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## TECHNIQUES FOR HANDLING OBJECTIONS

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Following are a few other approaches to handling objections:

*Feel, Felt,  
Found  
Technique*

One technique for handling virtually any objection is called the **feel, felt, found** technique. It goes like this. Your prospect (agent, manager, homebuyer, lawyer) indicates that they don't want to use you because of objection 'X'. Your answer is, "I understand why you *feel* that way. Many of my happy clients *felt* that way initially, too, but they *found* that ..." And here's where you explain some of the benefits that might convince the prospect to proceed.

This technique validates the objection rather than dismisses it. It also makes the client feel smart because others felt the same way. After you have told them that their concern is valid and shared by others, they relax a little. They will then be more receptive to the solution, especially since it is presented as an indirect testimonial: "It's not me saying this; it's what other clients have found."

This technique has the benefit of being simple, and you can use it for any objection. If you have it at your fingertips, you can pull it out when you hear an objection you were not prepared for. At least you will have ten seconds to think of an answer.

*Hot Button  
Technique*

A **hot button** is the one thing that is most important to your prospect. If you can identify your prospect's hot button, you're as good as there. For example, a real estate agent may lament to you that all she wants is for home inspectors to be "even-keeled." She doesn't care what problems are identified during the inspection, as long as the inspector keeps them in perspective. You now have your hot button. During your presentation, you come up with half a dozen different ways that you "keep an even keel." For example, you present instances of your good bedside manner, how you help clients keep things in perspective, your down to earth style, your balanced approach, and your non-alarmist presentation of house conditions. Forget about all of the other benefits of your service and work the hot button.



*Timing is  
Everything*

We said that the sales process involves discovering people's objections and addressing them. Until these have been dealt with, you cannot assume the prospect is ready to be asked to make a buying decision. There are, however, different times in which you can choose to deal with objections, which can create some challenges:

- You can answer objections as they are presented to you.
- You can figure out what the objections are when the prospect is not entirely forthcoming about them during the course of the presentation and then bring them up yourself.
- You can address objections later when you feel the time is right. This is especially important when discussing price, particularly if it comes up early in the conversation. You are better off acknowledging that you understand that price is an important issue and asking the customer if you can come back to it.

*Offer Proof*

Offering proof is a good way to diminish someone's objection. Here's an example. If you are on the phone with a client who thinks your fee is too high, as we noted earlier, you should agree with the prospect that you are more expensive and ask if you can explain why. Once you have elaborated on the benefits of your service, you can add, "You can see that while we are more expensive than some other inspection companies, we offer more value. Furthermore, we are only \$25 more expensive than other professional home inspection companies. My three main competitors charge X, Y, and Z." This last piece of information is the proof. You are offering specific data. Even better, you could fax your competitor's price schedule. Some people respond well to concrete information like this.

*Provide  
Testimonials*

Another example of concrete proof is the testimonial. This works for both prospective clients and real estate agents. If you can get an agent to write you a testimonial about how great your inspections are, you can pull out the letter as an answer to an objection. For example, say the agent you want to work with expresses concern about you because their current inspector is very good with the agent's clients; the agent doesn't want to lose that.

*Feel, Felt,  
Found  
Revisited*

You can use the "feel, felt, found" technique in conjunction with a testimonial letter. "I understand how you *feel*. Most of the agents that are referring business to me *felt* that way, too, but they *found* that my client-handling skills were better than they'd ever seen. In fact, they are so happy with my skills that I get letters like this." Then you pull out a testimonial letter that articulates how well you handled a difficult situation. This is a lot more powerful than simply saying, "Relax, I know how to handle my clients."

A Web site is a great tool for presenting testimonials. The more credible the testimonial, the more valuable. If possible, get permission to use the person's name, rather than initials. To add another dimension and make the testimonial even more credible, include a photo of the person offering the testimonial. You will have to ask permission, of course.

