

Content Map

Overcoming Sales Objections:

SAMPLE TOPIC	
What is the training topic?	Are you the subject matter expert (SME) or did you select a topic from Source Content?
Overcoming Objections in Sales	I am the SME

DEFINED BUSINESS GOAL AND PROBLEM
Define the business that your sample relates to: What type of business is it? What industry is it a part of? What is the name of the business (fictional or real, if volunteering for a real company)?
Heartland Pro HVAC is a fictional commercial heating and cooling company that does both new installations and service contracts for a wide variety of commercial customers (office buildings, factories, stores, schools) in the Midwestern United States.
What is the business goal for this training? What does success look like for the company?
Heartland Pro HVAC would like service contracts to account for 50% of overall revenue, with closing rates of 35% on service contract sales calls.
What is the business problem (gap), that when solved or closed, would help the organization reach the above goal? In other words, WHY is the goal not being met right now?
Heartland Pro HVAC has seen a steep decline in the sale of service contracts since hiring a group of new sales representatives. Closer inspection showed that sales reps are getting in front of clients but are having difficulty overcoming objections and closing sales. As a result, service contracts account for only 35% of overall revenue, with sales closing rates at 25%.

AUDIENCE
Who are the primary learners (audience) that will be taking the training? Be specific.
These are junior sales representatives with less than six months of experience at Heartland Pro HVAC and less than two years of overall sales experience. They have shadowed senior sales representatives, but have received less mentoring than is typical, as Heartland is rapidly growing and the senior sales force is currently overcommitted.

What are the basic demographics of your primary learners?
They are mostly between the ages of 25 and 35, with varying educational backgrounds. They were hired primarily because their work and education profile (and initial testing) indicated potential strengths in sales.
What are your learners' prior knowledge/skill level?
Most of these learners have only one to two years of experience in sales roles, many in industries quite different than HVAC. They aren't completely entry-level, but close.
(Current State) What is currently happening with the target audience that needs to change? Before learners take your training, what are they doing, or not doing successfully?
The sales representatives are successfully booking appointments with potential clients, but closing at a very low rate (25%), despite our historic average of 35%. They are universally having difficulty overcoming objections that potential clients raise, and sometimes discount prices too deeply to gain business, harming Heartland Pro's profit margin.
(Future State) What should the target audience be doing? Once learners complete the training, what should learners be able to do successfully?
The sales reps need to learn to carefully analyze and diagnose the real concerns behind the objections, so that they can make a convincing case for the value Heartland PRO's service contracts deliver. Our senior salespeople accomplish this through the LAR approach (Listen, Ask, Respond).

CONTENT OUTLINE

ACTIONS NEEDED TO MEET GOAL

Directions	Action 1:	Action 2:	Action 3:	Action 4:
<i>List all of the actions that a learner would need to take for the business goal above to be achieved.</i>	Listen carefully to objections that clients raise and identify the type of objection.	Ask refining questions to understand the objection in detail before responding.	Respond to the objection in a way that addresses the concern and moves toward the close.	
Directions	How Action 1 ties to the business goal:	How Action 2 ties to the business goal:	How Action 3 ties to the business goal:	How Action 4 ties to the business goal:
<i>State HOW these actions tie back to the business goal.</i>	Consciously thinking about the type of objection the client is raising allows the sales rep to strategize a response.	Asking clarifying questions lets the client know they are heard, and further informs a targeted response.	Addressing the concern with full information allows the sales rep to best position the value of the contract and avoid heavy discounting.	



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Directions	Terminal LO 1:	Terminal LO 2:	Terminal LO 3: (optional)	Terminal LO 4: (optional)
<i>List all of the terminal learning objectives (LOs) that the learner will need to achieve to meet the business goal. Your sample should have 2-4 terminal LOs.</i>	Categorize a prospect's initial objection as a Value, Competitive, or Approval concern.	Ask questions that refine the understanding of the objection.	Apply a response that best addresses the type of objection and moves the conversation toward closing.	

Each LO should connect with the action that is in the corresponding column above.				
Directions	Are there any enabling LOs that support terminal LO 1? (optional)	Are there any enabling LOs that support terminal LO 2? (optional)	Are there any enabling LOs that support terminal LO 3? (optional)	Are there any enabling LOs that support terminal LO 4? (optional)
If there is an enabling LO that supports the terminal LO, list those here. Not all terminal LOs may have a supporting enabling LO. Terminal LOs may stand on their own but enabling LOs should not.	List the three main objection types.	Define the goals for refining questions for each objection type.	Articulate the goals for responses to each objection type.	



CONTENT OUTLINE				
Directions	Subtopic 1:	Subtopic 2:	Subtopic 3 (Optional):	Subtopic 4 (Optional):
List the subtopics (categories of chunked content) in a meaningful order. Each subtopic should connect with the LO and the action that are in the corresponding columns above.	Identifying the type of objection.	Question Goals. Identifying the goal of your question for each objection type.	Responses to Objections. Identifying the goal of the response for each type of objection.	
Directions	Information / details:	Information / details	Information / details	Information / details
Outline the information	When you are meeting	Refining Questions:	Responses To	

<i>that each subtopic will cover. Avoid going beyond the scope of the LOs. Only include info that is needed to achieve the LOs. This section needs some detail, not just a couple of words.</i> <i>Example: If your content involves 5 steps of a process, you must write out all 5 steps. If it's three characteristics, all three characteristics must be named.</i> <i>The information should connect with the action, LO's, and subtopic listed in the corresponding columns above.</i>	with potential clients and presenting the benefits of an HVAC service plan, it is not uncommon for clients to express objections that seem to stop the conversation. When this happens, it is important to understand the TYPE of objection the client is raising. Objection Types: Clients will bring up many objections in the sales process, but historically, the objections for service contracts fall into THREE major types: 1. The Value Objection. This is by far the most heard objection in sales: Concern about the price. Listen for anything that has to do with cost, pricing, budget, or overall value. Examples: “Wow, that’s a lot for a service contract!” “My equipment is newer, I don’t need to pay for a service	Refining questions serve two key purposes. 1. They demonstrate that you are listening to the client. 2. They give you more information to form a response in the next step. Note that you may need to ask multiple questions to get the information you need to respond well, but the first insightful question is critical. Forming the Question: Each objection type requires different kinds of refining questions. The goal is to gather specific information, and not to respond yet. You will need to formulate the questions spontaneously, but it helps to focus on the following goals for each type of objection. Value Objections: Refining Question Goal: Find out what specifically the	Objections: After you’ve understood the type of objection and asked refining questions, it is time to formulate a response. The purpose of your response is to: 1. Diffuse the objection. 2. Advance the conversation toward closing. There is no set formula for your response. It requires tactical, spontaneous thinking. This spontaneous response is easier to form, however, when you know the response’s goal for each objection type. Response Goals for Value Objections: The goal is to help the client reframe their thinking about cost by seeing the VALUE of the service contract. Service contracts keep equipment in top shape and save money on repairs. They also	
---	---	---	---	--

	contract.” “A service contract sounds good, but we don’t have the budget”. Though it may seem like these are concerns about PRICE, they are about getting VALUE from the contract. The client needs to see the relationship between the price and the value they will receive. But first, you will need to ask questions related to the client’s overall HVAC costs to learn more about the value concern. 2. The Competitive objection. This comes into play when the client has a relationship with another vendor. Listen for any mention of another service or installation vendor. Examples: “We’ve been using ABC company for years.”	prospect questions about the contract's overall value. They may think their objection is price, but it is actually about whether their spending will yield an overall cost savings. Example 1: Value Objection: Wow, that’s a lot for a service contract! Refining Question: "I understand. May I ask: when you say the price is high, are you comparing it to something specific, or is it more about whether the contract is worth it for your situation?" Why it works: The price objection is very general. You need to find out more about what’s driving this perception. Example 2: Value Objection: “My equipment is newer, I don’t need to pay for a service contract.” Refining Question: I see. Do you currently get your units serviced seasonally to prevent repairs?	provide discounts should repairs be necessary. You need to help the customer see the value of these benefits as larger than the cost. Example 1: The client’s initial value objection was “Wow, that’s a lot for a service contract!” Refining questions revealed that the client has had several expensive repairs, and sees the maintenance cost as being in addition to repairs. Response: "I understand that you’ve spent a lot on repairs, but the maintenance included with our service contracts can prevent many of these expenses. Even if repairs are needed, you get a 25% discount on the price. Our basic service contract would have saved you \$3000 in service fees last year, and likely prevented some of the costly repairs in the first place."	
--	---	--	--	--

	“XYZ company installed the system years ago, so we use them for the service contract.” The main factors in these objections are trust and relationship. While value is a consideration, especially if the competitor is lower-priced, the real issue is that the client is settled in a relationship and needs a reason to switch. You will need to ask questions to refine your understanding of the relationship between this potential client and the vendor. 3. The Approval Objection. Even when clients are favorable to the idea of a service contract, there might be another decision maker in the mix. Listen for any mention of a need for approval or authorization. Examples: “I need to run this by	Why it works: It’s important to understand if and how much the client is paying for regular maintenance, so that you can better position the value of a service contract. Example 3: Value Objection: “A service contract sounds good, but we don’t have the budget.” Refining Question: I understand. Can you tell me about how much you typically spend in a year on HVAC repairs and maintenance? Why it works: The company is likely spending something on HVAC maintenance and repair. Understanding that amount will help you position the value of the service contract. Competitive Objections Refining Question goal: Find where the prospect may be less than fully satisfied with	Why it works: The response is effective because it helps the customer see the value in preventative care and in the labor discounts that our service contracts provide. This is especially effective as the customer has had significant repair costs over the past three years. Example 2: Your potential client’s initial response was: “My equipment is newer, I don’t need to pay for a service contract.” Your refining question reveals that he has not been regularly maintaining these newer systems. Response: “Your systems are newer, but they can age quickly without proper maintenance. Our service contracts include seasonal cleaning, tuning, and recharging. You have enjoyed an extended period of no repairs, but	
--	--	--	--	--

	my manager.” “I need to bring this up at the executive meeting this week.” Unfortunately, clients often don’t reveal these dependencies until later in the conversation. You’ll need to learn more about the approval process before you respond. Affirm and Prepare: Ultimately, you need to listen to the objection carefully. Repeat it back to the customer to affirm that you understand it, and prepare to ask further questions. Knowledge Check Question: You’ve just presented a proposal for a service contract to Jason, the owner of a small chain of coffee shops. He says: “I’ve never really budgeted for a service contract. Why can’t I just avoid the extra	their current vendor, or where Heartland PRO might be differentiated from that vendor. Example 1: Competitive Objection: “We’ve been using ABC company for years.” Sample Question: “I understand. How long have you been with them, and is there anything about your current service you’d want to improve if you could?” Why it works: Uncovering points of improvement gives you an opportunity to differentiate Heartland Pro’s service contracts. Example 2: Competitive Objection: “XYZ company installed the system years ago, so we use them for the service contract.” Sample Question: “I understand. Does the service contract include seasonal maintenance and a discount on repairs?” Why it works: Understanding the features of the	to keep it that way, your systems need to be maintained. Why it works: The response is effective because it helps the customer see the value that preventative care has in extending the life of his HVAC systems, even though they are newer. Example 3: Your potential client’s initial response was: “A service contract sounds good, but we don’t have the budget.” Your refining question reveals that there have been several unbudgeted costly repairs over the last three years. Response: “Budgeting for maintenance helps prevent the costly unbudgeted repairs, and the 25% discount on labor significantly reduces unplanned expenses. It will actually be easier to budget if you have a service plan. Your expenses will be more	
--	--	---	---	--

	expense and pay for repairs if there's an issue?" Question: What type of objection has Jason presented? Correct answers 3. A value objection. Feedback: "Correct. Jason is concerned about the value of the service contract fee. Distractors: 1. A competitive Objection. Feedback: Incorrect. This is a value objection, as Jason is concerned about the value of the service contract fee. 2. An approval objection. Feedback: Incorrect. This is a value objection, as Jason is concerned about the value of the service contract fee.	competitor's service contract will give you the information you need to differentiate Heartland Pro's service contract. Approval Objections Refining Question Goal: Discover who else's approval is needed and what their priorities are. Example 1: Approval Objection: "I need to bring this up at the executive meeting this week." Sample Question: "I understand. Can you tell me who will be in that conversation, and what do you think will matter most to them?" Why it works: By finding out what will matter most to the executive committee, you tailor a proposal and send it to the meeting with your client contact. Example 2: Approval Objection: "I need to run this by	predictable. Why it works: The response is effective because it demonstrates that a service contract is consistent with good budgeting, as it delivers predictable value. Response Goals for Competitive Objections: The goal is to help the client see the value of points of differentiation between Heartland PRO HVAC and their present HVAC servicer. Example 1: Your potential client initially stated, "We've been using ABC company for years." Refining questions, however, revealed that some repairs with this provider stretched into two or three days because of parts orders. Response: Heartland PRO guarantees same-day service, with 90% of repairs resolved in less	
--	---	--	--	--

		my manager.” Sample Question: "I understand. What do you think his priorities will be in a decision like this?" Why it works: Before asking for a meeting, you should discover how to best position the value of the service contract to the manager. Knowledge Check Question: You've identified that the client has a value objection ("I don't think we have the budget for that"). Which of the following questions would best meet the goal of finding out what they question about the value?" Correct Answer: 3: I understand. To understand if this is worth your time, may I ask what your company has spent over the last three years on HVAC repairs and maintenance?"	than six hours. We also have access to an extensive local parts warehouse to prevent delays. Extensive waits on HVAC repair can disrupt your business. Our service contracts offer the peace of mind that problems will either be noticed in advance or repaired within hours. Why it works: This response is effective because it builds a convincing case that Heartland PRO differentiates from the present vendor on service time. Example 2: Your potential client initially stated, "XYZ company installed the system years ago, so we use them for the service contract." Refining questions revealed that the competitor performs maintenance, but does not offer a discount on repairs. Response: Heartland PRO service contracts provide great	
--	--	---	---	--

		Incorrect: 1. I understand. Would you like to see if there is any way I could discount this for you? 2. I see, but we have some of the best technicians and a solid reputation. I know we can serve you well.	maintenance as well. The difference is that we offer a 25% discount on labor costs when things break. That's a significant savings. Why it works: This response is effective because it differentiates from the competitor on an important feature, making the case for switching vendors. Response Goals For Approval Objection: The primary goal is to get permission to meet with the additional decision makers. If this is not possible, you need to equip your contact with the tools needed to demonstrate the value of the service contract to the decision maker(s). Example 1: Your potential client seems favorable to working with you, but says, "I need to bring this up at the executive meeting this week." Your refining questions reveal that the	
--	--	--	--	--

			attendees are the owner and functional managers, and that they are concerned about reliability over price. Response: "I'd be happy to meet with your leadership to show them the value of the service contract and present our track record of service. If the client states that this is not possible, a good response would be, a further response would be: "No problem. Can I send you a summary of the benefits of our service contract and information about our service record? This can help your team make a fully informed decision." Why it works: This response is effective because although a meeting with the leadership team is not possible, the contact has agreed to present the sales case through	
--	--	--	--	--

			a document you provide. Example 2: Your potential client says, “I need to run this by my manager.” Your refining questions reveal that the manager is price/value sensitive. Response: "I'd be happy to meet with you and your manager to demonstrate the value of a service contract. Why it works: This response is helpful because it takes the burden of selling the manager of your contact, and lets you personally build the value case. Knowledge check: Question: Your client has expressed an approval objection. When asked, he says that the COO must approve the contract. Which of the following is the best response? Correct Answer:	
--	--	--	---	--

			2: I'd be happy to talk your COO through the value of the contract and answer any questions. Is there a good time for us to meet? Detractors: 1: Very good. Please let me know what your COO says. When you are ready to move forward, give me a call. 3: I understand, but is COO approval really a hard requirement?	
--	--	--	--	--



ASSESSMENT				
Directions	Question:	Question:	Question:	Question :
Write each stem as a performance-based scenario question set in a realistic context. The question should connect with the action, LO, and content in the corresponding columns above. Ask yourself, "Can this	Please note: Question 1: After you present a potential client with an overview of Heartland Pro's service contract, he says, "I just bought all new HVAC units 20 months ago. I don't really see the point of	Question 3: Your client has a value objection, as her equipment is less than 5 years old and has been reliable. What would be a good refining question to ask?	Question 5: A client gives an initial value objection of "It just seems too pricey!" You ask the refining question: "How much do you usually spend on HVAC repairs in a year?"	

<i>assessment question be answered with the content written above in this template?" No matter what content you include when you develop the course later, if there is not enough content provided in this template to answer the question, you will need to expand the content above.</i>	<i>paying for a service contract on newer equipment.</i> <i>How would you categorize the client's objection? Please select one option.</i>	Choose one of the following:	The client says: some years it's high, and other years it's minimal. I think I'd rather just call if something goes wrong than commit to an annual contract. Which of the following responses would best meet this value objection? Choose one of the following:	
Directions	Correct Response:	Correct Response:	Correct Response:	Correct Response:
<i>List the correct response to each question.</i>	C) A value objection. Feedback: "Correct! The concern about price indicates that he is not convinced of the value of the offer."	B) "What has your spending been like on seasonal maintenance checks, cleaning, and recharging?" Feedback: "Correct. You need to find out about maintenance spending to best position the service contract value."	C) "Those units still need seasonal cleaning, tuning, and recharging to stay reliable. The contract covers all of that. Skipping it is usually what turns a \$200 maintenance visit into a \$3,000 repair call." Feedback: "Correct. You have strongly positioned the value of the maintenance that comes with the contract."	
Directions	Distractors (Incorrect Responses)	Distractors (Incorrect Responses)	Distractors (Incorrect Responses)	Distractors (Incorrect Responses)

List the distractors for each question. These distractors should be viable responses, based on the content you have included above, and not so unrelated that they are obviously wrong.	A) A competitive objection. Feedback: "Incorrect. The concern about price indicates that this is a value concern. B). An approval objection. Feedback: "Incorrect. The concern about price indicates that this is a value concern.	A) "What if I put together a discounted first-year rate to make it easier to get started?" Feedback: Offering a discount still hasn't demonstrated value. You need to ask more about the value concern. C) "Have you not had any issues with these units so far?" Feedback: Incorrect. You need to get further information about the value concern.	A) "I hear you. Let me see what I can do on the price. I may be able to work something out for all three locations." Feedback: Incorrect. Offering a discount does not show the value of the service contract. B) "The contract covers preventive maintenance and priority response." Feedback: Incorrect. These are great selling points, but you need to show how they add value.	
Directions	Additional Question:	Additional Question:	Additional Question:	Additional Question :
Include additional performance-based scenario questions here. Note: You need to have a minimum of four questions, so a couple of your LOs may have more than one question. Please fill in the additional questions in the appropriate column under the corresponding LO. It is ok if some boxes are left blank in this	Question 2: Your potential client seems favorable to the service contract. As you prepare to close the sale, he says, "But for an ongoing contract like this, I need to get the approval of my business partner." What type of objection has now been raised?	Question 4: Your potential client has expressed a competitive objection: "We have a service provider already. Smith HVAC." Which of the following would be a helpful refining question?		

section , as long as you have at least four total questions.	Choose one option:	Choose one option:		
Directions	Correct Response:	Correct Response:		Correct Response:
<i>If you have an additional question for this LO, list the correct response to each question.</i>	C) Approval objection. Feedback: Correct! The client doesn't have sole decision-making power.	A) XYZ is a good company. May I ask, is there anything about their service that you are not completely satisfied with? Feedback: "Correct! This is a good initial question to start establishing points of differentiation."		
Directions	Distractors (Incorrect Responses)	Distractors (Incorrect Responses)		Distractors (Incorrect Responses)
<i>If you have an additional question for this LO, list the distractors for each question.</i>	A) Value objection. Feedback: Incorrect. This is an approval objection. B) Competitive objection. Feedback: Incorrect. This is an approval objection.	B) What if I can beat their price by 10%? Feedback: "Incorrect. You need to establish points of differentiation and build trust." C) Well, would you consider switching? Feedback: "Incorrect, you need to ask questions that refine your knowledge about the client's relationship with our competitor."		

