

Transcript – GET to YES Podcast

E6: B2B Handling Sales Objections 'The Rule of 3' – Public

The most common question I get asked is... "How do I handle objections?" Yes, regardless of whether you're selling to owners of beauty salons, skin clinics, hairdressing salons or spray tan salons, it seems the question you most want answered, is... "What do I say when the salon or clinic owners says 'NO'? Or when they push back, or give me an excuse or reason not to buy?"

The thing that most sales people fear most, are sales objections. So, in this series of three podcasts, I'm going to share three simple steps, that will help you understand and overcome most sales objections. I've termed my approach, as the 'Rule of 3.'

But first, before I explain that let's define a sales objection, so we're all on the same page. A good definition is:

"Any hindrance voiced by the client, that if unaddressed, prevents you from moving to the next step in your sales conversation, or your sales process."

Let's put that into context. You're in a beauty salon, skin clinic or a hairdressing salon. You're presenting your new retail range to the owner... enthusiastically doing all the talking, and they hit you with a sales objection, like "We have heaps of retail and we don't need anymore." How would you handle that? What would be your approach? What would you say?

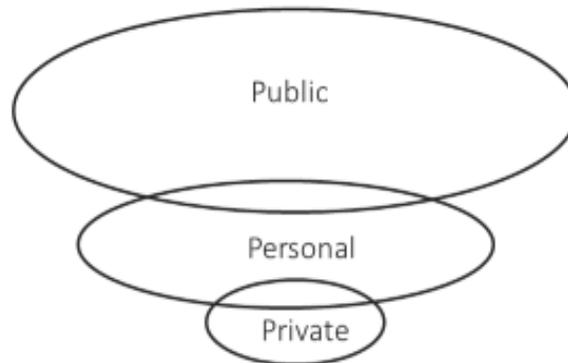
When I'm out doing in-field training, most sales people I observe move into either 'fight or flight.' Yep that's right, they FIGHT by stepping up and taking on the objection and as a result, unfortunately learn that debating is not a good strategy when you're trying to persuade a buyer. Or they FLIGHT... meaning that they retreat, back down or change the subject.

Hmm... which are you? Unfortunately, neither behaviour gets you closer to a sale, let alone your monthly budget.

Let's have a look at the statement, "We have heaps of retail and we don't need anymore" and break it down into pieces. Where are the specifics? There are no specifics, that's why many sales people find it difficult to handle, let alone overcome it as an objection.

This is where my 'Rule of 3' comes into play. Picture in your mind, or if you can, draw three layers of intersecting circles, or ovals. Here's how: draw a large oval from left to right, then draw a second oval, about 2/3rd the size, directly under the first one and slightly overlapping, and finally draw a third oval again about 2/3rd the size of the second, directly under and slightly overlapping. Now you have three ovals, stacked on top of each other, in descending size.

THE RULE OF THREE



In the top oval, write the word PUBLIC. In the second, write PERSONAL and in the smallest oval, write PRIVATE.

The objection just mentioned, (“We have heaps of retail and we don’t need anymore”) is what I call a ‘public’ objection. That’s an objection that a buyer will openly admit to anyone, or as the term suggests, they may even mention it publicly (to friends or in front of staff or clients). It could even be an objection that a salon owner has previously used when they’ve felt pressured by a sales person, and they found it worked.

Let’s break an objection down further. Basically, an objection is a fob-off, or an excuse. So, the real question is, how do you deal with it effectively?

Your goal is to be perceived differently, and not just different for different’s sake, but rather to develop the ability to shift... and understand things from your client’s perspective. Most importantly, you need to behave in a different manner than other unskilled salespeople, otherwise buyers will treat you the same as them.

So, how do you deal with a PUBLIC objection? Firstly, you don’t take it on, nor do you fight or flight.

You simply say, “THAT’S NOT A PROBLEM” add a brief pause, then pop out a question...

My preferred question is “Can you tell me a little bit more about that”

And then pause.

Let’s do that again:

Objection: “We have heaps of retail and we don’t need anymore”

You say, “That’s not a problem”

Slight pause

Then ask “Can you tell me a little bit more about that”

Another slight pause

Actively listen to what they say, and they'll tell you lots, lots more

What happens now, is that the client's thoughts are so focused on what she's just said, that when asked "Can you tell me a little bit more about that" they go on to explain more about their situation and offer you more information. For example, they may say "Well my girls aren't good at retail, Jenny never sells anything, Sue is Ok but only if they ask first, as for Mary, well don't get me started!"

WOW, so much information! You now need to decide if what are you're dealing with is a sales objection, or a training opportunity. Is now the right time to jump in and explain your ideas for training – NO, NOT YET! There's more coming in the next episode...

Let's review how you got here, with so much information at your fingertips: You were doing your presentation, endeavouring to balance it more as a conversation than a pushy telling style, because you're starting to realise and understand that TELLING AIN'T SELLING. Because, to stand out as a professional sales person you need to conduct yourself differently –not for different sake, but rather to disassociate yourself from the behaviours and language that buyers associate with poorly trained unskilled sales people.

Let's get back to the sales call...

The client raised an objection, you were pacing your conversation and therefore found it easy to stop and hear:

1. The sales objection "We have heaps of retail and we don't need anymore"
2. You then demonstrated empathy, and considered their response from their perspective
3. You then realised that what you were being offered, was a PUBLIC objection
4. You responded with "THAT'S NOT A PROBLEM"
5. Slight pause
6. Then you asked a question "Can you tell me a little bit more about that"
7. And actively listened to the client's answer, using some aha, ok, huh, yeah, which encouraged them to keep talking and tell you more.

So far, we've taken the edge off the sales objection and reached a point where you've not only found out a part of the 'why', but you've also found out that the real reason is something you can solve.

At this point, I'd like to offer you a challenge. When I first started to shift my selling style from telling, to a more questioning based style, I must admit I struggled. I can clearly remember the first time I tried a questioning sales style... it was at Insignia Hair Design in Seaforth; Karen and I had become quite friendly over the years, so I thought she was a great client to practice my newly learned skill on. Well, I'd never felt so embarrassed as I stumbled to ask decent questions that would get me more information. I still feel the blush of embarrassment. So, my challenge for you, is to practice this new behaviour – actively practice asking questions, rather than telling your clients. Next time you incur a sales objection, practice asking the questions we've just gone through. Practice listening to your client with the intent to understand, rather than the intent to interrupt. Then you'll be ready for the next episode, where we'll unpack the PERSONAL level of handling sales objections.

