

## MARKETING SAVVY: Turning Objections Into Opportunities

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By Carolyn Merriman

No doubt, there are phrases virtually no salesperson wants to hear: “I’ll think it over.” “I’m not sure about this.. .I need some more time.” “Maybe, but I’ll have to check with my boss first.” At face value, objections like these may seem to be a big roadblock to closing your sale. But, with the right tools, you can turn objections into opportunities for success. It’s simply a matter of listening to your customer, analyzing the information captured along the way, and always being prepared.

Remember, *an objection is a good thing*. It can help raise issues or concerns that you can deal with up-front, demonstrating your ability to provide what your customer needs.

### Troubleshooting Tip #1

*Do your homework.* Ask yourself questions the client may ask and prepare answers that will satisfy what he needs to know. The best salespeople do this from their very first meeting, paying close attention to what the client says and does.

### Troubleshooting Tip #2

*Objections can really be a signal* that your customer wants more information or clarification about your product or service. Be prepared to reiterate how your services can help your client and meet her needs. Make your services’ benefits relevant to the buyer’s personal *and* business motives.

### Troubleshooting Tip #3

*Acknowledge the client’s concerns* and show that you understand them. “You’re telling me you’re concerned about the per-patient cost of our wellness services. Is that correct?” Then address the concern directly using the responses you have prepared ahead of time.

### Troubleshooting Tip #4

*Read between the lines.* Price as an objection is usually a symptom of something else. Maybe the client is concerned about paying the entire amount up-front — perhaps here is where you can negotiate spreading the payment over three installments. It is important to focus on the product’s value to customers, their organization, and the desired outcome, as well as future return-on-investment. Position your solution with added value and give the customer a perceived choice.

## **CLAMP** *Down on Objections*

Meet objections head-on by using the CLAMP strategy:

**C**onfirm that what you hear is correct. "It sounds as if you're saying that you may prefer to break up payments into three installments,"

**L**isten and clarify that what you hear is the real issue. "I can appreciate your concern about how soon we can implement this occupational health program."

**A**nswer. Share your solution/response. "If I address this issue, the one concern you have is about providing enough staff for this project. We're prepared to handle any of the staffing needs you may have."

**M**onitor. Did that solution meet the objection?

**P**roceed to the next steps and re-close.

### **A Practical Example**

Below is one way of dealing with an objection situation. Try another situation yourself. Act out a scenario with a co-worker, having him play the part of your customer. Once you've anticipated possible objections, you'll be equipped to handle them in the real situation.

*XYZ Industries Manager:*

"We're satisfied with our current provider."

*Salesperson:*

"I can appreciate the work and relationship you have with ABC Clinic. In our earlier discussions, you indicated a desire for enhanced on-site and preventive services. We'd like the opportunity to be your provider for these services?"

"I'd like to propose a quarterly programming of both on-site and prevention services coordinated with your safety manager. We believe we can decrease your injury incidence by 15% and impact your overall workers' compensation bottom line — just through the provision of these services. The return-on-investment is our ability to shift dollars away from injuries and utilize a small portion of the savings on the on-site and prevention programs — returning savings of both dollars and lost work time to you."

**Re-close now.**

Like so many things in our lives, being successful in managing objections is about changing the way we perceive them. Think of them as an opportunity *to paint a picture* for your customer about the benefits of your solution. *Demonstrate the value* of the decision in the way that most

makes sense to your client. And *react to behaviors* by showing you understand what is important to her.

Keep in mind that when you face objections directly you also set yourself apart from other salespeople. Answering your client's questions and calming his concerns position you as someone who really cares about his business. And that can cement a relationship with even the toughest client.



*Carolyn Merriman, FRSA, President, Corporate Health Group,*  
[www.corporatehealthgroup.com](http://www.corporatehealthgroup.com), 1-888-334-2500