ask what would convince them - Timing isn't right → Ask when would be better and schedule follow-up

If genuinely undecided: > "That's fair. Let's put something in the calendar for next week so I can answer any questions that come up. What day works?"

"Our budget is tight right now"

Acknowledge and reframe: > "I understand—most businesses are watching every rand. Let me ask: what would a CCMA case cost you right now? Not just in money, but in management time and stress? File isn't an expense—it's preventing a much larger expense."

Monthly option: > "We do offer monthly payment if annual upfront doesn't work. It's a bit more over the year, but it spreads the cash flow."

Feature Objections

"We already use Word templates"

Acknowledge the approach: > "Templates are better than nothing. The challenge is: a template doesn't guide the process. It assumes the manager knows what to fill in, in what order, and doesn't skip anything critical."

Key differences: > "With Word, every manager produces different quality documents. With File, every warning follows the same professional process. And when you get to CCMA, consistency matters."

Ask about problems: > "Have you ever had a situation where a manager used the template incorrectly? Or couldn't find an old warning when you needed it?"

"We have HR to handle this"

Acknowledge their resource: > "Having dedicated HR is great. File doesn't replace HR—it makes their job easier and gives them oversight of what managers are doing."

Pain point for HR: > "Your HR person probably spends a lot of time coaching managers through the process, reviewing documents, and fixing mistakes. File handles the coaching automatically, so HR can focus on strategy instead of correcting forms."

Visibility benefit: > "HR also gets a dashboard showing all warnings across the organization. No more chasing managers to find out what happened."

"We don't have many disciplinary issues"

Acknowledge (but probe): > "That's good to hear. Is that because you have great employees, or because issues aren't being documented?"

Common reality: > "What often happens is managers deal with things verbally and informally. That works fine until the day it doesn't—when you need to terminate someone and you have no paper trail."

Prevention framing: > "File isn't for when things go wrong. It's for building the documentation now so that IF something goes wrong, you're protected."

"We've never had a CCMA case"

Congratulate, then reality check: > "That's excellent—genuinely. But statistically, for companies with more than 50 employees, CCMA cases are more common than you'd think. Many never make headlines because they're settled. File is insurance you hope you never need to use."

Second angle: > "Also, good documentation often prevents cases from being filed in the first place. When an employee knows everything is properly recorded, they're less likely to chance it at CCMA."

Trust Objections

"We've never heard of you"

Be honest: > "We're a new company, that's true. File is built by South Africans specifically for South African businesses—we understand local labour law because we live it."

Credibility points: > "The system itself is built on enterprise-grade infrastructure—Google Firebase, the same technology behind major applications. Your data is more secure than in most established software."

Offer proof: > "I'm happy to connect you with one of our existing clients who can share their experience."

"What if you go out of business?"

Address directly: > "Fair question. First, all your data is exportable at any time—you're never locked in. Second, your warning documents are PDFs that you can download and store yourself. Even if File disappeared tomorrow, your documentation doesn't."

Longevity signals: > "We're building this for the long term. We're already working with [X clients] and growing. But even in the worst case, your data is yours."

"Is our data secure?"

Confident answer: > "Absolutely. We use Firebase, which is Google's cloud platform. It's the same security infrastructure that banks and major corporations use. All data is encrypted in transit and at rest. We're also fully POPIA compliant."

Specifics if they ask: > "Data is stored in secure data centers with automatic backups. Access is role-based—managers only see their own team. Every action is logged for audit purposes."

"Can we see references?"

Always say yes: > "Of course. I can connect you with [existing client] who has a similar-sized business. Would a phone call or email introduction work better?"

If no references yet: > "We're a new company, so I don't have a long list of references yet. What I can offer is a 30-day trial period—use the system with real data, and if it doesn't work for you, full refund."

Timing Objections

"Not the right time"

Understand their timing: > "When would be a better time? Is there a budget cycle, a project, or something else driving the timing?"

Create urgency gently: > "The thing about disciplinary documentation is you need it before you need it. If an incident happens next month and there's no history, you can't go back and create it."

Plant the seed: > "Let me send you the information anyway. When the timing is right, you'll have everything you need to move quickly."

"We're in the middle of something else"

Acknowledge and park: > "I understand—focus is important. Let's put something in the calendar for [2-3 weeks out] when things have settled. Would [specific date] work?"

Keep the door open: > "In the meantime, if a disciplinary issue comes up and you want to see how File would handle it, just send me a message."

"We need to finish another project first"

Respect their priorities: > "That makes sense. What's the project, and when do you expect it to wrap up?"

Light touch: > "File is actually quite quick to implement—usually up and running within a day. It doesn't need to be a big project. But let's reconnect when your plate is clearer. How does [specific date] look?"

Technical Objections

"Our managers aren't tech-savvy"

This is a strength: > "That's exactly who File is designed for. The whole point is a manager who's never issued a warning before can follow the system and produce a legally compliant document."

Mobile demo: > "Let me show you on my phone—big buttons, simple steps, no confusing menus. If they can use WhatsApp, they can use File."

"We don't have good internet / Some staff don't have email"

Address each:

Internet: > "File is optimized for South African conditions—it works on slow connections and uses minimal data. Even 3G is enough."

No email: > "That's why we have WhatsApp delivery and QR codes. The employee doesn't need email—they can receive the warning via WhatsApp or scan a QR code with their phone."

"Our IT needs to approve this"

Be helpful: > "Happy to have a call with your IT team. File is a cloud application—there's nothing to install on your servers. They might want to know about security (POPIA compliant, encrypted, Google Firebase infrastructure) and data access (role-based, audit trails)."

Offer documentation: > "I can send a technical spec sheet that answers most IT questions."

The Golden Rule

When in doubt, ask questions:

> "Help me understand…" "What would need to be true for this to make sense?" "What's your biggest concern?"

Most objections are really questions in disguise. Uncover the real concern and address that, not the surface objection.

Follow-Up Cadence

If they don't sign immediately:

Day	Action
0	Demo + immediate follow-up email
3	Check-in: "Any questions since our call?"
7	Value reminder: Share a relevant article or case study
14	Direct ask: "Are you ready to move forward?"
21	Last attempt: "I want to respect your time—should I close this for now?"

Don't ghost, but don't pester. Each touch should add value.