

Sales Objections: The Complete Guide to Turning Resistance into Revenue

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"Handling Objections" Is Killing Your Deals (And Your Credibility)

Alright, buckle up buttercup, because this isn't a quick fix—it's a fundamental shift in how you approach one of the biggest challenges in sales. When it comes to objections, most of you are missing the boat. And you're missing the boat because you're at the airport, trying to catch a flight that left yesterday.

You're clinging to tired scripts and manipulation tactics from the 1990s that scream "desperate salesperson." You're treating objections like enemies to be conquered rather than opportunities to build trust. And it's killing your deals.

Think about what typically happens when a prospect says "your price is too high" or "we're already working with someone else." Most reps immediately go into panic mode—their heart rate spikes, their palms get sweaty, and they start frantically searching their mental database for the "right" rebuttal to "handle" the objection.

Need help with your team's objection handling? Contact us for a free 30-minute consultation. I promise I'll give you a few nuggets you can use for free.

The Three Deadly Sins of Objection Response



Sin Number One: The Immediate Rebuttal Reflex

WRONG APPROACH: Prospect: "Your price is too high." You: "Well, let me tell you about our ROI and why we're actually a great value..."

RIGHT APPROACH: Prospect: "Your price is too high." You: "I appreciate you sharing that concern. Help me understand – when you say the price is too high, what are you comparing it to?"

You need to become a sales psychologist. Marinate in the objection, don't go into handling objections mode. Dig deeper. Ask them to explain more:

"What's your concern in relation to price over the Economic Impact we've already discussed?" "Is this your concern or is this coming from someone else on the team?" "What would make this investment feel more comfortable for you?"

Don't just accept the surface-level objection. There's a picture in their head and we want them to help paint that picture so we can understand.



Sin Number Two: Misidentified Stakeholders

So often you're talking to someone who's relaying objections from someone else, and you don't even know it. You're fighting a phantom enemy. You're addressing the messenger instead of the message sender.

WRONG APPROACH: Prospect: "We're not sure this fits our strategy right now." You: "Let me explain how our solution aligns perfectly with what you're trying to achieve..."

RIGHT APPROACH: Prospect: "We're not sure this fits our strategy right now." You: "That's helpful feedback. When you say 'we', who else besides yourself has concerns about the strategic fit?"

You need to identify the real decision-makers, the influencers, the budget holders, the skeptics. Who are the key players in this drama? What are their individual perspectives? What are their priorities?

Try these questions:

"When you take this back to your team, who are the skeptics and what are they typically skeptical about?" "So, let's say you love it and they hate it, what happens next?"

Knowing this allows you to pre-address unforeseen issues and turn your contact into a champion because they'll understand you have their back. It also helps you understand who has the real power and how decisions are made within the organization.

Sin Number Three: Objection Aversion

You're afraid of objections. You see them as a threat, a rejection, a personal insult. You try to avoid them at all costs. This is a recipe for disaster. I assure you, this belief system is futile and you will not be in sales much longer.

WRONG APPROACH: [Avoiding tough questions, dancing around potential issues, filling the conversation with features and benefits to prevent objections from surfacing]

RIGHT APPROACH: "Before we go further, many clients initially have concerns about implementation time. Is that something on your mind as well?"

Objections are inevitable. They're a natural part of the sales process. And the sooner you embrace them, the sooner you can address them and move the deal forward. The best salespeople anticipate objections. They pre-handle them. They bring them up themselves before the prospect even has a chance.

The Psychology Behind Sales Objections



Before we dive deeper into the tactics, let's understand what's really happening when a prospect raises an objection. Objections aren't just logical barriers—they're emotional signals wrapped in rational language.

The Fear Factor

At its core, most objections stem from fear:

- Fear of making a bad decision
- Fear of wasting money
- Fear of looking foolish in front of peers or superiors
- Fear of change and disruption
- Fear of commitment

When a prospect says, "Your price is too high," what they're often really saying is, "I'm afraid I won't get enough value to justify this expense" or "I'm afraid I can't defend this purchase to my boss."

Understanding this emotional underpinning is crucial because it shifts your perspective. You're no longer battling a logical argument—you're addressing an emotional concern. Your job isn't to win a debate; it's to alleviate fear and build confidence.

The Trust Equation

Objections are also trust indicators. They signal how much (or how little) trust the prospect has in:

1. Your product/service
2. Your company
3. You personally
4. The promises you're making

When trust is low, objections multiply. When trust is high, the same objections seem less significant. This is why the way you respond to objections is far more important than the specific words you use. Every objection is an opportunity to build trust—or erode it.



The Hidden Objection Principle

For every objection voiced, there are usually 2-3 unvoiced objections lurking beneath the surface. This is why the "handle and move on" approach fails so spectacularly. You might address the stated objection perfectly, only to find the deal still stalls because you never uncovered the real concerns.

Think of objections like icebergs—the visible portion is just a fraction of what's really there. Your job is to explore beneath the surface.

The Marination Method: A 5-Step Framework for Objection Excellence

Step 1: Embrace the Objection

When an objection arises, take a breath. Don't rush to respond. Thank them for their candor. Use phrases like:

"I really appreciate you bringing that up." "That's a thoughtful concern, thank you for sharing it." "Many of our best customers had that exact same question."

This validates their concern and shows you're not afraid of tough conversations.

Step 2: Explore, Don't Explain

This is where marination happens. Ask clarifying questions to understand the real issue:

"Can you tell me more about that concern?" "What aspect of that is most troubling for you?" "How big of an issue is this compared to other factors you're considering?" "What would an ideal solution to this concern look like?"

Listen deeply to their response. Take notes. Show genuine curiosity, not defensive energy.

Step 3: Confirm Understanding

Before offering any response, mirror back what you've heard:



"So what I'm hearing is..." "Just to make sure I understand correctly..." "It sounds like the core issue is..."

This ensures you're addressing the real concern, not just what you think they meant.

Step 4: Bridge to Value

Now that you truly understand their concern, you can bridge to relevant value:

"Based on what you've shared, here's how we typically address this..." "Other clients with similar concerns found that..." "Let me share how this connects to the business outcomes we discussed earlier..."

Notice how this is different from a canned objection response. It's tailored to their specific situation based on what you learned through exploration.

Step 5: Check for Resolution

Never assume your response has resolved the objection. Verify:

"How does that address your concern?" "Is there any part of this that still worries you?"
"On a scale of 1-10, how comfortable are you with this aspect now?"

If it's not fully resolved, return to Step 2 and continue exploring.



The Art of Precision Questioning

The questions you ask during the marination process are critical. Here's how to develop questions that reveal the truth behind objections:

Open-Ended vs. Closed Questions

Closed questions (those that can be answered with yes/no) have their place, but open-ended questions are your primary tool for marination:

Closed: "Is price your main concern?" Open: "What aspects of the investment are most concerning to you?"

Closed questions confirm; open questions explore.

Layering Questions

Don't settle for surface-level answers. Use layering techniques to go deeper:

Initial question: "What makes you say the price is too high?" Layer 1: "Interesting. And when you compare us to [Competitor X], what specific features are you valuing most?" Layer 2: "If those features could deliver [specific outcome], how would that impact your price sensitivity?" Layer 3: "Who else on your team shares this perspective on price vs. value?"

Each layer takes you closer to the core issue.

Strategic Silence

Sometimes the most powerful question is no question at all. After asking a probing question, resist the urge to fill silence. Count silently to 10 if necessary. Most prospects will elaborate further if given space, revealing valuable information they wouldn't have shared otherwise.

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The Five Most Common Objections and How to Marinate in Them

1. Price Objection

Bad Response: "Well, we're actually less expensive than Competitor X."

Marination Approach:



"I understand budget is important. Help me understand – is it the overall investment that concerns you, or is it about the ROI you expect?" "When you say it's too expensive, what are you comparing it to?" "If we set price aside for a moment, does our solution address the challenges you shared earlier?" "What would make this investment feel more justified for your organization?"

The Price Objection Decoded

There are actually five distinct types of price objections, each requiring a different approach:

1. **Absolute Budget Constraint** - They literally don't have the money
 - Focus on creative financing, phased implementation, or smaller initial scope
2. **Value Misalignment** - They don't see enough value to justify the price
 - Focus on quantifying ROI, translating features to business outcomes
3. **Competitive Comparison** - They've seen lower prices elsewhere
 - Focus on differentiators, hidden costs in competitor offerings
4. **Negotiation Tactic** - They're just trying to get a better deal
 - Focus on adding value rather than reducing price
5. **Risk Concern** - They fear the solution won't deliver as promised
 - Focus on guarantees, success stories, implementation support

Your marination questions should help you identify which type you're facing.

2. "Need to Think About It" Objection

Bad Response: "Sure, I'll follow up next week" (and then you never hear from them again)

Marination Approach:

"I completely respect that. What specific aspects do you need to think through?" "When you've made similar decisions in the past, what factors ultimately influenced your choice?" "What information are you missing that would make this decision easier?" "If you were to decide against moving forward, what would be the main reason?"



The Real Reasons Behind "I Need to Think About It"

This objection is rarely about needing more time to think. It's usually one of these issues in disguise:

1. They're not the real decision-maker
2. They're considering a competitor
3. They see the value but have unspoken concerns
4. They're conflict-avoidant and don't want to say no to your face
5. They genuinely don't understand how your solution solves their problem

Your marination questions should help reveal which scenario you're dealing with.

3. "Need to Talk to Others" Objection

Bad Response: "No problem, when should I follow up?" (avoiding the real issue)

Marination Approach:

"That makes sense. Who else will be involved in this decision?" "What concerns do you anticipate they might have?" "How do decisions like this typically get made in your organization?" "Would it be helpful if I joined that conversation to address any technical questions?"



The Stakeholder Mapping Technique

When you hear this objection, it's time to create a stakeholder map. Ask:

1. "Who are all the people who will have input on this decision?"
2. "What's most important to each of them?"
3. "Who has the most influence in this decision?"
4. "Who might be resistant to change?"
5. "What objections do you think each person might raise?"

This not only helps you understand the decision process but positions your contact as an insider who can help navigate the organization—turning them from a gatekeeper into a guide.

4. Competitor Objection

Bad Response: "Let me tell you why we're better than them..." (launching into a feature comparison)

Marination Approach:

"I'm familiar with them. What aspects of their solution are you drawn to?" "What's prompting you to explore alternatives to them?" "How important is [your unique differentiator] in your evaluation?" "What would you need to see from us to consider us a better fit than them?"

The Competitive Differentiation Framework

When competitors enter the conversation, use these questions to reframe the discussion:

1. "What do you like most about their approach?"
2. "What would you change about their solution if you could?"
3. "Which of these three key areas matters most to you: [speed, quality, service]?"
4. "How would you prioritize these decision factors: [list your strengths]?"

This approach acknowledges the competitor while subtly shifting focus to your advantages.

5. Timing Objection

Bad Response: "When would be a better time?" (accepting the brush-off)

Marination Approach:

"I understand timing is important. What's driving your timeline on this?" "What would need to change for this to become a higher priority?" "What happens if you maintain the status quo for another 6-12 months?" "If we could address [key pain point] sooner, would that change your timeline perspective?"

The Cost-of-Delay Conversation

When timing is the objection, help the prospect understand the true cost of waiting:



1. "What's the monthly cost of the problem we're solving?"
2. "What opportunities are you missing while this issue remains unresolved?"
3. "How does this project compare to other priorities competing for your attention?"
4. "What's changed recently that's made this issue more/less urgent?"

This shifts the conversation from "Why now?" to "Why not sooner?"

Advanced Objection Techniques for Seasoned Sales Professionals

The Preemptive Strike: Addressing Objections Before They Arise

The most sophisticated approach is bringing up common objections yourself:

"Many clients initially wonder about our implementation timeline. Would it be helpful if I addressed that now?" "One question that often comes up is how we compare to [Competitor X]. Is that something you're curious about?" "Some teams worry about disruption during the transition. Is that on your mind as well?"

This demonstrates confidence, transparency, and customer focus. It also gives you control over how the objection is framed.

The Pattern Interrupt

When faced with a common objection, sometimes the most effective approach is to break the expected pattern:

Prospect: "Your price is too high." Typical Response: [Defensive justification] Pattern Interrupt: "You're right. We're not the cheapest option in the market. And there's a specific reason for that. Would you like to know what it is?"

This unexpected agreement creates curiosity and openness.

The Objection Reversal

This advanced technique turns the objection into a reason to buy:



Prospect: "We don't have budget for this right now." Reversal: "That's exactly why many of our clients started working with us. They found that our solution actually freed up budget by eliminating these three costs you're currently absorbing. Let me show you how that works..."

The Future Pacing Method

Help prospects visualize life with and without your solution:

"Let's fast forward six months. If you choose not to move forward, what will have changed about the challenges we've discussed?" "Imagine it's this time next year. Your team has been using our solution for 12 months. What's different about your operation now?"

This makes the cost of inaction tangible while making the benefits feel more real.

Real-World Case Study: From Objection to Opportunity

One of our enterprise clients was losing deals because their reps couldn't effectively address procurement's pricing objections. Their typical response was to immediately offer discounts or launch into ROI calculations.

We implemented the Marination Method, and here's how one conversation transformed:

Procurement: "Your pricing is 20% higher than other solutions we're considering."

Sales Rep (before training): "We can probably work out a discount if that helps."

Sales Rep (after training): "I appreciate your directness about pricing. Before we discuss that, could you share which aspects of our solution you see as most valuable to your organization? And when you compare our pricing to others, are you comparing similar capabilities?"



Through exploration, the rep discovered the prospect was comparing their enterprise solution to a mid-market product with significantly fewer capabilities. By marinating in the objection rather than immediately discounting, they uncovered the real issue, addressed the comparison confusion, and closed the deal at full price.

Case Study: The "We Already Have a Solution" Breakthrough

A technology company was consistently losing deals to the status quo. Prospects would say, "We already have something that works well enough."

Their traditional approach was to highlight all the advanced features their solution offered compared to the existing one. This created resistance, as it implied the prospect had made a poor choice previously.

After implementing the Marination Method:

Prospect: "We already have a solution that meets our needs."

Sales Rep (after training): "I appreciate your transparency. Many of our current customers were initially happy with their previous solution too. Could you tell me what you like most about your current approach? And if you could improve one thing about it, what would that be?"

This exploration revealed that while the current solution handled 80% of their needs well, there was a critical 20% that created significant manual work. By focusing narrowly on this gap rather than trying to replace the entire solution, the sales team was able to position their product as a complementary enhancement that solved specific pain points.

The result: A 45% increase in conversion rate from this specific objection, and a new "co-existence" strategy that opened doors previously thought closed.

Case Study: Turning "We Need to Talk to Others" Into an Advantage

A SaaS company was facing extended sales cycles because prospects constantly needed to "talk to others" before moving forward.



Their old approach was passive: "No problem, when should I follow up?"

After implementing the Marination Method:

Prospect: "I need to discuss this with my team."

Sales Rep (after training): "That makes sense. This decision impacts multiple stakeholders. Based on our conversation, I anticipate Susan in Operations might be concerned about implementation time, while John in Finance will want to understand the ROI model in detail. Would it be helpful if I created custom materials addressing those specific concerns to support your internal discussions?"

By mapping stakeholders and predicting their objections, the rep positioned themselves as a resource for the internal champion. They also requested to join a brief portion of the internal meeting to address technical questions.

The result: Sales cycle length decreased by 24% and win rates increased by 31%. The "need to talk to others" objection became an opportunity to expand influence within the account rather than a stalling tactic.



Your Objection Action Plan

Document Every Objection You Receive for Two Weeks

- Write down the exact words used
- Note when in the sales process it occurred
- Track how you responded and the outcome

Identify Your Patterns

- Which objections make you uncomfortable?
- Where do you tend to get defensive?
- Which objections consistently stall your deals?

Create Your Marination Questions

- For each common objection, develop 3-5 exploration questions
- Practice these until they become second nature
- Create a quick reference guide for the heat of the moment

Practice with Role Play

- Have colleagues throw tough objections at you
- Focus on marinating, not responding
- Record sessions and review your body language and tone

Implement and Track Results

- Note how prospects respond to your new approach
- Track changes in your close rates
- Continuously refine your questions based on results

Objection Response Templates That Actually Work

For "We're happy with our current provider"

1. "I'm glad to hear you've found a solution that works for you. What do you appreciate most about working with them?"
2. "Just out of curiosity, if you could change one thing about your current solution, what would it be?"
3. "What prompted you to take this call/meeting if you're satisfied with your current provider?"
4. "Many of our clients were initially happy with their previous provider too. What would a new solution need to offer to be worth considering?"

For "Your solution looks great, but I need to run this by my boss"

1. "I understand completely. What aspects of our solution do you think will resonate most with your boss?"
2. "What concerns do you anticipate your boss might have?"
3. "How does your boss typically evaluate new solutions/vendors?"
4. "Would it be helpful if I provided some materials specifically designed to address the questions your boss is likely to ask?"
5. "Have you had a chance to discuss the challenges we're addressing with your boss already?"

For "We don't have budget for this"

1. "I understand budget constraints are real. Just to clarify, is it that there's no budget allocated for this type of solution, or that our pricing exceeds the budget you do have?"
2. "If you could clearly demonstrate the ROI, would there be a path to securing budget?"
3. "What are the main priorities currently capturing your available budget?"
4. "If budget weren't a constraint, would our solution be something you'd want to implement?"
5. "Many of our clients initially had budget concerns too. Would it be helpful to hear how they addressed similar constraints?"

The Non-Verbal Side of Objection Response

Your body language and tone communicate more than your words during objection conversations:



Voice Patterns

- Maintain or slightly lower your pitch when responding to objections (rising pitch signals defensiveness)
- Slow your pace slightly to convey confidence
- Use strategic pauses before and after key points

Body Language

- Maintain natural eye contact
- Avoid defensive postures (crossed arms, leaning back)
- Lean in slightly to show engagement
- Nod to acknowledge their concerns
- Keep your hands visible and use open gestures

Digital Meeting Signals

- Ensure your camera captures your upper body, not just your face

- Nod visibly to show active listening
- Use "lean in" body language even on video
- Avoid looking at other screens or windows

Remember: Your non-verbal response begins the moment the objection is raised, not when you start speaking.

Conclusion: Stop Handling, Start Marinating

Forget the "Big Book of Objections." It's a relic of a bygone era. Instead, develop a "Big Book of Questions." Become a master of inquiry. Be genuinely curious about your prospect's needs, their challenges, and their concerns. Don't just listen to their words, listen to their meaning. Don't just hear the objection, help them explain more about the emotional feeling they have around these objections.

Stop handling objections. Start marinating in them. Let them soak in. Analyze them. Understand them. And most importantly, use them as fuel to drive the sale forward.

This isn't about manipulation, it's about genuine connection. It's about building trust, demonstrating value, and helping your prospect find the best solution for their needs. And if you do it right, the objections won't just disappear, they'll transform into opportunities. They'll become the very reasons why the prospect chooses you over the competition.

They'll become the stepping stones to a closed deal. And that, my friends, is the real art of handling objections in sales.

Richard Harris has trained thousands of sales professionals at companies like Google, Zoom, and Adobe. His straight-talking, no-BS approach has helped sales teams achieve an average 3-4x increase in response rates and 42% improvement in close rates.

