

# How to Use Success Stories to Overcome Sales Objections

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When it comes to the importance of follow-up, we've all seen the statistics: More than half (60%) of buyers say "no" four times before they say "yes." And yet, 44% of sales reps give up after just one follow-up.

It seems many tele-sales and inside sales reps would rather play the numbers game and move on to the next lead rather than follow up with a prospect multiple times. Instead, your salespeople might be better off focusing on their techniques for overcoming sales objections. One way to do that is through storytelling.

## **Why Storytelling Works**

Someone once said, "Facts tell, stories sell." In other words, if you want to capture a buyer's attention, establish an emotional connection, and reinforce your key points,

tell them a story.

According to Stanford researchers, people retain up to 70% of your message when wrapped in a story while remembering just 5 to 10% of the facts in a typical sales pitch. Cognitive psychologist Jerome Bruner found much the same results. He reported that people are 22 times more likely to remember the information presented in a story.

We are naturally drawn to stories. More importantly, when the stories are well crafted and on point, we connect and visualize the information.

So when your sales reps follow up on leads, they can work through a prospect's noes and I don't-knows with the power of story. Here are several steps you can share that will help them put storytelling to work.

### **Be Prepared**

When using storytelling to overcome sales objections, the stories need to be carefully crafted to include critical data. These are not stories invented on the fly. It helps to build a library of success stories that cover the most common objections. Encourage your reps to pool the story ideas that help turn stalled leads into prospects. Then have them practice delivering the ideal story for each situation with confidence.

### **To Stay on Point, Listen Carefully to the Objection**

There are many reasons why buyers throw out objections, and some of them are designed to deflect a rep's sales pitch. The prepared agent will detect deflection efforts and have a powerful success story at hand to counter them.

It's critical to listen to the prospect and interpret the concern. Is it really a price objection? Is it a matter of wanting to understand the value benefits fully? Does the prospect need more brand assurance to trust you? Or are there quality concerns that need to be addressed?

Your reps can't go into a follow-up conversation with pre-selected stories. They need to read the buyer and draw on carefully chosen stories to address any concern.

### **Provide Evidence**

When building their stories, reps should carefully select the details and include key facts and figures that help cement the case. In other words, your agents can use the power of storytelling to plant some essential data points that are pertinent to the story and reinforce the message.

### **Focus on Outcome**

It's best to start with the problem that a client encountered and showcase your company's ability to solve it, going the extra mile to do so. Facts and figures are essential, but a good success story focuses on an outcome that addresses the prospect's concern. In other words, a story appeals to a buyer on an emotional level and paints a picture of success—increased ROI, greater productivity, expanded customer base, shorter sales cycles, etc. The story's objective is to answer buyers' concerns and encourage them to see themselves experiencing those positive outcomes.

### **Always Be Honest**

It can be tempting to make up stories to deliver the facts, figures and outcomes that will sell a prospect. Don't! Stick to real-world accounts.

Reps will be excited to relate how your business can help others and will convey that enthusiasm to prospects. Thus, they can build trust and confidence.

### **Have a Follow-Up to the Follow-Up**

Once a salesperson shares a story with the prospect, they need to confirm that the question or concern is answered. Next, reps need to ensure that no other issues are festering in the prospect's head.

Finally, your reps need to address the next steps. For instance, they might schedule a follow-up meeting, set up a product demo or trial period, or even ask for the sale.

It takes sales persistence to set follow-up meetings, cut through objections and move the prospect to a "yes," but with the strategic use of success stories, your reps can win more business.

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