

# *Objection Free Selling*

## “Flashcard Learning”

### Contest Guide

#### **Contest Purpose:**

The purpose of this contest is to motivate every salesperson on your team(s) to develop personalized strategies and scripts they can use to prevent, preempt, and respond to every sales objection they get. The contest is designed to test their learning in a fun and safe environment while under pressure. The end result is to create skills they can use reflexively in the field to generate more sales with higher profits.

#### **Contest Overview:**

Using the guides provided in the book, *Objection Free Selling*, salespeople will identify the objections they get and write them on index cards. On the other side of the card, they will write the strategies and scripts they will use to prevent, preempt, and respond to them. These are used as flashcards during the learning process with team members. During contest time, the salesperson will hold the cards up for a manager to select one. The manager will then challenge the salesperson to handle the objection as described on that card. With each success, that card is taken out of play and immediate rewards, in the form of certificates redeemable for prizes, are handed to the sales person. At the conclusion of the contest, the teams with the most points win. Team members and managers are awarded prizes. The contest creates a high-energy fun environment for everyone involved.

#### **Contest-Driven Learning:**

Contests work well in driving objection handling methods home because they create pressure for salespeople to learn and perform just as they experience in the field. The psychology of “state-dependent learning” demonstrates that it’s easier to recall information when you’re in the same state (mental, physical, and environmental) as when you learned it. If the skills are to be used in a stressful situation then they need to be learned in a stressful situation. The pressure to learn and the stress under which the learning will take place are produced by:

- individual’s drive to achieve and win
- rewards of the contest

- individual – immediate
- team – cumulative
- time pressure – limited time to learn and later to answer
- managers – scoring answers (pass / fail)
- peers – contest for team prizes also means helping peers succeed
- performing in front of peers

### **Targeted Outcomes:**

The bottom-line for this contest is to build and train sales teams to dramatically reduce the number of sales stopping objections they get to generate higher volumes of sales at increased levels of profit.

How can we accomplish that goal?

The single focus is on teaching the salespeople the knowledge, skills, and strategies they need to prevent, preempt, and respond to the actual objections they get in the field. At the end of the contest, participating salespeople will have the contents for their personalized Sales Strategy Book including:

1. Competitor Analysis data that tells them:
  - Objections they should expect against each competitor and the information they need to neutralize these objections.
  - Unique Selling Points they can use to differentiate themselves from the competition and the information they need to answer the otherwise unanswerable objections.
2. Strategies and scripts to prevent, preempt, and respond to specific sales objections they get when going up against the competitors used in the contest.
3. The knowledge, skills, and experience to develop competitor analyses and to personalize objection handling methods that will work for them.

Sales managers will have a more team orient staff willing to share ways to improve each other's sales knowledge and skills. They will have a Sales Strategy Book for new salespeople that contain Competitor Analyses and proven ways to prevent, preempt, and respond to most objections the in-the-field team faces.

Team building is a natural outcome that will result from the drills, support, and comradery provided by team members. This will translate into sharing objection handling ideas about other competitors and that will translate into more profitable sales.

## In this document:

- Contest Preparation
- Sponsor Preparation
- Contest Leader
- Participant Preparation
- Manager Preparation
- Contest Action

## Contest Preparation (Management Team)

1. Provide a paperback copy of the book *“Objection Free Selling: How to Prevent, Preempt, and Respond to Every Objection You Get”* by Robert DeGroot, to those involved in the contest process including:
  - Salespeople (contestants)
  - Sales managers
  - Product managers
  - Marketing managers
  - Others who will be a part of the judging manager team
  - Others who normally are copied on meeting content
2. Conduct an Objection Free Selling session using the facilitators guide, *How to Facilitate “Objection Free Selling” Learning Activities*. The guide is free with a minimum purchase of one carton (24) of books from any source. For more information, contact [info@SalesTrainingInternational.com](mailto:info@SalesTrainingInternational.com).
  - The session can be orchestrated at a sales meeting by individual sales managers, trainers, or coaches, or it could be done by teleconference.
  - The session is designed to be conducted during local, regional or national sales meetings. The session should be conducted as early in the meeting as possible to allow ample learning and contest time.
  - OPTION TO FACILITATED SESSIONS: Salespeople can be instructed to select their top five objections and follow the instructions in the book to develop and personalize strategies and scripts prior to attending a sales meeting or participating in alternative contest methods such as teleconferences and email.
3. Measure results. Start by identifying sales that were lost due to objections from select competitors’ products/services pre-contest and compare with the results post-contest. The questions to answer:
  - “Are those objections we identified continuing to stop sales?”
  - “What new objections need to be dealt with by our newly trained teams?”

- “What increases in sales are we seeing?”
  - “What increases in profits are we seeing?”
4. Set threshold numbers of sales attempts to ensure a level playing field for prizes that are awarded based on post-contest sales results averages. Measurements should consist of readily available information such as:
- Number of qualified prospects to sales won and to sales lost.
  - Objections that resulted in the lost sales.
  - Dollar value of the sales lost.
  - Dollar value of sales won.
  - Dollar value or percent of profit improvement.

### **Sponsor preparation (Executive Management)**

1. Select and authorize prizes for individual achievements.
  - a. This should be something that can be handed out immediately during the contest. Funny money bills or certificates that can be traded for an increasingly valuable set of prizes. They can also be easily carried by judging managers.
  - b. Prepare a prize catalog which is always welcomed by contestants.
2. Select and authorize prizes for teams.
  - a. These can be given at the awards dinner.
  - b. Should be based on the cumulative amount of points of team members.
  - c. This can extend to regional prizes based on the company’s structure and levels of participation.
  - d. Select prizes for the winning team(s) sales managers.
3. Authorize the Contest Preparation Budget.
4. Authorize the Meeting and Event Budget.
5. Select a Contest Leader.

### **Contest Leader**

1. The “Contest Leader” is responsible for the details of the contest including:
  - Start and end times
  - When the contest is active and when it’s being paused such as during other presentations, meals, and special events.
  - Assigning judge numbers and badges to managers
  - Balancing the teams (see below)
  - Providing final decisions on the rules of the contest

- Coordinating with meeting and event planners
  - Working sales managers for the selection of competitors and objections
  - Managing and modifying the rules as needed (see below)
2. Balancing the teams can be done in different ways including counting off, pre-assigning team members and team leaders, or using standing sales teams. If using a standing sales team then averaging points will need to be used to provide a balanced per capita result for team awards. The Contest Leader can select other methods to create balanced teams. Balanced teams are important to ensure team peer pressure to learn and perform.
  3. Specific objections can be selected by salespeople from their own list (preferred) or they can be selected and assigned to all contestants by the Contest Leader. Ensure at least one “unanswerable” objection is included to test the use of transitions and phrases of persuasion.
  4. Bonus points can be awarded to participants who successfully use all their approved objection cards before the contest time ends. Management can decide how to award bonus points. For example, add them to the team total score or award separate prizes to the individual.
  5. Contest Rules:
    - To participate, a salesperson must have at least five different objections on different prevent, preempt, and respond cards for a total of 15 cards. The cards must be completed as previously described.
    - If contest time allows more than five objections, then cards may be replenished until the total number of different objections has been used.
    - Using only five objections at a time enables learning time for new ones to be added as others are taken out of play when successfully dealt with by the participant.
    - Time may become a constraint in getting all the cards pulled by managers, but some of that may be people giving priority to other issues. So, to encourage participants to stay in play, bonus points can be given when they’ve used all 30 of their cards successfully.
    - All cards must be used before the end of the contest to receive bonus points.
  6. Manage any penalties that may be imposed for contest rule violations, un-sportsman like behavior, and for other predefined reasons. Penalties could include:
    - Timeout: Short periods during which the participants are not able to participate in the contest and may risk running out of time and not getting bonus points.
    - Point deductions: Participants or teams can, at the unanimous decision of the judges, have points deducted for select violations. Sales manager judge of the participant or team can plead their case, but may not vote.



- These index cards serve as “flashcards” for learning drills (individual and peer-to-peer) before, during, and after the contest.
4. Repeat this process (#3) for preemptions for each listed objection.
  5. Repeat this process (#3) for responses for each listed objection.
  6. Repeat this process (#3) for “unanswerable” objections on the list. One of the five objections should be an unanswerable objection. If none, the salesperson may select one of their own or one will be provided by management.
    - Provided that it is in good taste, the unanswerable objection could be a serious one or a ridiculous one as discussed in the book demonstrating the effectiveness of transition sentences (see chapter fourteen).
    - There are three cards for each objection. Each participant will have a total of 15 cards when they start the contest. As each objection is successfully handled, that card is taken out of play and so the number of cards will decrease until all contest cards are used.
    - There are many examples provided for each process (prevent, preempt, and respond) in the book. The participant needs only to select or develop one such strategy for each card.
  7. Contest Rules:
    - To participate, a salesperson must have at least five different objections on different prevent, preempt, and respond cards for a total of 15 cards. The cards must be completed as previously described.
    - If contest time allows more than five objections, then cards may be replenished until the total number of different objections has been used.
      - a. Using only five objections at a time enables learning time for new ones to be added as others are taken out of play when successfully dealt with by the participant.
    - Time may become a constraint in getting all the cards pulled by managers, but some of that may be people giving priority to other issues. So, to encourage participants to stay in play, bonus points can be given when they’ve used all 30 of their cards successfully.
    - All cards must be used before the end of the contest to receive bonus points.
  8. Use a contestant sheet that lists the five objections they put on their cards with three columns labeled prevent, preempt, and respond. They should place a check mark in (or judge’s number) the appropriate box when that method of handling the objection was completed successfully. For example:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Team: \_\_\_\_\_ Event: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Objection	Prevent	Preempt	Respond

## Manager Preparation

1. Sales Managers are responsible for ensuring each participating member of their team:
  - a. Completes the self-selected or assigned Competitor Analysis.
  - b. Completes the index cards in the prescribed manner. Manager initials signify approved cards on the front of the card.
  - c. Understands and plays according to the rules.
  - d. Is aware of penalties for rule infractions.
2. Contest Rules:
  - a. To participate, a salesperson must have at least five different objections on different prevent, preempt, and respond cards for a total of 15 cards. The cards must be completed as previously described.
  - b. If contest time allows more than five objections, then cards may be replenished until the total number of different objections has been used.
  - c. Using only five objections at a time enables learning time for new ones to be added as others are taken out of play when successfully dealt with by the participant.
  - d. Time may become a constraint in getting all the cards pulled by managers, but some of that may be people giving priority to other issues. So, to encourage participants to stay in play, bonus points can be given when they've used all 30 of their cards successfully.
  - e. All cards must be used before the end of the contest to receive bonus points.
2. Penalties: Is aware of penalties that may be imposed for contest rule violations, unsportsman like behavior, and for other predefined reasons. Penalties could include:
  - a. Timeout: Short periods during which the participants are not able to participate in the contest and may risk running out of time and not getting bonus points.
  - b. Point deductions: Participants or teams can, at the unanimous decision of the judges, have points deducted for select violations. Sales manager judge of the participant or team can plead their case, but may not vote.

- c. Disqualification: Severe infractions can result in disqualification at the decision of the judges with the support of the Contest Leader, executive management, and/or sponsor.
3. Sales Managers who are also judges may not judge their own team members.
4. Participating manager judges (sales, marketing, product, executive) will wear a badge provided by the Contest Leader that clearly designates them as a judge and includes their judge number. If they are wearing the badge, they are “on judge duty” ready to challenge salespeople. If they are not wearing their judge badge they are “off judge duty.”
5. Judging managers determine a win or lose based on the information provided by the participant on the back of the card. If the salesperson gets it correct, the sales manager will award a certificate on the spot. The manager will mark on the card a plus sign or a minus sign (circle the sign) and put their initials and judge’s number next to the sign.
  - a. If a plus sign, then that card is now out of play.
  - b. If a minus sign, the card stays in play.
6. Judging managers are to return the card to the participant.
7. Judging managers will take only one card per contestant. Once done, the contestant must seek out another judge for the next card draw.
8. Once the participant has successfully completed the contest, they should meet with their sales manager to review the completeness of the contest summary sheet (objection, judges’ numbers, heading information) and to ensure all the cards have been validated with a plus sign and a judging manager’s initials and number.
9. The sales manager will count the total number of points (certificates) awarded to each participant, add them to a team summary contest sheet for their team, and then submit the sheet to the judges for awarding of team prizes.

## **Contest Action**

1. Participants will initiate play by approaching an on duty judging manager.
2. Participants will hold up their cards for the manager to pick one.
3. The manager will take one, and then let the contestant know if they are to prevent, preempt, or respond to the objection (as indicated on the card), state the objection, and then let the participant have one minute handle it according to how it was described on the back of the card.
4. Judging managers determine a win or lose based on the information provided by the participant on the back of the card. If the salesperson gets it correct, the sales manager will award a certificate on the spot. The manager will mark on the card a plus sign or a minus sign (circle the sign) and put their initials and judge’s number next to the sign.

- a. If a plus sign, then that card is now out of play.
  - b. If a minus sign, the card stays in play.
5. Judging managers are to return the card to the participant.
6. Judging managers will take only one card per contestant. Once done, the contestant must seek out another judge for the next card draw.
7. The participants should record the results on their play sheet described above.
8. Once a participant has successfully completed the contest, they should meet with their sales manager to review the contest sheet and to ensure all the cards have been validated with a plus sign and a judging manager's initials.
9. Sales managers will count the total number of points (certificates) awarded to each participant, add them to a team summary contest sheet for their team, and then submit the sheet to the judges for awarding of team prizes.

For questions and comments please contact Sales Training International: [info@saleshelp.com](mailto:info@saleshelp.com)

1-281-367-5599

[www.SalesTrainingInternational.com](http://www.SalesTrainingInternational.com)

[www.ObjectionFreeSelling.com](http://www.ObjectionFreeSelling.com)