

Boomerang method

Technique

When people object, turn them around by using what they say to prove that they are wrong.

Use their own arguments like a boomerang, so they go around in a circle and come back to persuade them.

Examples

Yes, it is expensive, but I don't think you would want to buy your wife a cheap present.

Indeed, the house does need work, but as you said, you are very good at Do-It-Yourself work.

Certainly, if you do not have the money today then we can arrange it all for tomorrow.

How it works

By using what they say, you are saying that they are right. And when you attach what you want to what they say, then by association, what you want is right.

Objection Chunking

Technique

You can take a higher, more general viewpoint or a more detailed focus.

Chunking up (also called Helicoptering) lets you see more and understand the big picture. When you chunk up, specific issues seem small and insignificant. My worries are about a scratch on a car is nothing in comparison with world peace.

You can expand the pie, showing them how they are getting not only the basic product, but other things as well. You can add widgets and warranties. You can add emotions like the added peace of mind they will have from your product.

Chunking down drills into the detail, highlighting and addressing significant concerns. It also distracts attention away from more difficult concerns in other areas.

You can reduce the apparent size of the objection, for example by changing a dislike of town into a dislike of a neighbourhood or just a street.

Examples

Let's look at the big picture. What do you really want achieve by using this?

That's interesting. Tell me more about that...

Tell you what. Let's consider the situation together.

How it works

Taking a different perspective has a dual effect, first of reframing to create a different attention and a new understanding, and secondly of distracting from what might be a difficult issue to resolve.



Conditional Close

Technique

When the other person offers an objection, make it a condition of resolving their objection that they buy the product.

Phrase your wording: 'If I...will you...' rather than 'Will you...if I...'. This is because our brains work very quickly and starting with 'will you' causes them to begin thinking immediately about objections and they may miss the exchange. On the other hand, starting with 'If I...' will cause psychological closure on what you are offering thus drawing them in to the close.

Examples

You say you want a red one. If I can phone up and get you one, will you take it today?

If we can figure out the finance for you, will you choose this one?

If I get you a reduced rate guaranteed, shall we get the ball rolling?

How it works

The Conditional Close uses the Exchange principle to build a social agreement that if I solve your problem, you will buy the product in return.

Curiosity

Technique

When they declare that they do not want to buy from you, act curious.

Do not just ask 'Why??', but express a curious interest that says 'how interesting - I wonder why'.

Getting the objection out before they leave then gives you one last shot to keep them there.

Even if they still leave, it also lets you know why you failed to sell to them today and so improve your sales skills.

Examples

I know you don't want to buy this, but before you go, could you just let me know what your reason was?

I was just wondering what led to your decision not to buy this today.

Most people really go for this one. I am a little curious as to how you decided otherwise.

Did I not explain it clearly enough?

Was I a bit too enthusiastic? Sorry, but I just love these.

How it works

Being curious appeals in part to their child-self, whereby you say 'Wow, isn't that interesting!' and invite them to a game of exploration and discovery.

Curiosity also evokes their need for novelty in their life.

When you are non-threatening and not in 'closing mode' they may well relent and give you the information you need.



Deflection

Technique

Avoid handling an objection by deflecting it such that it does not hold up the proceedings.

Listen to it. Show understanding of the concern then carry on as if nothing had happened.

Say that you will come back to it later. Maybe you won't have to.

Examples

Yes, I see what you mean...mmm...Now let me show you the range of finishes you can have...

Good point. Can I come back to that later?...thanks...Now what I was saying was...

Yes, I've got some information about that back at the office somewhere. Can we carry on now? ...

How it works

By accepting their objection you are accepting them as a person, and the additional harmony and rapport created may be enough to overcome the objection.

Refusing to answer their objections now may also be a power play, where you are demonstrating authority and control over the situation. If you can get away with it, they may cede more power to you.

Feel, felt, found

Technique

First empathise with them, telling them that you understand how they feel.

Then tell them about somebody who felt the same way.

Then tell them how that other person found that things were not so bad and that when they did what you want the buyer to do they found that it was actually a very good thing to do.

Examples

I understand you feel about that. Many others have felt the same way. And what they have found is that...

I know how you feel that it looks rough. I had a person in here yesterday who felt the same when they first looked at it. But when they tried it on they found that it was so comfortable.

You know I feel the same about products when I first see them. I felt the same recently when I bought a new car. But when I took it home for the weekend, I found that everyone I know was so envious.

How it works

By empathizing with how they feel, you are building harmony with them to create rapport. When you talk about how somebody else felt, you move the focus to a more objective place which they are likely to trust more. This also makes them a part of a group such that they do not feel alone. When they are attached to that group, then you move the whole group by telling how the person in the group changed their mind. The buyer, being attached to the group, should change their mind at the same time.

Handling objections with humour

Technique

When they object, do not respond with negative emotions such as anger or frustration.

Defuse the tension with gentle humour, maybe feigning shock or otherwise poking fun at yourself.

Be careful about making them the object of humour. It can be done, but you need to be sure first that they will not be offended.

Examples

Oh no! What will we do! (Smiling)

Well I think this car would be very sad to see you go home without it.

I think I've lost my touch.

How it works

When you receive objections it can be very frustrating and it is very easy for these emotions to leak out. By reframing the situation with gentle humour, you can show that you are not offended by their refusal.

Remember that they, too, may find objecting embarrassing and uncomfortable, with the result that they may well want to get away from you (and the embarrassment) as soon as possible.

Justification

Technique

Rather than fight the objection, justify why it is reasonable.

Tell them how you have deliberately made what you are selling this way for a particular reason.

If they complain about price, tell them the product is built for a superior market.

If they complain about quality, tell them that this is to allow you to charge a very low price.

Examples

Yes, the car is expensive, but it is a rare import and cost a lot to bring over here.

I know it is not new, but it will give your image depth, making you look more established.

It is large, which is why most people who buy it find that visitors notice it at once.

LAARC

This is another acronym to help you remember things to do when you are handling objections from your customer.

Listen

First listen to what they have to say. Avoid the temptation to jump in at the first moment you can. Wait patiently for them to complete what they are saying.

Acknowledge

When you have heard them, acknowledge the person, their right to object, and the validity of their objection. If you do not do this, they may take your response personally and the conversation will descend into a failing duel.

Assess

Having listened to and acknowledged the person assess the situation. This may mean asking various questions to probe for further detail. You know when you have completed the assessment stage when you can fully empathise with the person's objection.

Respond

Only when you have a proper grasp of the objection should you start to respond. Structure this carefully, perhaps using one of the objection-handling techniques here.

Always be careful to ensure you respond fully and adequately to the objections given. Beware of straying off the path of responding to the objection or else you may end up creating more objections.

Confirm

Finally, check with the other person that they have understood your response and that it addresses their concerns.

If the other person still has the objection, repeat the loop. See if you have listened well enough in the first place. Check that you have assessed their situation correctly. Ensure that the response fully and adequately addresses their concerns.

Pre-empting objections

Technique

Tell them about a possible objection before they object. Then handle the objection so it cannot be brought up again.

Make the objection rather weak and the handling rather strong.

Tell them stories of other people who objected and then looked foolish.

Examples

I had one person didn't like the shade, but then they had not realized that this was the latest fashion.

You might find this expensive, but we can find the right deal.

How it works

If you answer the objection before they bring it out, then they are unable to voice the objection without appearing to not have heard you.

Pushback

Technique

Do not accept the objection. Push back assertively (not aggressively). Object to their objection.

If they are wrong, tell them.

If you think they are not being truthful, show that you know this.

You can push back either directly, by telling them they are wrong, or indirectly, by showing them that they are mistaken. Indirect pushback is usually likely to reduce further objections, unless you have concluded that a 'short, sharp shock' is likely to be more effective.

Examples

That's not right. This product is the cheapest on the market.

I can see that you might think that. But the latest survey has shown that we are the lowest cost supplier.

Would you like to check those figures again? I think you'll find they are not accurate.

Good try. But I can see that you can afford more than that.

How it works

A direct response to an objection can be a shock that the other person will accept.

Exposure of a trick puts the other person on the defensive and may well make them want to compensate you for their deception.

Objection Reframe

Technique

When they object, reframe their objection as something other than a 'no' so you can continue with your selling.

Reframing the objection as a misunderstanding (and take the blame for this yourself).

Reframing the objection by taking the subject and turning it around.

Reframe a small difference as being the critical difference.

Reframe 'required specific experience' to 'relevant experience'.

Examples

I can see that this is not making sense. Sorry - let me put it another way.

The cost may be high, but the cost of inaction may be higher.

Yes, blue is an unusual colour. It will make you look really original.

How it works

Reframing uses what the other person has given you, which makes it more difficult for them to deny it

Objection Renaming

Technique

A simple approach to handling objections is to change something in what you are presenting. Some examples are given below, but you can think of more, of course.

Objections have names. It may be price, worry or something even more specific. Turn price into cost of ownership. Turn worry into reasonable concern.

Words have very individual meaning, which means that changing 'heavy' into 'weighty' or 'strong' into 'powerful' can change the meaning of a whole sentence.

Renaming the objection changes it. Or should I say 'putting the problem into new words creates a whole new world.'

Examples

You say you are worried and I can see you are concerned and that tells me you are interested in good quality products.

When you consider about how long it takes, you may also think about the free time it will give you.

You said you would talk to your partners. Could you think instead of discussing it with him?

How it works

Words are 'little packets of meaning' and can have complex schema associated with them, as the deeper aspects of linguistics show. Changing just a word changes the meaning of what is being discussed, looking at it in a different light.

Reprioritise objections

Technique

When they have a priority, which is stopping them from buying from you, find ways of changing the priority.

Explore the criteria they are using to decide. Probe to find how important each criterion is.

Appeal to their values, which include a system of prioritisation.

Reframe their arguments so they naturally change priority.

At the same time or alternatively, increase other priorities that will lead to them buying from you.

Examples

You are very loyal to your current supplier, but should you be more loyal to your wallet?

You are right, price is important. But how much more important is quality to you?

Having all your eggs in one basket does have its advantage, but why do we always shop in one supermarket? Because it's easier!

How it works

When evaluating between different choices, we use different criteria and different weighting of those criteria. We also get fixated on particular solutions and forget about other criteria. If you can change criteria, change weights or remind the other person of forgotten criteria then you can get them to reprioritise.

Objection Isolation

Technique

When they object, tip the bucket to get all remaining objections, confirming these to the customer to recap.

Then isolate the objections and verify that if you address these, then there are no reasons for them not to buy.

Then, as you handle each one, verbally cross it out. You can ask the person before this ('So, we have addressed this. Can I cross that off the list now?')

A variant of this is to summarize the objections into one word or a short phrase. Thus you write down 'price', 'quality' and so on. This allows you to reframe slightly what they are saying.

How it works

Writing things down is useful for a visual thinker. It also moved the problem onto the external, objective sheet of paper (from their subjective thinking). And then it allows you to cross it out. The act of crossing it out causes closure, on eliminating the objection.