



Objections & Negotiation

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Agenda

- Common Objections
- Why Money Isn't a Real Objection
- Preventing Objections
- Negotiation: Separate the People from the Problem
- Negotiation: Focus on Interests, not Positions
- Negotiation: Invent Options for Mutual Gain
- What if They Won't Play Ball?
- Q&A

Common Objections

Objections - Reasons a customer gives you for not doing the things you recommend.

Product & Services

- "Your solution is missing a feature we need."
- "You aren't answering our support tickets quickly enough."
- "The rest of our systems won't integrate with yours."

Time & Priorities

- "We don't have time to work on implementing your solution right now."
- "Another solution needs to be prioritized over your project."

Competition & Other Options

- "Your competitor offers more of the features we need."
- "We're doing just fine with our manual process."
- "Your competitor has a cheaper solution..."

Resources & Budget

- "I don't have enough team members to staff the project."
- "You only offer annual billing."
- "I don't have the budget for this..."



Be Prepared

Most CS teams have **10-15 objections** they run into regularly.

- 1. Write down 2-3 questions** you should ask to help you understand the objection
- 2. Note 2-3 things you want to share** to make sure that the customer understands your solution and services
- 3. Know 2-3 things you can offer** that might help you overcome the objection

Example

Objection: "We don't have time to work on implementing your solution right now."





Why Money Isn't a Real Objection

If a customer brings up a budget objection, it means **they don't see enough value in your solution.**

Executives can always find money for the things they think have value.

Tactics

- **Ask about other objections** that the customer might be masking by talking about the budget.
- **Ask great questions** to help build the cost of the problem and value of your solution in the customer's mind.

Preventing Objections



Do Your Homework

- Know your customer's business
- Understand current initiatives and priorities
- Learn where your contacts fit into the org chart



Set Expectations

- Start during the sales cycle
- Ask questions so you know what the expectations are
- Communicate proactively as things change



Build Value

- Regularly probe for problems and issues
- Ask Impact and Value questions to develop and understand needs
- Make sure there is a match between needs and solutions

Negotiation: Separate the People from the Problem

Understand Perceptions

- Don't deduce their intentions from your fears
- Discuss each other's perceptions
- Make proposals consistent with their values

Acknowledge Emotions

- Allow the other side to let off steam
- Consider the role of identity in the discussion
- Don't react to emotional outbursts

Prioritize Communication

- Listen actively and confirm that you understand
- Speak clearly and confirm you were understood
- Speak only for yourself, not the other party



Negotiation: Focus on Interests, Not Positions

Position

What the customer says they want.

Interest

Why the customer wants it.

Identify Interests

1. Ask yourself why they might be taking a particular position
2. Ask yourself why they didn't choose the opposite position
3. Consider that they have multiple interests
4. Consider "soft" interests like security, reputation, recognition, control
5. Make a list of the interests of both sides

Negotiation: Invent Options for Mutual Gain

Brainstorm Ideas

- Can be done solo or together with the other party
- If done together, use a neutral facilitator
- Expand on several of the most promising ideas



Consider Multiple Options

- Get an outside or expert opinion
- Think about different strengths of agreement
- Consider adjusting the scope of the solution



Seek Mutual Gain

- Look for shared interests on your list
- Look for different interests that compliment each other
- Ask about their priorities



Make It Easy

- Evaluate the options from the other party's point of view
- Give them several choices that all work for you and are likely to work for them based on their interests



What if They Won't Play Ball?

- 1. Look behind their position.** Try to figure out their interests, principles and priorities objectively, and ask questions to understand.
- 2. Don't defend your ideas.** Instead, ask for criticism and advice from the other party on how to improve them.
- 3. Reframe personal attacks.** Restate the other party's attack as an attack on the problem, not you.
- 4. Ask questions and pause.** Use silence as a way to draw out ideas from the other party.



Q&A

If you have questions, please contact
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