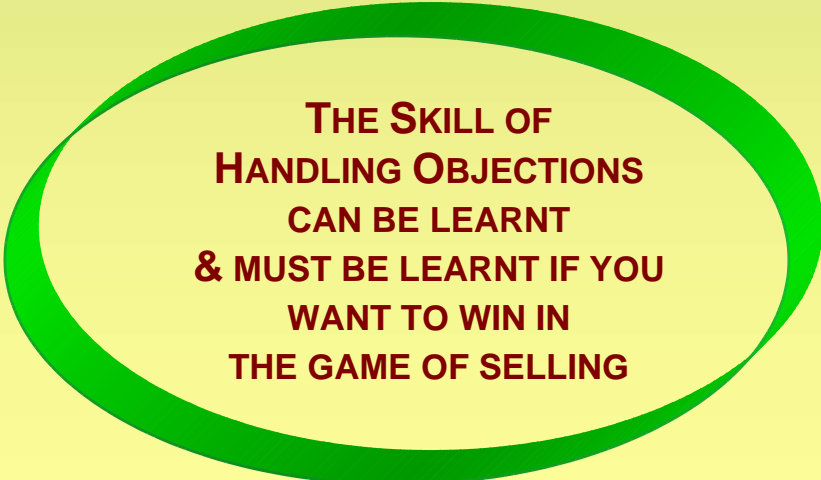


**FOUNDATIONAL SKILL IN
SELLING**

Handling Sales Objections

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**THE SKILL OF
HANDLING OBJECTIONS
CAN BE LEARNT
& MUST BE LEARNT IF YOU
WANT TO WIN IN
THE GAME OF SELLING**

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Chapter 1 - A LOOK AT OBJECTIONS

Suppose you are in the middle of a sales call. You have warmed the prospects well and done a good job in probing for his needs. You sincerely believe that your product or service will benefit the prospects and almost like a bolt of lightning your prospect says:

- ✧ *"Your price is too high."*
- ✧ *"Your delivery time is too long."*
- ✧ *"I don't see a need for this."*
- ✧ *"Your specifications do not meet our requirements."*
- ✧ *"I don't believe your machine will perform."*
- ✧ *"I don't have money for this."*
- ✧ *"I'll think about it."*
- ✧ *"I'm happy with what I have and see no reasons to change."*

Objections, objections, objections.

Many a salesperson has fumbled when confronted with objections. Some even pack up and go and leave the business to their competitor. What a shame! There is really no need to fumble or give up. Objections can be overcome. The skill of handling objections can be learned and mastered - just like the skill of probing, presenting and closing.

Before we discuss the skill of handling objections, it is important to understand what objections are and indeed why prospects object.

Let me ask you a simple question.

Do you have a perfect product or service? A product or service which meets all the needs of each and every prospect?

If your answer is "NO" - congratulations! Because a perfect product or service needs no sales staff - just order takers! The only type of sales situation where no objections ever surface is when you are 'order taking' for a perfect product or service. If you are not selling a perfect product or service, it follows that your prospects or customers will naturally have objections of some sort, right?

Indeed, and as a professional salesperson, you should expect objections to come up during the sales calls and be prepared to handle them effectively.

Why do prospects object?

There are three main reasons.

1. Prospects object because they are interested in your product or service and may be considering to buy from you. Why else would they bother to object? It would be easier just to say no and show you the door.
2. Prospects object because they need more information about your product or service and objections are your prospects' way of asking you to furnish more relevant details in support their needs.
3. Prospects object because they need justification to buy and objections are requests from your prospects to help them make their buying decision.

You can see from these three reasons that objections are not mere obstacles. Objections are opportunities. A professional salesperson must love objections and welcome them.

He sees objections as zebra crossings in the sales path which he has to pass in order to reach the final destination. He uses objections to heighten the interest of the prospects. He uses objections to feed relevant information to his prospects. Through successful objection handling, he gives the prospects justifications

and reasons to decide in his favor. He uses objections as opportunities for closing the sale.

In short, a professional sales person uses objections to differentiate himself from the non-professionals and order takers. He excels and wins through his ability to handle objections.

I have often been asked by sales people as to whether there are objections which cannot be handled. When I say no, they often come up with examples of 'objections' from prospects which relate to a pre-condition which their product or service cannot physically or materially satisfy. I call these

pre-conditions or exceptions.

Let me give you an example to distinguish between objections and exceptions.

Suppose you are selling beauty soap and nothing else. Your prospect tells you that because of a skin allergy the only thing she can ever use is Mountain Dew Liquid Wash. If this is established to be a fact, then Mountain Dew Liquid Wash is a pre-condition or exception. If however, your prospect does not have an allergy problem and merely has, as a matter of preference or habit, been using Mountain Dew Liquid Wash, then it is an objection. In the

first scenario, your product (beauty soap) has a deficiency as far as the prospect is concerned and she will probably never be able use any brand of beauty soap as long as her allergy is there. It is a pre-condition or exception which your product cannot physically meet. There is no way by which the product can bridge the limitation and there is nothing you can do about this. The second scenario is an objection because if you probe enough, you will find out that using Mountain Dew Liquid Wash is merely a preference or habit and if you can demonstrate the benefits of beauty soap over Mountain Dew, then you are in business.

Let us look at another example.

Suppose you are selling a shipping service. Your prospect says that he cannot use a ship because he has to fly the goods. Is "flying" an objection or an exception?

If you determine that he cannot use a shipping service because the shelf life of his goods is say 5 days, (e.g. some perishable goods), then "flying" is a pre-condition which a shipping service cannot overcome. This would be an exception. If on the other hand, he is merely concerned about the possible delay in using a ship and you can demonstrate that from the start to the finish of the transportation chain that shipping from point A to point B is the

same as flying from point A to point B, then "flying" becomes an objection.

By definition an exception is something which your product or service cannot physically or materially satisfy. An exception would therefore not be an objection. Before you label all difficult objections as exceptions, do consider this. If you are encountering too many exceptions, you are probably seeing the wrong target segment - i.e. your prospects are really suspects.

If not, you probably have been too trigger-happy to call an objection an exception. It would be difficult if not impossible to overcome an exception - it is a square peg in a round hole situation in which there is no fit.

However all objections can be successfully handled and overcome. In the chapters that follow, I will share with you a systematic method of handling objections effectively. Through the various exercises, you will practice and internalize the techniques as we go along so that by the end of the book, you will become adapt in the skill of handling objections.