



Cold Calling Objection Handling Playbook

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Introduction



If you're a sales rep working in B2B, and you're making cold calls every day, then you'll know that getting objections from your prospects is inevitable.

If you're a sales rep working in B2B, and you're making cold calls every day, then you'll know that getting objections from your prospects is inevitable. Almost every prospect you talk to will have objections of some sort.

All B2B salespeople have to learn how to handle objections during their cold calls - which is why Cognism is offering this free guide to cold calling objection handling.

We've spoken to some of Cognism's star salespeople, who helped us to grow exponentially over the last 12 months (a 657% growth in revenue in 2018). They are experts in cold call objection handling and they've shared their five-point plan for dealing with objections. We'll also take a look at the top four most common objections that Cognism Sales has faced on their cold calls - and how to resolve them. Let's get started!

What are objections?

- ✓ An objection is when a prospect raises a concern about the product or service the salesperson is selling.
- ✓ Objection handling is the process whereby a sales rep answers and works to alleviate a prospect's concerns.
- ✓ Being able to handle objections effectively can determine whether a deal is won or lost.

An objection is when a prospect raises a concern about the product or service the salesperson is selling. They can be about anything, but some of the most frequent objections you'll encounter will be around price, need and timing.

One important point that salespeople often forget is that objections aren't a sign that the prospect isn't interested. Quite the opposite, in fact - they're an indicator that the prospect is interested, but doesn't yet have a full understanding of your product or service. It's your job as a salesperson to give them that understanding.

WHAT IS OBJECTION HANDLING?

Objection handling is the process whereby a sales rep answers and works to alleviate a prospect's concerns. It's about filling in the gaps in their knowledge and guiding them to a position where they're ready to purchase.

Remember that most objections are entirely valid. You can't just brush them off. You have to provide insight and give the prospect a compelling reason to buy from you.

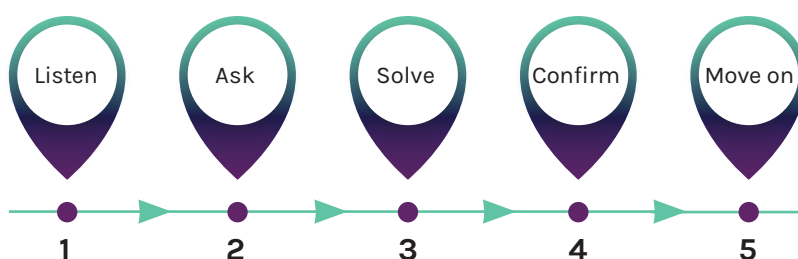
WHY IS OBJECTION HANDLING IMPORTANT?

Being able to handle objections effectively can determine whether a deal is won or lost.

Always address objections on your cold call as quickly as you can. The longer you leave it, the stronger the prospect's concerns will become - and the harder it will be for you to change their mind.

Cognism's five-point plan for cold call objection handling

In B2B sales, preparation makes perfect. This is especially true when it comes to handling objections, which could come at any time during your cold call and be about any subject. Don't improvise and make it hard for yourself. Instead, ensure you have a process in place. Cognism's sales team uses the following five-point plan when they face objections on their cold calls. It's formed the basis of our own objection handling playbook.



The prospect should do 70% of the talking, while the sales rep should only do 30%.

1. LISTEN

It sounds like an obvious point to make but a lot of sales reps forget to do this. In their rush to make a sale, they talk more than they listen.

This is the wrong approach. The best salespeople are always those who listen. One rule of communication during a sales call - [the 70/30 rule](#) - states that the prospect should do 70% of the talking, while the sales rep should only do 30%. What's the benefit of doing this? The more the prospect feels like they're being heard and understood, the more likely they are to buy. Listening to their objections is the first step to making a sale more probable.

Here's another useful stat for you: when buyers were asked what they wanted from salespeople, 69% answered: "to listen to my needs." Your prospects are crying out for it! So stop talking and listen to their objections. The more you listen, the more you'll learn - and the knowledge you'll gain will help you out massively when it's your turn to respond.



The more information you gain from the prospect, the easier it'll be to handle their objections.

2. ASK

Listening is one thing; letting the prospect know that you understand their objections is another. A great way of doing this is to ask qualifying questions. It will help to build up trust and rapport with your prospect.

We recommend that you always ask open-ended questions (questions that don't require a "yes" or "no" answer). Asking these types of questions will let the prospect know that you're interested in what they have to say - and it's also a great method for getting more information out of them. The more information you gain from the prospect, the easier it'll be to handle their objections.



One good tip from Cognism Sales is to answer the prospect's most urgent objection first.



One good piece of advice from Cognism Sales is to repeat the prospect's words back to them.



Don't spend more time on one objection than is strictly necessary.

3. SOLVE

Once you've listened and indicated your understanding of the prospect's objections, then it's time to solve them. This step requires some quick and nimble thinking. The best thing to do is to stay calm and think about what you've done in the past. How have you handled objections for other, similar companies? Over time, you will build up a library of solutions you can deploy whenever they're needed.

One good tip from Cognism Sales is to answer the prospect's most urgent objection first. The reason for this is, once you've resolved that, it makes answering all the other, less troublesome objections much easier. You've shown that you can be trusted and it will make the prospect feel much more certain that you have the solutions they're looking for.

4. CONFIRM

In this step, you have to find out if the solution you've offered meets the prospect's requirements. Ask them if they're happy with what you've suggested. If they are - great! You can continue with your cold call. If not, you'll have to go back and make sure if you've fully understood the objection. Ask some more questions and see if the prospect's answers point at an alternative solution.

One good piece of advice from Cognism Sales is to repeat the prospect's words back to them - for example, if they've objected to the pricing, you can say, "I understand the pricing is higher than you expected." This is an easy tactic for confirming your understanding of the objection.

5. MOVE ON

When the customer is satisfied with your solution, then you can both move on to the next step in the cold call. This could be either facing another objection or (hopefully!) closing the deal.

Don't spend more time on one objection than is strictly necessary. Listen to the objection, ask questions, define it, provide a solution - and then progress to the next one. Never go back to an objection once you've addressed it.

6. BONUS TIP: WHAT IF YOU DON'T HAVE THE ANSWER?

If the prospect asks you something that you genuinely feel you can't answer - don't blag it! Tell the prospect you'll have to refer their question upwards - and always, always agree on a timeframe for you to supply a response.

Four common B2B sales objections - and how to handle them

At Cognism, we teach our SDRs to qualify leads according to the BANT criteria:



BUDGET

Is the lead able and willing to spend?



AUTHORITY

Is the lead the ultimate decision maker?



NEED

Does the lead have a problem that your product can solve?



TIMING

Is the lead looking to buy quickly?

The most common objections you'll encounter in B2B sales will be based around one of these four areas. We've consulted with our sales team and they've selected the four objections they see most often during their cold calls. Each of the four objections corresponds to a particular part of the BANT criteria. They've also supplied the best tactics for dealing with these objections. Following their advice can make all the difference between losing and winning a sale!



You have to give the prospect a compelling reason to buy from you.

Have some suitable case studies and testimonials to hand during your cold call.

1. BUDGET

"I don't have the money to buy."

First, find out more about the reasons behind the objection. Is it genuinely that the price is too high, or is it that the prospect doesn't see the value of your product for the price they'll have to pay?

If it is that the price is too high, emphasise the value of your product or what makes you different from the competition. If they don't see the value, explain how your product will change their life for the better! This could be anything from saving them time or money, or helping them to generate leads and revenue. You have to give the prospect a compelling reason to buy from you.

A compelling reason needn't necessarily be based around pricing or cost. It could be anything from certain product features, the level of customer service that your company provides, or customer reviews.

If the prospect still has an objection, try to avoid the temptation of going straight to discounting. Doing this can all too quickly devalue your product. If the prospect has a pricing objection, there are other things you can suggest instead of taking money off. Perhaps consider bespoke payment terms that help spread the cost of investment, without reducing the overall price.

Another strategy for resolving a pricing issue is to bring up some of your company's success stories. Prove that other organisations are



Maybe you can provide some information that will stop them from referring their query upwards.



Provide the prospect with some data that displays the difference your product can make.

Keep up to date with the content your business is publishing and utilise it in your objection handling.

achieving results with your platform and that the expenditure is worth it. Mention some satisfied customers who work in the same industry as your prospect (this is a very important point - whichever customers you mention, they must be relevant to the prospect). Have some suitable case studies and testimonials to hand during your cold call.

2. AUTHORITY

"I'll have to speak to my boss about this before deciding."

To handle this objection, start by confirming what the prospect's concerns are. Maybe you can provide some information that will stop them from referring their query upwards. If you play this right, you can turn the prospect into a champion for your product. They can help you get the buy-in you'll need from the ultimate decision maker.

If that doesn't work, and a third party has to be involved, immediately arrange a time to speak with them.

3. NEED

"We really don't need your product right now."

With this objection, you need to get to the root of the problem. What's stopping them from buying? It may be that the prospect loves certain product features, but not others. It may be that they just can't see (yet!) how your product will help them.

Two things will assist you here: data and content.

Provide the prospect with some data that displays the difference your product can make. Always have two to three stats nearby whenever you're cold calling. However, check that the stats you've chosen are relevant to the prospect's industry or business. There's no value in sharing sales statistics with a marketer, for instance, or giving revenue growth data from your enterprise clients to a startup!

Make use of the materials produced by your marketing team (if you have one!). Come prepared to the cold call with a couple of appropriate customer case studies. If the prospect has a couple of very specific questions, maybe you can direct them to a blog or two on your company website. Keep up to date with the content your business is publishing and utilise it in your objection handling. Perhaps suggest scheduling in a regular content meeting between sales and marketing, so both teams are properly aligned.

4. TIMING

"It's not the right time for us to buy."

How you handle this objection all boils down to the prospect's reason for delaying. But whatever their reason is, the most important thing to do is to create a sense of urgency. Remind the prospect of the costs of not buying your product now.

This is where all the research and information you've gained during your cold call will come in handy. Use what you've learned to turn the objection on its head. Here are a few scenarios from Cognism's sales team to get you thinking:



Maybe the prospect's company is launching a major new project or initiative. Can your product help them out at this critical phase?



Has the prospect's company recently acquired funding? Show them how your product is a wise investment and can take their business to the next level.



Has the prospect only recently joined the company? Tell them your product can help them to achieve great results and make a big impression early on.



Perhaps the prospect's business had a bad quarter. Is there an opportunity for your product to turn their fortunes around?



If the objection is based around an incoming hire with ultimate decision-making power, explain to the prospect how your product will enable them to become even better at their job once they arrive.



The trick is to turn each disadvantage into an advantage.

The trick is to turn each disadvantage into an advantage. The bottom line is - investigate each objection, ask searching questions, uncover the reason behind each one - and then use the information to handle them effectively.

Conclusion



By learning how to handle objections smartly, you will increase your chances of closing a sale.

Knowing how to address objections during a cold call is a key skill that all B2B salespeople have to master. Especially so if you're working in a scaling business, which may have limited manpower, resources and technology at its disposal. When you're scaling, you need all the wins that you can get!

By learning how to handle objections smartly, you will increase your chances of closing a sale. Hopefully you've found this guide useful. When you've finished reading it, be sure to get back on the phone and try out some of Cognism's winning strategies. Good luck - and keep calling!

TAKE ACTION

Cognism can supply your B2B sales team with all the data they'll need to make handling cold call objections even easier. From sales triggers that tell you when a prospect is most likely to buy, to data enrichment that automatically updates out-of-date records in your company CRM - Cognism is the number one toolkit for a scaling sales operation.

Book your free, 15-minute demo with us now!

[Request a demo](#)

Cognism is a sales acceleration platform, using patented AI technology, to provide B2B sales teams with a blend of real-time company, people and event data to streamline prospecting, find and deliver new revenue.

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