

# Use “But” to Your Advantage

## SMART STRATEGIES IN REMODELING & RENOVATION SALES

April/May 2021

I was taught that in sales, an objection is a customer's response to an unasked question. Meaning, if you get an objection when you ask for the customer's business then you may not have done a thorough job of asking questions earlier in the sales call. So then, it stands to reason your goal to begin any objection handling situation is to begin asking questions designed to open the channels of communication with your customer and try to determine where things got off-track. You should have list of questions you ask during every sales call designed to gather a full picture of what the customer wants, why they want it, and what will a successful project look like to them. In addition, answers to some questions can minimize objections before they arise or provide you some ammunition to overcoming them when they do arise. Still, with even the best questions asked during a sales presentation, you can still end up with an objection when you ask for the business.

While researching Neuro-Linguistic Programming for a presentation I was developing, I came across the concept of the “But Flip”. I believe this could be a good strategy for you to use in overcoming a form of price resistance. What does the word “but” indicate to you when communicating with somebody? It always told me that whatever you said before the word “but” is not how you really feel, and whatever you say after the “but” is how you really feel. In addition, whatever comes after the “but” is almost always negative in nature. Here's an example of how this might manifest itself in a sales situation. You've completed your sales presentation, asked the customer for their business, and they respond – “We really like your offering, but the price is more than we wanted to spend.”

The concept of the “But Flip” is simple. It states you flip the “but” so it ends on a positive instead of a negative, add your “because”, then ask how can you help? The word “because” is very important and there is reason it is used. There is a strong cause and effect component to that word, and it must be placed in this dialogue. Let's put it all together and see how it works. When a potential customer tells you – “We really like your offering, but it costs more than we wanted to spend.” You respond – “So, this is more than you wanted to spend, but you really like my offering because of the value it provides. Then let's find a way to make this work for you all... how can I help?” If the goal in overcoming objections is to get your prospective customer talking, then the question at the end of the “but flip” will be key. Answers to this question could lead anywhere; discussions on financing options, cost versus value, the options they have selected, another product to name a few. The positive that comes from this is both of you are communicating and looking for solutions instead of walking away with no sale for you, and no solutions to the issues for your customer.

I'm not saying this is a 100% guaranteed method to overcoming a price objection – it's not. There's also no guarantee that how you presently handle this type of situation will work either. I've not seen anybody yet with a 100%, fool-proof method for overcoming any objection. If somebody did have such a method, they would be as rich as Warren Buffet, or heck maybe even Jeff Bezos. But I believe this could be a sound strategy to help get your customer from “No” to “Yes”. So, remember, when a homeowner uses a “but” to end on a negative... flip that “but” to the positive and see if it can't lead to a sale.



Brian McCauley is director of sales training for Atrium and Simonton Windows and Doors, both part of the Cornerstone Building Brands family. He has trained thousands of people nationwide and speaks from coast to coast. Contact him at [brian.mccauley@cornerstone-bb.com](mailto:brian.mccauley@cornerstone-bb.com) or 502-409-1816.