

SIX KEYS TO HANDLING OBJECTIONS

**Theresa Jordan, Staffing Industry Specialist
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As the demand for staffing services increases, staffing firms are enjoying more business opportunities. But more business opportunities mean more competition, and more competition requires better selling skills to win the business.

To be successful in today's highly competitive selling environment, your sales staff will need to view objections as opportunities rather than obstacles. By embracing resistance from prospects, they will be able to uncover the true motives behind objections and then overcome them. Following are six keys to successfully handling staffing industry sales objections. Master these six critical staffing industry success factors and your sales will soar!

KEY #1: Consult, Don't Chase

To create a mutually beneficial partnership between your staffing firm and a prospective client, your sales representative must first identify the prospect's business goals and staffing objectives to see if there is a match between the prospect's needs and your firm's services.

Then your firm can develop a customized solution that will specifically meet the prospect's needs. This approach will take your sales team out of the mode of chasing business and into the mode of consulting with prospective clients and becoming trusted staffing advisers.

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KEY #2: It's Not Personal

It is important for your sales team to see objections in a positive light and not take them personally. An objection is really a sign that the prospect does not yet know how your staffing firm can benefit his or her business. Successful salespeople see objections as opportunities, challenges, and requests for more information.

Embracing objections—and skillfully uncovering the true reason behind them—is a necessary first step in building relationships with prospective clients. If objections are not uncovered, the business will never be won.

KEY #3: Listen—From the Prospect's Perspective

Sometimes the gift of gab is a salesperson's best asset, but it can also be his or her worst enemy. It is important that a prospect be able to voice an objection without being interrupted. Sales representatives who do most of the talking jeopardize the sale.

When it is the salesperson's turn to talk, he should repeat the objection, demonstrating that he understood the objection and can see it from the prospect's point of view. This also gives the prospect the opportunity to clarify if necessary.

For example, if a prospect expresses concern that your staffing firm's pricing is too high, your sales rep can respond, "I can see that it is important for you to see value in what you are receiving." This response shows that the sales rep was listening to the prospect and has the prospect's business needs uppermost on his mind.

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KEY #4: See Through the Smoke Screen

Early in the sales process, the objections are generally quick responses, such as “I don’t have time to meet with you,” to try to get the sales representative off the phone. These are typically not true objections.

The key is to keep the sales process moving by getting past these smoke screens. A sales representative can do this by answering the objections quickly and moving forward to close for an appointment.

KEY #5: Probe for Complete Understanding

To understand a prospect’s true objection and customize a solution that will meet the prospect’s needs, the sales rep will need to ask probing, follow-up questions.

If a prospect’s objection centers around price, for example, the sales rep should seek to learn more about the level of service the prospect is receiving for the price he or she is paying. The sales rep should ask the prospect to elaborate on the turnover rate, response time, and quality of work being produced.

It is critical to put a dollar figure on the level of service the prospect is receiving (or not) and to identify the value added that your staffing firm would provide. For example, if the current level of service is resulting in high turnover, the sales rep should follow up by asking about the impact of turnover on the company’s operations. Then the sales rep should probe further to determine the financial cost to the company.

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The sales rep might discover that not having enough qualified temporary and contract employees requires the prospect to close down the production line. The next probing questions might be these: “What does that cost the company? Are there lost sales because you are not able to get your product out?” The cost might be substantial if a production line is shut down or if rework is necessary because of poor quality.

Be sure that your sales representatives are thorough when probing so that they can truly understand the challenges facing the prospect and their effect on business.

KEY #6: Answer and Clarify

It is critical that the sales representative answer the prospect’s objections—specifically and completely—to make the sale. If, for example, the sales rep has learned that turnover has required the prospect to shut down its production line, he or she can say, “Our solution can actually save you \$25,000—the cost of having to close down your production line.”

Once your staffing firm’s solution has been presented, the sales rep should continue to ask probing questions to make sure that the prospect’s concerns have been addressed and the sales rep has made clear how your firm can meet his or her company’s needs.

By embracing resistance and effectively handling objections, your sales team—and your staffing firm—will be soar high above of the competition!

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Theresa Jordan is owner of the staffing industry consulting, coaching and training company Jordan Staffing Resources, LLC. With over 20 years staffing industry and management-related experience, Theresa is a veteran staffing industry consultant and trainer. The process she uses is completely unique and customized based on individual staffing company needs and goals. The results are that companies and individuals will have a structure and process in place that will have a positive impact on increasing profitable market share. You can contact her for more information at 248 719-0078 or email her at info@jordan-staffing-resources.com. Visit our web page at www.jordan-staffing-resources.com for a complete list of our affordable staffing industry products and services available.

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