

# The Encyclopedia of Sales Objections: 35 Common Objections & How to Handle Them



As a salesperson, you probably spend a lot of time thinking about why prospects would decide to buy your product. And you should. Understanding what motivates a buyer's purchasing decision is crucial to positioning your product correctly.

But the opposite exercise is just as important. Putting yourself in your buyer's shoes and running through all the reasons they would say "no" is invaluable for anticipating and mitigating objections.

Where do you start?

Every product and sales process is different, and so specific objections will vary from industry to industry. However, there are many objections that fall along similar lines independent of what you're selling. Below are 35 common objections sorted by their level of difficulty, along with tips on how to handle each.

## Easy to Handle

### 1) "It's too expensive."

Price objections are the most common type of objection, and are even voiced by prospects who have every intention of buying. Beware -- the moment you start focusing on price as a selling point, you reduce yourself to a transactional middleman. Instead, circle back to the product's value. Check out these [24 answers to a price objection](#) for more ideas on how to respond to a prospect with sticker shock.

## 2) “We’re already working with [Vendor X].”

A prospect who’s working with a competitor is a blessing in disguise. They’ve already recognized a need and identified a solution, so much of the education you’d otherwise be responsible for has already been done. You can spend your time doing the one thing you’d have to hold off on with a prospect who hasn’t recognized their pain yet -- talk about your product.

Just because a prospect is working with a competitor doesn’t mean they’re happy with them. Probe into the relationship: Why did they choose this service? What’s working well? What’s not? Pay special attention to complaints that could be solved with your product.

## 3) “I’m locked into a contract with a competitor.”

Perhaps the easiest competitor-related objection to handle, this phrase is worded in a way that broadcasts your prospect’s feeling of being trapped. See if you can come up with a creative discount to offset the cost of breaking a contract early, or demonstrate ROI that will make up for the sunk cost.

Of course, your prospect could have simply chosen an overly negative turn of phrase. Ask them point-blank how the relationship is going to determine whether they’re actually happy or are itching for a vendor switch.

## 4) “\*Click.\*”

If your prospect hangs up on you, don’t sweat it -- it happens to everyone eventually. Try reaching out to a different person at the company using a different approach.

Or you can go on the offensive. Wait a few seconds, then call back and say, “Sorry, looks like we got disconnected! Do you have a few minutes?”

Which approach you choose is purely dependent on how your conversation with your prospect went before the hang-up.

## 5) “I’ve never heard of your company.”

Treat this objection as a request for information. Don’t give an elevator pitch, but provide a very quick summary of your value proposition.

For example:

“We’re a company that sells ad space on behalf of publishers like yourself. I’d love to speak with you about your revenue model and see if we can help.”

## **6) “How did you get my information?”**

Hopefully, you’re not pulling numbers from lists you got off the internet -- because if you are, your prospects have every reason to be annoyed. Don’t get defensive -- simply remind the prospect that they filled out a form on your site, or signed up for more information at a trade show, or that you simply came across their website and wanted to reach out to see if you could help.

## **7) “I’m not authorized to sign off on this purchase.”**

No problem. Ask your prospect who for the name of the right person to speak to, and then redirect your call to them.

## **8) “I’m busy right now.”**

Of course your prospect is busy -- almost every professional these days is. Simply explain that you’re not looking to give a full-blown conversation, just have a quick chat about whether or not a longer discussion about your product would be a good fit at their organization.

## **9) “I’m not interested.”**

During a prospecting call, it’s far too early for a prospect to be able to definitively say they are or aren’t interested in your product. Offer to send over some resources and schedule a follow-up call.

## **10) “Just send me some information.”**

This is a great opportunity to segue into some qualification. Say, “I’d be happy to send you some materials, but I want to make sure that they’re relevant to you. What are you interested in learning about?”

## **11) “Call me back next quarter.”**

Prospects will often say this to dissuade you from pursuing a conversation. But don’t let them off that easily -- it’s a vague brushoff uttered in the hopes you’ll fade away and disappear. Ask, “What’s going to change next quarter?” to question their motivations for brushing you off.

For more suggestions, check out this list of 15 responses to a prospect who says, “It’s not a good time to buy.”

## **12) “I don’t want to get stuck in a contract.”**

A prospect with a genuine need and interest who balks at time-based contract terms is generally hesitant for cash flow reasons. Luckily for you, there are workarounds -- find out if you can offer month-by-month or quarter-by-quarter payment instead of asking for a year or more commitment up front.

## **Semi-Difficult**

### **13) “There’s no money.”**

It could be that your prospect’s business simply isn’t big enough or generating enough cash right now to afford a product like yours. Track their growth and see how you can help your prospect get to a place where your offering would fit into their business.

### **14) “We don’t have any budget left this year.”**

A variation of the “no money” objection, what your prospect’s telling you here is that they’re having cash flow issues. But if there’s a pressing problem, it needs to get solved eventually. Either help your prospect secure budget from executives to buy now, or arrange up a follow-up call for when they expect funding to return.

### **15) “I can get a cheaper version of your product somewhere else.”**

Find out what you’re dealing with here. Are you in a competitive situation, and the prospect is playing you against a competitor to drive up discounts? Or is your prospect under the impression that a similar, cheaper product can do everything they need?

If it’s the former, lay out your deepest discount and emphasize the features that make your product superior. Walk away if they ask you to go lower. In the second scenario, take advantage of the comparison. What are the points of differentiation that provide your prospect the most value? Play them up and emphasize overall worth, not cost.

### **16) “I’m happy with [Competitor X].”**

What if your prospect is happy? The same strategy still applies -- find out why they believe their relationship with your competitor is beneficial, and identify weak spots where your product could do better.

### **17) “I hate you.”**

A disclaimer: Generally, prospects won’t actually come right out and say this. And it’s obviously not necessary to become best friends with someone to sell to them. But if you and your prospect really just don’t get along, consider handing them off to a colleague lest

your company lose the deal for good. The upside? This objection has nothing to do with your product or its value.

### **18) “We're doing great in X area.”**

If you hear this objection, do a little more qualification. What are your prospect's goals? How much progress has been made?

### **19) "We don't have that business pain."**

This objection is often raised as a brush-off, or because prospects haven't realized they're experiencing a certain problem yet. And while ultimately you might discover they really don't need your product, don't take this objection at face value. Dig deeper to clarify their business priorities, where they're succeeding and struggling, and whether your product can be part of the solution.

### **20) “X problem isn't important right now.”**

Sometimes, a simple “Oh?” will be enough for your prospect to start talking. Listen closely for real reasons the need has low priority versus platitudes. Keep in mind that excuses can be a sign that your prospect understands they have a problem and is trying to rationalize their inaction. Capitalize on this and instill a sense of urgency.

### **21) “I don't see what your product could do for me.”**

Another request for information packaged as an objection. Reconfirm the goals or challenges you've discussed and explain how your product can solve specific problems.

### **22) “I don't understand your product.”**

If your prospect literally can't wrap their head around your product, that's a bad sign. If your product is particularly complicated or specialized, it may be time to disqualify your prospect lest they churn two months from now.

Don't give up immediately, though. Ask your prospect what aspects of your product they're unclear on, then try explaining it in a different way. Alternatively, bring in a technician or product engineer to answer questions out of your depth.

### **23) “I can't sell this internally.”**

Well, your prospect might not be able to, but you can. After all, you sell your product every day. Ask your prospect what objections they anticipate, and help them prepare the

business case for adopting your product. Check with Marketing to see if there's any collateral you can leverage on your prospect's behalf.

## **24) “You don't understand my challenges. I need help with Y, not X.”**

It's crucial to make your prospect feel heard. Restate your impression of their situation, then align with your prospect's take and move forward from there. A lot of misunderstandings and hard feelings can be resolved simply by rephrasing your prospect's words.

## **25) “You don't understand my business.”**

If you sell to a specific industry, chances are you do know a bit about your prospect's business. Let them know that you have experience working with similar companies, and have solved similar problems in the past.

If you simply made an incorrect assumption about your prospect's company or industry, don't be afraid to own up to it. Your prospects will appreciate your candor. Say, “Sorry -- I assumed X was true, but it looks like that doesn't apply to your business. Can you tell me a little more about X?”

## **26) “There's too much going on right now.”**

Ask your prospect to define their competing priorities for you. If they can't, it's likely a brush-off and you should press them on precisely why they don't want to engage with you.

If they can provide concrete answers, don't sweat it. Set a meeting time for a follow up and send over helpful resources in the meantime to stay on your prospect's radar.

## **27) “We're happy the way things are.”**

Maybe everything really is going swimmingly. But more likely, your prospect is having some sort of challenge (after all, who isn't?). Do some light qualification to determine if they're facing any problems you can solve, then move forward or disqualify based on their answers.

## **28) “I don't see the potential for ROI.”**

This is a sign that you'll have to prepare a formal pitch for either your contact or her managers, either using internal numbers provided by your prospect or customer case studies. If you've never built a business case before, Nothing sells quite like hard numbers.

## **29) "X is just a fad."**

You might hear this objection if your product pioneers a concept that's new to your prospect's industry. For example, social media is now widely accepted to be a necessary part of a sound business strategy, but seven years ago many would have scoffed at it.

Now is the time to pull out any testimonials or customer case studies you have to prove ROI of your product. If you're pioneering a new concept or practice, you'll have to show that it works.

## **All But Impossible?**

### **30) "We don't have capacity to implement the product."**

This objection can be a deal-killing roadblock. Depending on what product you sell, it's possible your prospect will have to add headcount or divert resources to fully take advantage of your offering, and if they truly aren't able to, you might have to disqualify.

Another tactic is to assess your prospect's current duties and day-to-day to see what job responsibilities could potentially be eliminated or made easier by your product.

### **31) "Your product is too complicated."**

Find out if your prospect is confused about specific features or if the product is indeed over their head. If it's the latter, you might have to disqualify. But if it's the former, remind your prospect that they'll have help from your customer service team should they choose to buy and that you'll be on hand to answer any implementation questions they have.

### **32) "Your product doesn't have X feature, and we need it."**

Try suggesting a supplementary product that can be used in conjunction with yours. But if that specific need is a must-have and your product can't solve it, your prospect might not be a good fit. Time to disqualify and move along to a better fit opportunity.

### **33) "[Economic buyer] isn't convinced."**

If you've already addressed objection #23 by providing internal selling advice and coaching and your prospect just can't hack it, it might be time to walk away. While it's heartrending to give up on a prospect who's on your side and just can't convince the higher-ups, it's also a waste of your time to keep butting heads with someone who will never see your product's value.

### **34) "We're being downsized / bought out."**

This happens rarely, but when it does there's usually nothing you can do. If there's no more company, there's no more deal. Wrap the relationship professionally so when your prospect finds a new gig, they'll be more likely to restart the conversation from a new company.

### **35) "There's no money."**

Wait, didn't we just say that cost objections are easy to address and one of the most common prospect brush-offs?

Yes, but sometimes the money objection is a true blocker. You can usually discover this during the exploratory stage, when you're delving into your prospect's business model. Sometimes even when there's a great fit, budget is far too misaligned for your company to swallow the discount necessary to close the deal. In these cases, table the deal until your prospect comes into a little more cashflow.

Objections are an inevitable part of sales. Some are legitimate reasons to disqualify, while others are simply an attempt to brush you off. But as long as you're familiar with common objections and equipped to answer them, you'll be able to distinguish between prospects who have the potential to be good customers and prospects with whom you need to part ways.