

Influencing With Integrity

By Richard Brooke

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Richard Brooke
george@georgecollins.com

Success Team Builders <http://greatestnetworker.com/is/collins>

Every salesperson — whether selling a product or an idea — must deal with “objections.” Most sales training focuses on how to overcome them. In the first in a series of articles, Contributing Editor Richard Brooke, one of Network Marketing’s true masters, shows us a whole new way to look at and work with objections. Rather than seeking to overcome them, Richard reveals a way to turn them into win2 opportunities for everyone by “listening through them.” Here’s what it’s all about. The key to having distributors stay in your organization is to get them to the benchmark of a \$300 commission check as quickly as possible — ideally within three to six months. Your training, goal-setting and strategy should be focused on that first all-important benchmark.

“Listening Through Objections” means that instead of overcoming objections by defending against them, you eliminate them by being open to them. You embrace them. You encourage the other person to bring them out in the open. And you do this by listening.

In a very real sense, you — as the salesperson — champion the objection. This is an active process. More than being merely receptive to the objection, you actively help it to be expressed fully with all the emotion that gives it its charge.

In traditional sales, we’re trained to deflect objections, to turn them back against the person, to prove with ratiion and reason that the objection is false.

And we may defeat the objection successfully — but this leaves in place the feelings associated with it. In fact, it increases the emotional charge. We “overcome” it with logic — and we’ve made the other person wrong. We invalidate him or her and end up, in effect, calling the person a liar!

Hardly the way to “win friends and influence people.”

Objections Are Emotional

When you use reason and logic to deal with an objection, you’ll fail nine out of 10 times. Why? Because 90 percent of all objections are emotional in nature.

The argumentative approach of “overcoming objections” brings out a person’s defenses. The emotional component isn’t being honored. Its “life” is threatened. It fights back. When your logic overpowers it, it lies down and plays dead. And watch out! — later, when you are gone and the threat is removed, it will spring back to life, more determined than ever!

This phenomenon is known as “buyer’s remorse,” or “having second thoughts,” and it’s responsible for the anxiety and doubt people experience after making a decision.

And all simply because they were not heard.

What is it that wants to be heard? The emotion — the anger, frustration, disappointment, or fear. Until it is purged, there is no chance for the other person to make a complete choice about your offer. They simply cannot hear you. The emotional voice inside their head is too loud.

How To Lose By Winning

You may win the “battle of words” when you overcome an objection, but you will never change the other person’s point of view. So another objection pops up — and then another, and another. “I don’t have time,” becomes, “I don’t have the money,” then, “I’m no good at selling,” and on it goes. The emotion simply takes a new form — and it will keep doing so until it is heard and allowed to express itself.

You may even successfully “get” somebody to buy your product or sign the distributor application. But it won’t last.

Merchandise will be returned...the product won’t work as they expected...or they’ll quit the business — they’ll find a good reason Network Marketing “doesn’t work” for them. There’s no commitment, because they haven’t truly been heard.

Says author Robert Fritz, “Any relationship built on manipulation is doomed to fail.” It may take time, but you can count on it. Look at the number of talented, capable people who fail at MLM for no apparent reason.

Only when the emotion has exhausted itself by your listening through the objection will it dissolve and be eliminated.

Only when the objection — the whole objection, not just its words — is expressed will the opportunity occur for your prospect to arrive at making a committed choice.

Only when the objection — the whole objection, not just its words — is expressed will the opportunity occur for your customer or prospect to arrive at making a committed choice.

Rule #1: Don’t Buy The Objection

The truth about objections is — they’re not true.

“I don’t have time to do this, I’m too busy...” — it’s not true! Yet most salespeople make the mistake of buying into those words. And if you believe that the speaker believes that he or she doesn’t have any time, you have to go to work changing their belief.

Good luck! The hardest thing in the world to change is someone’s mind.

There’s a better way.

When you’re listening through objections and someone says, “I don’t have the time (or money or whatever),” you’ll know not only that this isn’t true for you — but that it’s not true for them either.

What is the truth?

Rule #2: Listen to What Isn't Being Said

Here's what you'll hear: frustration, anger, disappointment, fear. That's the truth.

It's clear this person is overwhelmed! They have more to do than they think they can ever do. The issue is not, "When am I going to find time — on top of everything else..." to build a Network Marketing business. The real issue is that the person wants somebody — anybody — to hear how frustrated they are about time!

So, listen.

What you will create is a rapport between the two of you, a safe space where truth can be spoken and heard. You haven't attacked their objection head on, so you're not someone to defend against — which is what most salespeople end up becoming. Instead, there will be trust, communion, a connection, respect, admiration. In any relationship — especially sales and sponsorship — it doesn't get any better than that!

Rule #3: The 10 Percent Solution

"So, after I listen through the objection, what's left? — what about the 10 percent that is logical?"

Most of the time, after you've listened completely through the objection, there won't be anything left.

If there is — if there really are, for example, some "time" or "money" constraints — it's no longer an emotionally charged issue. You can deal with it.

You can have a conversation with the person about managing his or her actions in time, about setting priorities and planning. That makes you that person's partner. And that is the perfect thing for a distributor or potential sponsor to be.

A Process For Listening Through Objections

Step #1 — Embrace The Objection. Love it. Have it be exciting. Look forward to it.

If you come from "I don't want to hear this" or defensiveness, you're thrown into being argumentative. You'll have to push people, and when you do, they'll push back. Instead, as in the martial art of Aikido, you simply redirect your opponent's energy. You remain centered while they fall forward to the mat.

Step #2 is to welcome the objection.

Step #3 — Define The Objection. Make sure that you and your customer or prospect are speaking then I've got to take my daughter to daycare..." you can add, "And you have to pick her up in the afternoon, too."

Again, help them fully express their feelings. Don't "step over" anything.

Make sure that you and your customer or prospect are speaking the same language.

Step #4 — Purge The Emotion. If you've got a sense that the person is leaving something unsaid, point that out and help them say it. For example: if someone has objected by saying, "Is this like

Amway?," there's a chance they've had a personal experience. Ask them about that. Ask if anyone else they know had a similar experience. Ask what that means to them — how they felt about it, what bothers them most. Encourage every negative emotion to pour out fully, exhausting their supply.

How will you know when that's happened?

Complete The Objection Process

Most of the time, you'll know it's complete because the person will change their state of being. You'll see a dramatic shift in the person's facial expression, their body language. They'll breathe a sigh of relief, put their arms behind their head, and relax deeper into the chair, and you'll notice a clear sense of peace or contentment in the room that wasn't there before. Many times, people will simply laugh out loud.

Being fully heard has a dramatic effect on most everybody.

Listening through objections is not easy. For most of us, it requires a 180° shift from how we have been taught to do things. And, the impact it will have as you begin to master it — both on your business building efforts and on your life as well — will be one of the most positive and profound you can imagine.

Influencing with integrity is a high art. When you do it well, you will be a Master artist.

And in MLM, Master artists don't have to wait 'til after they're dead for their work to be worth millions!

Reference:

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