

HANDLING OBJECTIONS

SITUATION #1

In this situation, the Representative will answer the prospect's concerns about the cost of the program. Read how the Representative shifts the prospect's emphasis from cost to value by reconfirming many of ITT Tech's benefits.

Prospect: I like the program, but it just seems like it's very expensive.

Representative: Let me ask you, is it the cost of the program or your ability to pay that you're concerned about?

Prospect: It's the cost. I know the community college offers a similar program for a lot less.

Representative: NAME, you have every right to be concerned about that because your education is really your investment in the future, and you want to get the most for your dollar, right?

Prospect: I sure do.

Representative: That's good because ITT Tech offers some advantages that make it more attractive than most other programs—especially for someone who wants to develop marketable skills like you do. However, these benefits are expensive to provide. Let's review some on these. To begin with, we offer a full array of student services, which include....(LIST)..and that really helps the learning process. No don't you agree those are important features to have in the program you choose?

Prospect: Yeah, I guess so.

Representative: You know, NAME, a long time ago, ITT Tech made a major decision—it is easier to explain price once than it is to apologize for quality forever. I'll bet you agree that we made the right decision, don't you think?

Prospect: That makes sense.

Representative: Good. NAME, the next thing I need is some information...

The Representative was successful because he had already established the prospect's commitment to education as an investment in the future. By reconfirming benefits that have reinforced the prospect's commitment, the Representative could establish ITT Tech as a logical and worthwhile choice.

SITUATION #2

In this situation, the Representative must help the prospect make a decision between ITT Tech and the state university. The Representative uses an approach and a personal experience that allows

to dramatically reconfirm many of the benefits she had already presented as well as add new information.

Prospect: It sounds good but I can't decide between ITT Tech and the state university.

Representative: NAME, I can understand how you feel and you have every right to be concerned about making the best decision. I'd like to make a suggestion. My father taught me a valuable technique for making important decisions. He told me if the decision is the right thing to do, he wanted me to do it. If it wasn't the right thing, then he wanted me to avoid it. Isn't that about how you feel?

Prospect: Yeah.

Representative: Here's what my father had me do. He'd have me take a sheet of paper and draw a line down the middle. On one side, he'd have me write "Yes" and under that I'd list all the reasons favoring the decision. On the other side, he'd have me write "No" and beneath it I'd write all the reasons against the decision. When I was through, I simply weighed the items in each column and the decision was made for me.

Prospect: Ok.

Representative: Let's see, you said you wanted a practical education that's relevant to your future career, right?

Prospect: That's correct.

Representative: You said you wanted to complete your education as quickly as possible so that you can get a head start on your career...that's an important reason. Are there any others we've left out?

Prospect: Well, availability of lab time.

Representative: That's right. We don't want to forget that. Any others?

Prospect: Not that I can think of.

Representative: Well, I guess that completes that side. Now let's see what reasons we can think of for not applying to ITT Tech.

Prospect: Let's see, the state university is a little closer to home. The tuition is less. I know several people who will be going there...and they do have lots of fraternities.

Representative: Are you finished?

Prospect: I guess so.

Representative: Well, NAME, let's count them up. Why don't we start with the reasons for--one, two, three...thirteen, fourteen. Now the reasons against--one, two, three...seven, eight. Now I realize that

we may not have come up with every reason—pro or con, but the list is fairly complete. Don't you agree?

Prospect: Yeah, I guess it is.

Representative: Then if you consider the information here, the decision is pretty evident, isn't it?

Prospect: You're probably right.

Representative: If that's the case, NAME, then we need to go ahead and apply for your admission....

The Representative used the "Balance Sheet Approach" to answer the prospect's objection. This approach has been used successfully for years in many formats. It works so well because it is both as logical and graphic method for making decisions. One of the keys to using it is how you introduce it. The more personal and sincere your introduction, the more effective the results will be. Use this as an example but find ways to personalize your own approach to fit your personality and style.

SITUATION #3

"I want to think it over" is a very common "smoke screen" that you will hear quite frequently. The Representative empathetically and persistently questions the prospects "smoke screen" until he identifies the real objection.

Prospect: I guess I just want to think it over. After all, you're the first school I've really looked at.

Representative: I see. Tell me specifically what you are concerned about.

Prospect: I don't know, I'm just not sure. It's a big decision.

Representative: I can appreciate that. Since you are interested, you want to give this decision careful consideration, right? But just to clarify my thinking, what is it that you wanted to think over? Is it the quality of the education you'd receive at ITT Tech?

Prospect: No, ITT Tech is a great school.

Representative: Is it going to school during the summer?

Prospect: No, I like the idea of being able to complete the program in less time.

Representative: Are you concerned about working part time?

Prospect: No, it's not that. I guess I'm just not sure I can handle all of the math. You know, it's been a few years since I've been in school.

Representative: I see. Then you're concerned about the amount of math in the program and your ability to handle it. Is that right?

Prospect: That's pretty much it.

Representative: I can appreciate how you feel, NAME. But you have gotten the wrong impression about our _____ program. Let's review the course descriptions in the catalog and see if I can answer your concerns about math. To begin with.....and that's the extent of the math in our _____ program. Now can you see where it's fairly well suited to your interest and abilities? We also offer tutoring, free of charge, if you need additional help.

SUMMARY

Now that you've seen responses to different objections, let's review the concepts.

We began by classifying objections into three basic categories: "smoke screens," irresolvable conditions, and real objections.

Next, we talked about the three principles to follow whenever you encounter an objection:

- Don't argue
- Protect the buying committee's ego
- Lead people to answer their own objections

Then we discussed neutralizing and resolving objections, the two ways you can handle the concerns of the buying committee. Neutralizing objections during the interview is by far the most effective.

Next, you were given a six-step method for resolving objections:

- Listen and hear the prospect out
- Acknowledge the legitimacy of the prospect's concern
- Clarify the prospect's concern
- Answer the objection
- Confirm your answer with the prospect
- Complete the finalization process

Finally, we outlined five techniques for answering objections:

- Provide new information
- Reconfirm benefits
- Describe an alternative plan
- Clarify information that was misunderstood
- Turn a stated negative into a positive

Objections can be your road map to successful presentations. Each objection is an opportunity to satisfy the concerns of the buying committee and move the interview closer to a positive decision.

Keep the following points in mind when you begin to apply the material covered here:

- Don't be misled into thinking that resolving objections can save a poor presentation. The purpose of answering objections is to get you "back on track" with the buying committee and to move their decision in a positive direction.
- Your answer to an objection must be built on a foundation. That foundation must be built during the normal course of the interview.
- Be prepared to use several techniques or combination of techniques when answering an objection.
- Always be looking for buying signals when resolving objections.
- The key to becoming skilled in neutralizing and resolving objections is to learn the basic concepts and techniques and then personalize your responses by studying, practicing and critiquing your presentations.