

Handling Objections ~ A Sales Mastery Booklet



Handling Objections Workbook



By Dave Kahle

How to get the most out of this guide.

This guide is designed to assist you in bringing out of yourself the knowledge and understanding you already have, and to apply this to the task in an organized fashion.

It is composed of both instructions as well as worksheets and is designed to be used by an individual in a step-by-step, sequential process.

We suggest that you first review the entire guide to see how it works.

Then, begin to work through it. Don't skip ahead, but rather go step-by-step through the material. Make sure that you complete each portion of the exercise and worksheets as completely and thoroughly as possible. While we have provided worksheets for every exercise, there may be times when you need to use extra paper for particularly long lists.

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About the Author

Dave Kahle by the numbers...

He's been the number **1** salesperson in the country for
2 different companies, in two distinct industries and selling situations.

He's a high energy, intense, world-class speaker who has presented in
11 countries
5 Canadian provinces, and
47 US states.

He has been in practice for **30** years, and in that time, has authored
13 books, including [*Question Your Way to Sales Success*](#), and [*11 Secrets of Time Management for Salespeople*](#).

His books have been translated into
8 languages and are available in
20 countries.

He has spoken to meetings and conventions of
98 associations, and has trained or consulted for over
500 individual companies.

He writes and publishes an [*Ezine*](#) for salespeople and managers called "Sell Better" which is distributed
48 times a year to over

His [*articles*](#) have been published over
1,000 times.

He has trained and certified more than
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TENS OF THOUSANDS of [*B2B salespeople*](#) to be more productive in the Information Age.

How to Prepare to Handle Objections

1. The first step is to identify each of the products, services or systems that you sell. Use the spaces below to list them. Notice the example on the left. Throughout the manual we'll be illustrating with examples from a fictional sales person.

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| <i>Surgical Gloves</i> | |
| <i>Band-Aids</i> | |
| <i>Bedpans</i> | |
| <i>Scalpels</i> | |
| <i>Plastic Tubing</i> | |
| <i>Etc...</i> | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

2. Now, identify the six most common objections you hear to each of the items you sell.

Note that an item sold to several different markets may have different objections from each of the markets.

For example, if you're selling surgical gloves to a hospital, there are several categories of people (markets) who may each have different concerns which directly impact them. The surgeons may remark about the thickness of the glove and their ability to feel while wearing them. The nurses who assist in surgery, because they change gloves 10 or 12 times a day, may be concerned about how easy they are to put on. The Operating Room Supervisor may be more interested in the packaging, and how easy it is to identify the size by the color or printing on the package. The purchasing agent may be most concerned about the price, and the materials manager may be most interested in the delivery time and size of the case packaging.

So, as you complete each worksheet and identify the concerns and potential objections, relate them to each category of person who influences the sale.

When you finish this step, you should have one worksheet for each product and market with the most common objections listed below.

In our example, we'd have one sheet for "Gloves" and "Surgeons" as the market. Another for "Gloves" with "OR Nurses" as the market, etc. On each form, we identify the most common objections. We've completed an example on the next page for you to review.

Handling Objections

Example

Worksheet # 1

Item Sold: Surgical Gloves

Market (Category of person) to whom sold:
Surgeons

Most common concerns (objections).

1. Sensitivity – Can they feel well enough through them?
2. Fit – Are they comfortable?
3. Length – The are not as long as others.
4. Etc...
5.
6.

Handling Objections

Worksheet # 1

Item Sold: _____

Market (Category of person) to whom sold: _____

Most common concerns (objections).

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

3. Now that you've identified each of the major concerns you expect, translate those concerns into the exact language you may hear. For example, when people think "It costs too much" they may say things like, "How much?" "That is more than I was expecting to pay", etc.

We've completed a form on the next page to give you an idea of how to complete this next step.

After you review our example, take the information you created on the first worksheet, and transfer it to the next.

Write your thoughts on Worksheet #2, which follows. This will be your primary worksheet, so you may want to make a number of copies – one for each of the objections you've identified.

Handling Objections

Example

Worksheet # 2

Item sold: Surgical gloves

Market: Surgeons

Objection: (Generalize) Length

Specific Examples: “They’re not as long...” “Aren’t these shorter?”
“Is this as long as they are?”

Flow Chart

Language
& Support

Handling Objections

Worksheet # 2

Item sold: _____

Market: _____

Objection: (Generalize) _____

Specific Examples: _____

Flow Chart

Language
& Support

4. Now it's time to prepare your responses to each of the objections.

There are four stages to this preparation.

First, outline the general strategy for handling each objection and translate it into a flow-chart.

Second, collect the ammunition you need to support your positions.

Third, create the language you'll use to powerfully communicate each response.

Fourth, practice each response.

We'll work on each of these four stages, one at a time.

Preparing Responses to Objections, Stage One.

First, outline the general strategy for handling each objection and translate it into a flow-chart.

There are several basic strategies you can use to respond to an objection.

1. Put the concern in perspective.

In other words, show how your prospect's concern, while valid, is relatively minor compared to the benefits of the product. Then, show them how those benefits help them to achieve their business goals.

This is powerful strategy for any concern, but is particularly effective with technical objections that are specific to your product.

On the next page, we've created an example, and completed the worksheet using this strategy. To give you an idea of why we've included each thought, we've noted in parentheses the rationale behind every step. Please review that now.

Handling Objections

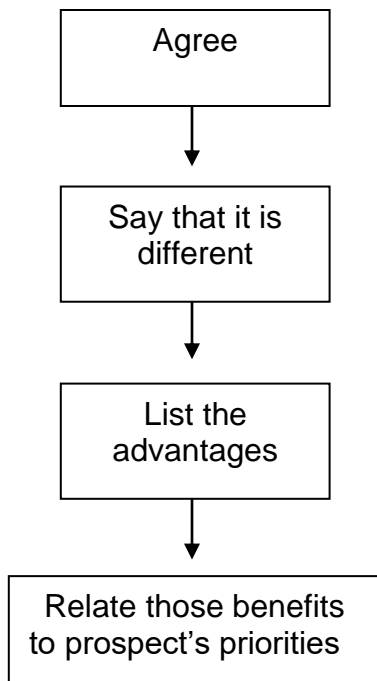
Item sold: Surgical Gloves

Market: Surgeons

Objection: (Generalize) No ribbed edges around the opening of the surgical glove.

Specific Examples: There are no ribs around the bottom. Doesn't it come loose easily?

Flow Chart



Language & Support

(Agreeing with their perception decreases the tension, includes the prospect, and makes him/her more open to your response.)

(Lends some credibility to your understanding of the technical aspects)

(He/She may not be aware of the plusses. Clearly point them out.)

1. Easier to put on.
2. Allows for greater sensitivity.
3. More comfortable fit.

(Show how your product helps him/her achieve their goals.)

2. Another strategy is called the “Sandwich method”.

This strategy is appropriate when your prospect’s concern is based on a misunderstanding, or when the prospect believes something that is not factually true. In that case, you must correct that misunderstanding before you can continue.

That strategy for this situation is called the “Sandwich method”.

Imagine a coloring-book illustration of a sandwich. A slice of bread would rest on the bottom. On top of that would be a layer of meat. Another slice of bread would top it off.



That’s an easily retained image of how the sandwich method works. First lay down a layer of positive reinforcement by thanking the prospect for his response. Next, provide the meat of the issue by correcting the misunderstanding. Finally, end by laying down another layer of positive reinforcement.

We’ve outlined an example of the “Sandwich method” below.

1. Give positive reinforcement.
Example: Thanks for that response.
2. Correct them.
Example: This new model does contain the higher-efficiency V-6 engine you wanted, not the V-8 as in earlier years.
3. Finish with another positive statement.
Example: And I appreciate your interest in engines.

3. Strategies for specific objections.

There are a number of other strategies that are effective in handling specific objections, depending on the kind of objection.

Here's a list of the most common types of objections and proven, powerful and appropriate ways to respond to each.

A. "I must shop."

Your best strategy is to help them shop. Prepare a questionnaire which takes them through the detailed questions they should consider when evaluating your product as well as your competitors'.

Offer to review the information they collect and the answers to the questionnaire to provide additional information that may assist them in making the best decision.

B. "I have to wait."

Find out why they are waiting. Often, the reason will be one of the other objections listed here.

For example, if someone says something to the effect that "I have to wait," and you probe that, they may say, "I have to wait because I have to shop."

Respond appropriately, and then attempt to schedule an appointment shortly after that event.

C. Politics and Process – "I have to consult with others."

Learn who, what, and when.

Ask your prospect if he/she'll present your case and recommend you. If not, find out why not. If so, make sure you have provided the information and ammunition needed to sell to others.

D. Price.

There are several variations to this.

1. "I can't afford it, but it's worth it."

Develop creative ways to help your prospect pay for it.

2. "I don't think it's worth it." Or, "Something else is better." Or, "My money is better spent elsewhere."

Resell the primary benefits and link them to the customers' stated needs. Put the cost of the product or service in perspective. Show how it satisfies their need.

3. Priority. "That isn't on my list right now."

Align your product with their business goals. Show them how your product helps them meet their highest priority goal.

Your job now is to analyze each of the objections you have identified so far, and to select the best strategy to deal with each. Use the worksheets which you have begun, and create flow charts similar to our examples for each.

Look on the next page to see our example.

Handling Objections

Example

Item Sold: Surgical gloves

Market: Surgeons

Objection: (Generalize) Length

Specific Examples: "They're not as long..." "Aren't these shorter?"
"Is this as long as they are?"

Flow Chart

Agree: (*The gloves are shorter.*)



Point out the feature: (*New Design*)



Translate into a benefit:
More comfortable and easier to put on.

Language & Support

Preparation, Stage Two.

Now you need to collect all the “proof” you can to support the positions and assertions you intend to make.

This proof can take several forms. For example, you may have independent studies or statistics published by your company. Collect testimonials and letters of recommendation by your customers. Look for “third party” support for your positions. Magazine or newspapers articles which support things you say are effective.

The process of collecting “proof” is something which you should continue as long as you’re selling that product or service. Constantly look for material that supports your positions. By doing so, you’ll maintain a file of the most timely support available.

Note on your worksheet the materials that you have collected for that specific objection. We’ve done an example on the next page for you. After you’ve reviewed the example, work on each of your responses to objections, noting what materials you have collected on the place reserved for that on the worksheet.

Handling Objections

Example

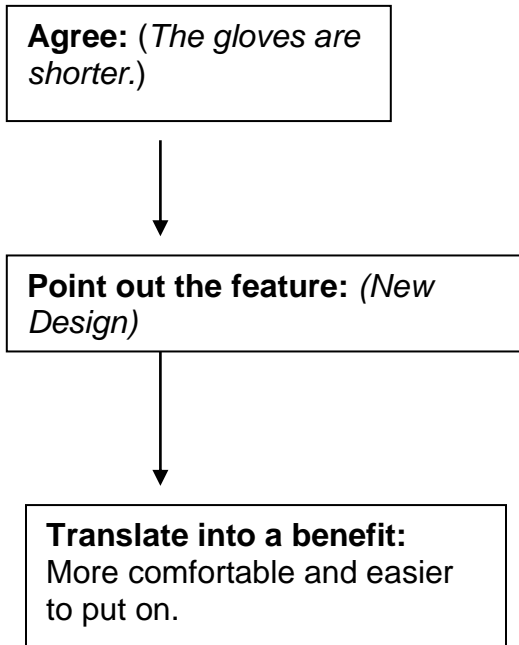
Item sold: Surgical gloves

Market: Surgeons

Objection: (Generalize) Length

Specific Examples: "They're not as long..." "Aren't these shorter?"
"Is this as long as they are?"

Flow Chart



Language & Support

Proof:

1. Close up photo of the "shorter design."

Handling Objections

Objection: (Generalize) _____

Specific Examples: _____

Flow Chart

Language
& Support

Preparation, Stage Three

Now it's time to create the most powerful and compelling language you can think of to communicate each of the responses you've prepared.

I suggest that you write out, word for word, the most effective words you can develop.

Here are some suggestions for developing that language.

1. Avoid confrontational words.

Words like "but" and "however" are confrontational in that they cause someone to harden their position. Whenever someone says "Yes, but..." you know he's disagreeing with you. Use "and" instead.

Be careful about other terms that make light of your prospect's concern. I once had someone attempting to sell me health insurance. When I objected to the lack of coverage for doctor's office visits, he made light of that by saying that most people weren't concerned with "the sniffles." He used that word so many times to characterize my concern that I became irritated. I said to him. "I just had a complete physical. That's hardly "the sniffles." My daughter has a medical condition that requires frequent doctor's visits. That's hardly "the sniffles." And my son just went in to have a cast on his hand removed. That's hardly "the sniffles." And then I terminated the interview.

The moral of that story is to be careful not to use language which is confrontational or rubs people the wrong way.

2. Use words which appeal to the senses.

Paint word pictures by using words which appeal to the senses. For example, a new food product isn't "great," it "has a gingery aroma that tickles your nose, and a zesty flavor reminiscent a baked apples and cinnamon."

3. Use words which position the product as being “used,” not “purchased”.

For example, don’t talk about when the prospect purchases the product, talk about how he will use it – what it will do for him/her, how it will look, what people will say, what effect it will have on production, etc.

4. Use the prospects’ terms and expressions.

Listen carefully to the language the prospect uses. It is the way he/she sees the world. Use those same words back to him/her to describe your product.

For example, I recall listening to a prospect describe his business problem “like a river, with powerful currents moving against his business.” I described my services as offering him water gates and dams to control the flow.

Now it’s time for you to develop your own powerful, compelling language for each of your responses. Use the same worksheets you’ve been developing.

Again, notice our example on the next page.

Handling Objections

Example

Item Sold: Surgical gloves

Market: Surgeons

Objection: (Generalize) Length

Specific Examples: “They’re not as long...” “Aren’t these shorter?”
“Is this as long as they are?”

Flow Chart

Agree: (*The gloves are shorter.*)



Point out the feature: (*New Design*)



Translate into a benefit: More comfortable and easier to put on.

Language & Support

You’re right. I’m glad you noticed that.

Not only are they shorter, but they are also waffled around the edge.

This means that you’ll be able to put them on easier, and you’ll notice how much more comfortable they are.

Preparation, Stage Four

Now it's time to practice each response until you have committed the words to memory and can say them in a conversational, relaxed fashion.

There are two powerful reasons to commit your responses to memory.

First, you can be assured that you'll be using the most powerful words and thoughts you can create. Too many sales people rely on their ability to come up with something on the spur of the moment. As a result, they don't use the most powerful words available to them. By taking the time to develop the language beforehand, you can be sure that you're using the most powerful words you're capable of selecting. That alone can make a significant difference in your performance.

Second, committing your responses to memory frees you to be more involved with your prospects.

Generally, when you're listening to an objection from a prospect, instead of concentrating on what the prospect is saying, you're probably thinking about what you're going to say. As a result, you can often miss some the nuances the prospect is communicating to you.

On the other hand, by committing your response to memory, you don't have to think about what you're going to say. You're sure that you have the best responses. So, you're free to concentrate totally on what the prospect is communicating to you.

The communication process is thus much more effective, and you can more completely understand our prospects' needs and concerns.

Now, it's time for you to do the hard work and rehearse the responses you've prepared.

Concentrate on one response at a time, and rehearse until you feel that it is so imbedded in your mind that it will come out without thinking at the time that you need it.

Now when you have yourself prepared, you're ready to implement.

Implementing

Before you rush out and begin using your newly created responses, you'll find it helpful to practice a process which is used after your prospect voices an objection, and before you respond to it.

That process is called **clarifying**.

Unfortunately, many people don't say what they mean when they begin to offer objections to a proposal. And often they aren't sure themselves of what they think.

So, before you can appropriately respond to an objection, you need to make sure that you and your prospect clearly understand his/her concern. That requires you to clarify the objection.

Clarifying is a three-step process: First, empathizing, next questioning, and finally confirming. Let's look at each of these steps.

1. Empathizing.

When you empathize, you understand what your prospect is feeling and/or thinking. And you communicate that understanding to your prospect.

Here's how to do so.

First, make a statement that communicates that you understand. For example, your prospect may say, "That sounds like a lot of money". You reply, "I know what you mean. It does sound like a lot." Or, you could say, "I can understand you feeling that way." Or similar words.

Next, offer some substantiation for your statement. In other words, explain why you understand. For example, if your prospect said “That sounds like a lot of money,” and you said, “I can understand you feeling like that,” now substantiate your statement with a comment like, “Several of my other customers felt the same way when they first considered it.”

This empathizing is incredibly important because it diffuses any tension that may rise between you at this point. It also helps prevent any defensiveness on the part of your prospect, and helps make him/her more receptive to what you may say.

Once you’ve done that, you move into the second part of the process, which is questioning.

2. Questioning.

Ask your prospect a question which calls for him/her to more specifically state the objection. In our “That sounds like a lot of money” objection you could say, “When you say it’s a lot of money, what exactly do you mean? Do you mean it’s more than you were expecting to pay, or do you mean it’s more than you think it’s worth?”

These questions help your prospect think through his/her thoughts and feelings and more clearly express them. The answers to the question help you understand your prospect’s concerns more specifically.

3. Confirming.

Finally, after you have heard the response, confirm your prospect's position by repeating it back and asking if that's correct.

Let's go back to our example, and describe the entire interchange.

Prospect: "That sounds like a lot of money."

Sales person: "I can understand you feeling that way. Several of my other customers felt the same way when they first considered it."

"So that I can understand better, let me ask this. When you say it sounds like a lot of money, what exactly do you mean? Do you mean it's more than you were expecting to pay, or do you mean that's it's more than you think it's worth?"

Prospect: "I'm sure it's worth it. I guess I had in my mind that this would cost something like \$350.00, not the \$500.00 that you quoted."

Sales person: "So, in other words, this is \$150.00 more than you were expecting. Is that right?"

Prospect: "Yes. That's right!"

At this point, both you and the prospect understand exactly what the issue is, and you're equipped to handle it because you have thoroughly prepared for the "It costs too much" objection.

Review

At this point you have **identified** the most common objections you're likely to hear, you've developed well thought out **responses**, you've gathered **supporting evidence**, and created powerful persuasive **language**. Then, you've practiced those responses, and prepared to **clarify the objection**.

All that's left is for you to act. Now is the time for you to put all this hard work to use.

Good luck!

Review more of Dave Kahle's courses here:

<https://www.thesalesresourcecenter.com/onlinecourses/>