

## Overcoming Objections

- Ask: “Why do objections occur?”
  - *Because there are doubts or unanswered questions in the mind of the prospect*
  - *Because the prospect is interested but wants to make sure they are making the right decision (it is often habit for people to give objections when making a big decision)*

*Remember, if the prospect*

- *wasn't really interested, they a) wouldn't have inquired, and b) wouldn't continue talking to you*
- Today, we are going to brainstorm some objections, talk about their rebuttals, and discuss how to present our product and answer questions to not provide more objections to the prospect.
  - Before we get started, I am going to share an analogy to put our minds at ease when we get objections. *In any relationship you will not find perfection, there is usually a list of things you love about someone and a list of things you just cant stand. However, in life, we make the decision regarding what we are willing to deal with in order to get the things we love. Buying any product is like that, there is usually a whole list of things we like, and some not so desirable things about that product. Your job is to make our prospects understand how the great things in our program out way the things they don't like and help them figure out if the things they don't like will work for them.*
- Brainstorm:
  - “What objections do you think come up most often when on the phone with prospective students?”
    - Cost
    - Time to completion
    - Time Commitment
    - Spouse/Family/third Party
    - Credibility
    - Support system (lack of face-to-face)
    - Start Date (urgency)
    - Shopping
- Discuss rebuttals:
  - Cost
    - Financial aid, tuition pay
    - If they say they don't want (or can't do) financial aid, find out why, often prospects think that they are not qualified when they are
  - Time to completion
    - Find out how long they were planning to spend in the program
    - Discuss that our time to completion is realistic, however, since a lot of our programs are self paced, they can speed it up.
    - Often schools that have much shorter programs either are not accredited, or if they are, they are packing the same amount of work into a shorter time frame which is not realistic for students who work, etc.
  - Time Commitment

- Find out what they have on their plate.
- Discuss when they can fit the work in (that it's about 15-20 hours per week)
- Have them tell you when it would work for them
- Convenience and flexibility of an online program (that they won't have to spend extra time commuting)
- A lot of our programs are self paced (i.e. KAM programs that they can move through at a faster or slower paced)
- Spouse/Family/Third Party
  - Encourage them to talk with their third party
  - Discuss what the third party will want to know so you can prepare them with the best information
  - Offer them for you to speak with them if they have questions
  - Give them a deadline to discuss things and follow up so you can answer any further questions that the third party might have
- Credibility
  - Walden was established in 1970
  - Walden is regionally accredited by the Higher Learning Commission and a member of the North Central Association
  - Show them faculty and alumni profiles
- Support system (lack of face-to-face)
  - Discuss Student Services
    - ◆ Student manager, CMT, academic advisors, library, librarians, writing center, and you!
  - Discuss the structure of the classes and discussion board and how much interaction there is
- Start Date (urgency)
  - Find out why they don't want to start now
  - Use foundations class as an easy way to ease into the program
- Shopping
  - Don't discourage them from shopping
  - Understand what they are comparing and make sure they have the best information from us to make that decision
  - Give them a deadline to do that research and set an appointment to follow up after so you can answer any other questions
  - Never talk bad about our competitors! Never give out any information about our competitors and their programs.
  - *(Schools change their programs all the time, and it leaves us liable if we give out misinformation regarding another school).*
- Ask:
  - "What would you do if I was a prospect and asked you a question?" (The standard answer is to answer it)
  - "Okay, what do I need to get into your program?"

- Depending on the EA's answer, explain why we need to clarify what they are asking and why. (See example below)
- Prospects often ask questions to find out what is most important to them. This is a clue to the Enrollment Advisor that it might be a possible objection later on if they don't get the answer they are looking for. If they know why the prospect is really asking the question, then and only then should they answer it. Otherwise, the EA might give them another objection before they really have one.
  - AC<sup>2</sup>
    - Acknowledge the question that they asked.
    - Clarify the question to make sure you understand what they are asking
    - Clarify the question to make sure you understand why they are asking
  - Example:
    - Prospect – What are your requirements for entering the program?
    - Enrollment Advisor – There are different circumstances in which one can be admitted to the program. Tell me a bit more about your educational background and we can discuss whether you would meet our minimum requirements.
      - *The reason one would want to qualify the question before asking it is so they don't bring objections upon themselves. A person who graduated from Harvard with a 3.9 GPA may not want to go to a school that allows someone who graduated from Imaginary College with a 2.5 GPA to be accepted. Once one understands where the prospect is coming from it makes it easier to answer questions without getting tangled in more objections.*
- Spitfire ball - role-play game
  - Break the class into two groups. One group is the Objection Group, the other is the Rebuttal Group.
  - The Objection Group will state objections prospects might have, then throw the ball to someone in the Rebuttal Group. That person will state a rebuttal they could use to overcome the prospect's objection. The rebuttal person will then throw it to someone on the objection group. Then switch groups.

Full role-play. Break the group into triads to roleplay the entire conversation from the opening through MAPSOR. Today, they should concentrate on overcoming the prospect's objections. Have one person be the EA, one the prospect, and one the observer. (Give the observer a role-play observer sheet).