

OBJECTION!

Every objection is an emotional response. Even the ones shrouded in reason. Because of this, responding to the emotion is more effective. Below are ten responses to objections. They can be used in a framework called, VET, further below. This framework helps you create psychological safety in order to help your prospects navigate their own objections. It is not your responsibility to overcome objections. It's your job to help your prospect overcome their objection.

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| AFFIRM | ASK FOR CLARITY |
| Affirm your prospect's position and offer an out. It might sound something like this: "I'm sorry to hear that you feel that way. Should we end the conversation here?" A common response is, "No, no, it's fine." | Ask your prospect to help you understand, e.g., "Could you tell me more?" Or, "What makes you say that?" This shows that you're open to listening, and it places the objection in the proper place - with your prospect. |
| PAUSE | REPEAT |
| Rather than respond immediately to an objection, allow for a moment of quiet. Just pause. This provides time for your prospect to think it through. Oftentimes they answer their own objection. | Repeat back what your prospect says to help them think it through. Psychologists repeat back words to help their patients work through a problem. You can do the same, e.g., "The price is a little high...?" |
| REFLECT | INVITE INPUT |
| Objections can be quite emotional. You can reflect back with professionalism. Prospect: "Whoa, that much!" Reflect back: "Whoa, it sounds like that caught you off guard, am I reading you right?" This can diffuse the objection and build trust. | Sometimes a simple invitation is all that is needed. Your prospect may say, "I don't think we have the funds right now." Response: "It sounds like we're at an impasse, what should we do about that?" Prospect's often come up with their own solution. |
| REFRAME | PROVIDE PERSPECTIVE |
| Help your prospect to reframe. Example: "I appreciate the load you're under. However, a large part of that load is coming from the situation we just discussed. Is that a fair statement, or am I off base?" Reframes help people see things in a new light. | Help your prospect know what's at stake. One approach you can use is, "I appreciate your bandwidth constraints; however, based on our conversation, doing nothing sounds like it will create X, Y, and Z. Is that a reasonable concern or did I step out of bounds?" |
| BIG PICTURE | COLLABORATE |
| Help your prospect see the bigger picture. Ask questions like, "Is ROI the only factor in your decision, or are there other considerations?" This helps to refocus the conversation on the bigger picture. ROI is important, but so is saving time and mitigating risk...etc. These are areas worth exploring to help your prospect get unstuck. | Sometimes prospects want to work with you, but say no because they can't find a way within their organization. If you suspect this, ask, "Is it a matter of figuring out how to navigate your organization or something else?" This can open the conversation, allowing you to help your prospect find the best way to bring you in. |

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The VET framework allows you to adapt these responses to a variety of objections & situations.

/vet/ (verb) - the acronym VET has the added bonus of lining up with the definition of vetting, e.g., make a careful and critical examination of (something).

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| VET OBJECTION FRAMEWORK: VALIDATE EMPATHIZE TEACH |
| VALIDATE: Validating someone can take many forms, but in a sales context, it might sound like: “I appreciate that you brought that up. It’s a fair point.” This simple statement “validates” the feeling. This makes people feel good. It also shows you as someone who is emotionally aware. People will feel safe with you. |
| EMPATHIZE: Empathizing with a prospect in a sales scenario might sound like this: “It sounds like you weren’t expecting that.” Or, “I can see why that might be frustrating.” This short empathic statement acknowledges the emotions at play. It puts people at ease. It makes you trustworthy. |
| TEACH: Teaching might sound like this: “Are you open to thinking about this a bit differently, or should we end our conversation here?” This provides freedom of choice for your prospect to Talk and/or Think it through. Or, the objection may indeed be a deal breaker, in which case Termination is the best course of action. You are then free to move on to helping someone who needs your services. |
| When you put it altogether, it sounds like something like this: “I appreciate that you brought that up, and it’s a fair point. And it sounds like you weren’t expecting that, am I reading you right?” Yes - I didn’t know... “Totally get it, are you open to thinking about this a bit differently, or should we just end our conversation here?” |

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