

FIFTY SHADES OF DELAY

How to Handle
Resistance,
Put-Offs,
Blow-offs,
and
Objections

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50 Shades of Delay

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When it comes to delays, stalls, blow-off's and objections, there is a lot of bad information floating around.

“The selling doesn't start until an objection has been voiced.”

“You should love objections.”

“After the third objection is when you'll usually get the sale.”

What's scary is that there are people who actually believe some of that nonsense. If the selling didn't start until you heard an objection, what were you doing up until that point? Why not just start out the call with, “OK, what's your objection to buying from me. Come on, let me hear it.” Yeah, right.

Love objections? If I love something, I want more of it. As for objections, I'd prefer I never hear another one, since they really are a sign that something broke down in the sales process up to this point. No objections would mean perfection. We'll never reach it, but we should always try to get closer to it than the alternative.

Bottom line is, we're always going to be faced with resistance. How you deal with it determines your success, and the height of your attitude. Many sales reps either turn tail and head for the exits upon the first sign of resistance, or they react adversarially, putting on the gloves to defend their own position. Neither is a good strategy.

Here are 50 ideas and tips that can help you help your customers and prospects when you hear delay, resistance, put-offs, blow-offs, and objections. Take action, and profit!

1. Upon hearing an objection, respond with the non-adversarial statement, “Let’s talk about that.” Then proceed with questions to get them talking about their reasons for objecting.
2. If things were flowing smoothly on the first call, but, suddenly on the second call they are a totally different person, simply ask, “Pat, the last time we spoke I had the impression you loved this idea. What happened since then?”
3. If you hear price resistance, ask them, “Is it more of a money-availability question, or a value question?”
4. Buyers usually aren’t looking for the lowest-priced vendor. They typically want the least-risk vendor. Determine how you can position yourself as the least-risk supplier.
5. If you hear the obvious brush off, “I don’t think we need that,” at the beginning of a call, respond with, “I’m not yet sure if you do, either. That’s why I’d like to ask a few questions to determine . . .”

6. There are no price objections, only value questions.

7. Before writing off a prospect who you're obviously getting nowhere with, ask, "Would you say we'll likely never do business together?" This might prompt them to say never is a long time, which gives you a lead-in to more questions.

8. Take each of your top five competitors and determine your main advantages over them. Then develop questions to get prospects talking about their needs in those areas. For example, "How are you now adversely affected by the order fill rate you're getting?"

9. When they want to "Think it over," ask them, "In what areas are you still not convinced?"

10. When you hear an objection, to hear the reason behind it, respond with, "I'm not sure I understand." They'll likely respond with more detailed information.

11. After addressing resistance, and there's silence, ask for commitment or the sale again. Don't make it easy for them to delay or serve up another objection.

12. To get them talking after they state an objection, say, "Tell me more about that."

13. The objection you hear consists only of the words which represent the symptom of the real problem. That's what you must address to be successful. Do it with questions.

14. The old myth says that "The selling doesn't start until an objection has been expressed." That's garbage. If the sales process had been perfectly executed, an objection wouldn't even occur.

15. Resistance early in a call is easier to deal with than a major objection later on. Plus it helps you change course when necessary. So, ask for the resistance if it's there. "What are your thoughts so far?"

16. If there's a common objection everyone you contact usually brings up, mention it before they do, along with the answer. "And you might be wondering if . . ."

17. Get to the heart of the reason for an objection: "It seems the real decision here is this: is (the ultimate benefit they'll receive) more important than (the objection)?"

18. Never tell someone they're wrong (even if they are!). Instead, take the responsibility. "I don't think I explained myself clearly. Here is what I meant . . ."

19. To help the indecisive prospect move: "What would happen if you did nothing?"

20. If they put you off with, “Call back in six months,” verify they are sincere. “OK, so what you’re saying is that you are interested in doing business together. It’s just that now is not a good time?” Then find out what will happen in six months making that a better time.

21. Use the “Just suppose” technique. “Just suppose the money was in the budget. Would you go with it then?”

22. Here’s a question to ask when they are comparing you to a discounter: “What other expenses have you considered in the long-term if you went with the lower-price alternative?”

23. Don’t focus all your energy thinking of answers for objections. First start with the many reasons someone might have for stating an objection. Work on understanding them, and then on questions to help them talk about those reasons.

24. Another question to ask when they compare you to a discounter: “How long do you plan on keeping the unit?” This helps you amortize the difference over a longer period.

25. Create urgency by pointing out what they’re missing every day they delay. “Pat, we’ve agreed that by using our system you’d generate about another \$100 daily in walk in traffic, sales you’re missing every day now.”

26. Don’t send information just to get it out the door, especially with people who have no short-term potential. Instead, let them qualify themselves. “Would it be worth it to send you information for your files, just in case things change with you?”

27. If on a follow-up call they immediately say they haven’t read your material yet, reply, “That’s OK. As long as I have you on the phone, let cover a few points . . .” Take advantage of the opportunity.

28. If a prospect says that your price savings wouldn't be large enough to switch, ask him, "How much would you have to increase sales to generate the same NET profit as the savings we'd provide over a year?"

29. Your marketing material doesn't do the selling for you. You do the selling for you. If it did, your company wouldn't need you.

30. Instead of blurting out "Why?", which can sound argumentative, ask, "Oh, what has lead to that decision?"

31. In response to a "Send literature" brush-off, try, "I'll be happy to. Let's say you like what you see. What will happen next?" Or, "Will you be ready to buy at that point?"

32. Initial resistance at the beginning of a prospecting call is quite natural. It's a reflex instinct. Quite often prospects will say, "I'm happy with what we have," as an attempt to get off the phone. Be prepared with a question to get them talking.

33. Objections are only symptoms of a larger problem. Unless you identify the problem, you'll never address the true concern.

34. You'll never change anyone's mind by trying to overcome an objection with a slick phrase. The best you can do is get them to doubt their beliefs. You do this by questioning.

35. An alternative to asking "Why?" is, "Apparently you have a reason for feeling that way. May I ask what it is?" Then respond with, "If you weren't concerned with that, do you feel we could move forward?"

36. When you hear a price objection, try asking, "If price were not an issue for you, would this be the system you'd choose?"

37. If you ever have to give concessions, do it hesitantly. Giving in too quickly diminishes the value of it, and might cause them to keep grinding away.

38. If budget is the problem, ask them, “What have you done in other situations where there was something you wanted that could help your department, but it wasn’t budgeted? How did you get it?”

39. To learn the reason behind their objection, ask, “Oh? What led to that conclusion?”

40. If someone claims to be getting a better deal or offer elsewhere, question every component of it to determine if you’re comparing “apples-to-apples.” You can determine if they’re mistaken, if they’re putting you off, or if the deal is better.

41. If they tell you to call back “in a few months or so,” respond with, “I’ll be happy to. What will make that a better time for you?”

42. Upon hearing an objection, instead of mentally arguing with it, ask yourself, “Under what circumstances could that be true?” This helps you understand why they say what they do.

43. When a prospect tells you they're happy with who they're buying from, ask them, "When you do have to replace your products, or return them, what are the main reasons?" This gets them thinking about problems . . . things you can solve.

44. Paraphrase objections and resistance as questions to ensure you understand the situation, and to position them as something to be answered—not overcome. For example: "What you're asking is, if you'll get a return on the extra \$200 you'd pay with our system, is that the question?"

45. Questions and objections should never leave you at a loss for words. Every time you hear a new one, brainstorm three or four ways you'll respond next time. Write them down in a notebook, and study them until they're committed to memory.

46. People love to buy, but they hate to be "sold," with "sold" meaning being pitched a product or service they have no need or use for. Help them buy to minimize or eliminate objections!

47. When your prospect is fence-sitting after repeated calls, ask them, “Pat, on a scale of 1-10, with 10 being the most interested, where would you say you are right now regarding our offer.”

48. If you hear, “I want to shop around,” ask them, “What will you be looking for?” This might help clear up any misunderstandings about what you could provide, and cause them to forgo the shopping and buy from you now.

49. Learn the real reason for the resistance. You only waste time chasing shadows. Ask, “If I understand what you’re saying, this is the only factor holding you back, is that right?”

50. Repeating their objection as a question can get them to explain it more fully. “You don’t feel you could use us this year?” And if it’s not a real objection, it can prompt the real answer.

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