

“MAKE THEM SAY YES”

16 OBJECTIONS PATIENTS HAVE TO BOOKING THE FIRST (FREE) APPOINTMENT AND HOW TO OVERCOME THEM

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Dear Physical Therapist and Admin Team,

If you're involved in marketing your PT clinic – one of the best ways to do it is by using a strategy termed Lead Generation – that works by offering helpful information in the form of a “free report” - and then follow up (on the telephone) with that prospective patient (who we term a “lead”) who made the call to request the tips report at your clinic.

It's important to understand that in the beginning, most people say "no" to any offer of PT - even if it's free.

It's the same in EVERY industry, not just physical therapy.

Know why? *Simply because they're supposed to!*

Starting from childhood, we're taught to be wary of people we don't know ...and to never make a fast decision when it comes to buying something.

And yes, even if it's our health that is at stake!

In fact, you could argue because peoples most prize asset is at stake, they are LESS likely to say “yes” fast, than they are to buying something trivial like a TV and for much more money!

So, please don't expect your prospect to go against the very habits and beliefs that are ingrained in childhood... and this is why you should expect to be making multiple follow up calls to that same prospect over a period of weeks and months... and also explains why sales adverts asking for “appointments” DO NOT work.

If they don't agree to book after the first one or two calls... it's NOTHING to do with you and it certainly isn't your fault or due to a lack of skill in the subject of “sales” techniques or training.

We're using a strategy called “Lead Generation” and that requires consistent and relentless follow up with warm prospects who in the beginning are NOT READY TO BUY NOW.

However, with nurturing over time, providing helpful information to make decision making less daunting, challenging objections and overcoming false assumptions (about PT), it is VERY possible to convert many of these prospects to paying patients.

How long does it take?... that depends... all on the prospect and their objections to saying “yes” – and of course, how well YOU understand why they say “no” in the first place.

Dan Kennedy (the worlds best DRM marketer) teaches that you should set yourself for **SIX MONTHS** of follow up **AT LEAST**... for someone suffering with chronic knee or back pain.

It’s my experience that it often takes about 3 follow up calls for most people to say “yes”. Some happen sooner, some will indeed, take 6 months (...and more!)

Think of it like this:

The biggest false assumption that we make as PT’s is to assume that just because people are in pain, that WE (as PT’s) are in the “URGENT need business and because they’re in pain, they will come and see us.

However, that’s FALSE.

Sure, there are a few people out there in urgent need of back pain help, but the reality is that many, many more, are suffering, but coping... completely unsure of about what they should do next, often confused about making a decision, fearful of getting it wrong, therefore happy to do nothing.

Understand that at the time of requesting your report they could be just at the very beginning of the decision making process and unlikely to say “yes” immediately, at least not until trust is established and the prospect comes to his or her own conclusion that YOU are their best choice.

In that way... the “lead generation” (of marketing) model is THE best method for creating patient compliance and unearthing easy to work with, happy to pay the cost, patients.

Better even than referrals from doctors.

Why? Because if the doctor refers them to you, they feel under pressure to go and they may arrive and have 6 sessions, but not all 12 that you recommend.

A patient who makes his or her own mind up about PT is HAPPY to go simply because they made the decision – and more likely to see the benefit and therefore attend all 12 session!.

It may take a while as the patients comes to the conclusion that their pain really isn’t going to go away until they seek REAL help -- and sometimes, often times, it’s just a simple case of showing up each week to ask “*are you ready to try something different YET!*”...

All that said, there are things that you can do to speed this up that once you know and learn, will make the referral process and conversion from a LEAD to a PATIENT happen faster – it’s a simple case of KNOWING before hand the objections that leads will throw up at you.

The good news is they are very PREDICATABLE and most IRRATIONAL - and therefore easy to over come (once you learn them).

I’ve listed them all below for you in order of how likely you will come across them in your first few follow up calls.

Here are the 16 Chief Reason Prospective Patients Do NOT Respond or Buy

1. I haven’t had time to read the report yet

60% of people NEVER read these reports, so do not focus on it. FACT IS, they don’t and didn’t want the report in the first place! They just want the HOPE that comes with the possibility of what might be inside the report when they see it advertised. When they realize they actually have to do something, i.e read the report then follow through on the actions/tips, it’s another roadblock! For two reasons: no body wants to figure anything out for themselves (in case they get it wrong!).

Second reason, we would all much rather have someone do it (anything!) for us.

Solution: Do NOT under any circumstances ask about the report or its contents (other than your PT service and your option of the free diagnostic first session!). If you ask “have you read the report” and they say “NO”... there’s no where to go other than, “well, can I call you back after you’ve read it?”... they will say “yes”, but they are unlikely to have read it by the next time you call so the same conversation will surface and you’ll not get onto the REAL issue at hand which is “have you YET”, or “Are you STILL?”.

Begin the follow up phone call with a question about their concerns or their goals (that they told you when they called to request your free report!) and an emotionally connected call will flow – one where patients will be happy to talk and the longer they talk the more comfortable they will be with you thus more likely to book!

Remember, you are looking for three “yes’s” to begin the follow up conversation. Here’s how to get four!:

- ✓ Are you STILL suffering with back pain since you called our clinic last week?” (YES!),
- ✓ “Are you STILL concerned about relying upon medication/not knowing what’s wrong?” (YES!) OR, “Are you still missing out on golf”? (YES!)...
- ✓ “Would you like to try something different to help you get there faster?” (Yes!) ...
- ✓ “Am I okay to tell you more about what we might be able to do to help you?” (YES!!)...

2. I don’t have time right now –

Really? No body is THAT busy that they can’t find 30 minutes for a free session of pt. What they are really saying here is *“I don’t have time for 12 sessions of physical therapy as I’m not 100% sure of it actually being able to help me”*. You are letting the prospect think to far ahead.

It goes back to a trust thing... “why should I trust YOU, someone I don’t even know, to inconvenience my life, one 2 hours per day, 3 times a week for the next month, without even knowing anything about you or what you do?...” (Valid point!).

Any patient who tells you this is living to far in the FUTURE – you are letting them over look the concept that you just want to help them make a better, more educated and more informed decision, so that they DON’T waste their time – one that takes just 30 minutes to achieve!

Always bring this objection back to the “this will only take 30 minutes then after that you’re able to make a more confident and better decision so that you don’t have your time wasted”!

Solution: Ask any of these questions to overcome this common objection:

- a) “Mrs Smith, I hear what you’re saying and I completely understand that you’re likely to be a very person right now and don’t have much time... am I okay to point out that it’s likely to be because of your chronic back pain, always slowing you down, that you do feel as though you’re always so busy these days?

...Maybe if we could find a solution to your back pain we could help you get things done more quickly and find you more time in your life? **Am I ok to tell you more about that solution? (Yes!)....**

- b)** We know that you're likely to be really busy... and that's why we don't want you to commit to 12 sessions of physical therapy UNTIL you decide it's right for you... and that's why this discovery visit/free taster session is right for... it only takes 30 minutes and will help you decide whether or not think it is worth YOUR TIME going ahead with more sessions after that. **Am I ok to tell you more about it? (Yes!)**
- c)** "I hear what you're saying about being "busy: Mrs smith... and I remain concerned that you're chances of ever getting to playing golf/sleeping at night/enjoying playing with grandkids in the park are going to be slim unless you find out what's going wrong with your back... do you think it would be worth investing just 30 minutes of your time one day this week to come and explore the options you have for living with less back pain?... After all, 30 minute is not a lot of time when you consider some trivial things like watching tv shows take up more of our time. **I'm looking in our schedule for the next week, would tomorrow or the next day work better for you?**

Note: if they say they don't have the time to TALK right now... that's fine, ASK when IS a good time to talk about their concerns!... Tell them you will need just 15-20 minutes and you'd like to know when would be a good time to call that would be less convenient!

3. I'll wait a little longer –

This is happening because of inadequate urgency placed up the issue at hand. Most patients FORGET how long they have actually suffered. They forget that everything to this point has so far failed including time. They forget what life USED to be like before back pain. You must REMIND them.

They are also FORGETTING the consequence of waiting for more time. i.e. dangerous surgery, painful injections, life time dependence upon pills, loss of activity or mobility! REMIND them of all of this repeatedly.

Solution: Ask any of this questions to overcome this common objection:

- “Ok Mrs smith, I hear that you’re happy to suffer with back pain even longer ... can I just ask, how long has it been since your torment began?” And, how many rounds of golf/weekends in the park with your grandchildren/nights sleep have you now missed out on since it began?” – **YOU MUST STOP** and wait for an answer (an uncomfortable silence will occur while the prospect recalls how long it has actually gone on for).

When they reply with the answers, you ask:

- 1.) “It’s such a shame to hear that Mrs Smith... and the reality is that this back pain will keep on interrupting these things and if you choose to do nothing but wait a little longer, reality is that back pain will likely get worse and you could end up missing out on those things for good.... **Do you think it would it be worth giving up just 30 minutes of your free time one day this week to explore the possibility of getting REAL help that could quite possibly help SAVE your ability to play golf/sleep at night/play in the park for many years to come?** (Yes!)

OR -

2. “You know Mrs Smith, we hear this all the time... usually from people who regretted that decision as it meant having to go through painful injections or spinal surgery – we often receive referrals from doctors for follow physical therapy for spinal surgery and so many of those good folks tell us that they wish they had done something about their low back pain when they had the chance... and while you’ve still got the chance Mrs Smith, we’re happy to help you try and make a safer decision that “waiting” by offering you a free discovery consultation with our experts... **can I tell you more about it?** (Yes!)

Timely reminder: can you see how EVERY way that I challenge an objection finishes with a question that allows the prospect to say YES! The above two responses are great examples: I could have asked, “would you like to book that consultation now?” ... if I did, there’s 50-50 chance of the prospect saying NO!... so, I asked a “guaranteed yes” question to move the sale along even further by asking their permission to “sell the session to them!” and, by asking “Do you think it would be...”!

4. Worried about the cost –

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You've allowed the prospect FUTURE pace again. Remind them that at this point, there is NO cost. But, acknowledge the objection they really have which is "will I be able to afford the cost once the free session is over!".

Reality is that 8 out of 10 people CAN afford the cost, they're just not convinced on the certainty of value. Big Difference. Massive difference. The same people who tell you cost is a problem, will go out and order a plasma TV on Amazon that same night (costing more than \$1200!) or book a cruise with their partner somewhere (irony: very few such purchases will be able to be enjoyed because of the persons chronic back pain!).

And therein lies the problem pt clinic REALLY face:

If you order a TV on Amazon tonight, it arrives in a box tomorrow and you plug it in, and it works!...If you book a cruise, you show up when they tell you and you know you will have a good time... there are no doubts in what you're getting for your money! With our type of service, it's a little bit "mystical", patients have to TRUST and HOPE that you can help and it doesn't come with a box or a guarantee that it will work.

Your goal is to remind the prospect of the certainty of value that your services can bring to their life – do that be recalling success stories of other patients JUST LIKE THEM - and how much more enjoyable things would be even if there back pain was just 20-30% better than it is now!...

Solution: Ultimately, you need to bring it back to this:

- "I hear what you're saying about the cost Mrs Smith, I really do, and that's why we introduced this completely FREE session... it was to help folks suffering with back pain to come and decide for themselves whether or not pt is something that can help and decide if the required investment will be worth it or not. Because until you've heard what the pt says about what's going wrong, and how long it will take to fix, it's impossible to speculate on the cost...**with that said, can I explain to you more about how this free session works and how it might help you to make a better decision about whether or not to invest in physical therapy?** (YES!)

Important Explanation: note how I turned this round to a session about discovering VALUE?... it's now NOT just a session of pt to get to

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the bottom of back pain... it's a session to help that person decide whether or not PT is going to be worth the potential investment - this is THE only way to overcome this objection and you'll do it by focusing on the "offer" (the free session) having being created *specifically* for people so that they can confidently decide if the investment is worth it, for themselves!

Do NOT try to convince them it is, let them decide for themselves by showing up for the FREE session!

5. They do not understand the proposition well enough –

Confused patients do nothing. People are easily confused. The hazard for the sales person is their own familiarity with their products, services, offers, terminology, so they presume knowledge and understanding in their customers that just isn't there. It might be a completely free first session, but if the patient doesn't understand the benefits of why they should show up, they won't!

Solution: Clearly articulate the REAL reason they should show up i.e to get a diagnosis, OR to discover VALUE (in time or money!). Then link this to their concern. Say:

- ✓ “Once you know what’s wrong (with your back), wouldn’t you agree it would be much easier to put it right and finally start moving away from depending upon pills or FINALLY getting that round of golf in again? (YES!)...

6. The do not believe the proposition –

This is actually, relatively rare. Actually, most people are far too gullible and far too quick to accept a proposition that satisfies their need or desire thus the millions of dollars spent on diet pills sold with outrageous, even idiotic claims. But if the proposition does strain credibility, massive effort should be invested in making the incredible credible, the unbelievable believable.

Solution: Explain the REASON WHY you are offering a free session like this! They rightly assume they will be get there at your clinic and get “sold too”. **Use words like:** ...

- “We’re offering you this because we know so many people are skeptical, unsure, or nervous about what to do for the best – even let down by chiro’s or other pt’s in the past – so us offering you this free “discovery session” is our way of saying to that we understand that, and giving you an opportunity to help you make a better more educated and more informed decision about your future health! **Does that sound like something that would help you Mrs. smith? ...” (YES!)**

Note: you must stress the “we understand you might be sceptical or unsure...”. Tackle this head on right away – simply because MOST people are skeptical and nervous about everything to do with their health hence why they haven’t called you already!

7. **They do not trust you –**

This a HUGE, obstacle in health care – one unlikely to be revealed in the spoken word by the prospect!...You should always address the issue with whatever reassurance exists that the person or entity behind the proposition is real, established, will be around tomorrow, and has expertise in the field.

Solution: Just keep showing up on the phone until they tell you to stop. The more that they hear from you, the more they accept that you ARE genuinely concerned and trying to help them!...**You could say:**

- “You know Mrs Smith... I hope you don’t mind me calling you again.. it’s just that I know if you were my mother or my father (friend or daughter etc – obviously relative to yours and their age!) I would hope that someone who knew they could help you live with less back pain would NEVER stop calling and trying to show you how they could help!”... This is GENIUS! And is a way of connecting with the prospect on a leve that they will never see coming or be able to connect with! And it’s true.. think about it: if your parents had back pain, at what point would you want the friendly and very local pt clinic to stop trying to help them?”

Note: this exact conversation is often a game changer in cold relationships (from “cold” to “RED HOT”).

8. **Do not believe they can do it –**

Here is one of the biggest factors, often neglected by the follow up person. A prospect may believe a proposition and believe others can do it -- but **lack belief in his own ability to do it**. A.k.a “It won’t work for me... nothing good, ever works for me!

He or she may, for example, believe you can an end to back pain by doing exercises for 30 minutes three times a week -- but doubt he will have the discipline to do them! So what’s the point in starting!... In most cases people privately acknowledge that they lack discipline, self-motivation, persistence, willpower – whether you’re selling to a CEO or broom pusher. You **NEED** to address this.

Solution: The only way is to create an obvious alternative – one that they can understand. I.e Exercises and DIY vs pt doing everything. The prospect must know that they can **CHOOSE** between being left to figure it out on their own, **OR** be in the safe hands of an expert if they are not confident! **You might say:**

- “I understand that you might be sceptical about whether or not this will work for you.. But right now Mrs smith, we’re just suggesting you to attend one session – sometime this week. At that session you’ll be given range of different options to help you get there faster...

...If after that first session you want to do much of this on your own to cut down on costs, we’ll just show you some exercises and help you progress... **OR**, if you would prefer an **EXPERT** to do everything for you so that is no responsibility on you to get this sorted, then the **PT** you see will explain how he plans to help you by taking over 100% total recovery of your treatment plan....

...This **FREE** session is just about giving you the chance to see if you have been overlooking something or missing out on another option to help you. Either way Mrs Smith, you will get there it just depends how fast you want it to happen...

...Can I just ask Mrs Smith... do you like the sound of **YOU** doing the exercises, or **US** taking over total responsibility of your complete recovery...as I’ll pass your comments onto the pt who will doing your free first session so he knows how to serve you best moving forward?”

Note: I 100% guarantee all patients leave HAPPY, or their money back! I would advise you do the same and if you're good at what you do, why not?

9. Do not believe the VALUE represented (because it's FREE!) -

Typically in presenting a FREE offer, the irony is you will be striving to establish (a perception of) high value. The problem with "free" is that it has been overused and people widely believe that if it is FREE, then it's not going to be all that good! Plus, they're also skeptical that if it's "free", you're going to sell me something to compensate for it later!

We must do two things:

- a) Reinforce the value of them giving up their TIME to show up. i.e in exchange for just 30 minutes of your time Mrs. Smith, we'll answer the number 1 question that everyone with back pain REALLY wants to know – "what's going wrong!". Tell them relentlessly that they will be able to rest easier with the peace of mind knowing what's wrong... as once you know what's wrong, it's much easier to fix.
- b) Remind them that there is no obligation to proceed or book – in fact, it's standard procedure that NO further sessions are to be booked until 24 hours breathing space has occurred! "We know by the end of that session it's likely that you will ask to become one of our patients, however, we almost always insist on you having time to think over what we said to you..."

If the VALUE of the free session (to them!) isn't believed or accepted, you will hit an obstacle. Overcoming requires care, comparison stories about what life COULD be like if they don't at least find out what's wrong, and about the difficulty of playing blind archery in the dark... which is essentially what ANYONE does who chooses to try and fix back pain without knowing what's wrong! That choice includes rest, time, painkillers, gym instructors advice etc etc!

10.) Unwilling to pay the future price –

Regardless of value, the prospect may simply be unwilling to pay the price. You can, in fact, price yourself out of a market (although it is much

more common to err in the opposite direction). If this problem affects you, it is usually repairable not just through copy or sales method, but via more adept selection and targeting of the appropriate patients.

For example: the answer lies in the Marketing and has less to do with ad copy or personal salesmanship than with targeting and attracting individuals for whom long term, chronic back pain is of gigantic lifestyle and even economic impact.

The sporty/gym person who loses his or her ability to go the gym at the hands of back pain has one set of problems which translates to a certain willingness to pay “x”; but the 50+ year old grandmother of 3 (about to lose the ability to offer her services for minding children or her mobility!) may be willing to pay “x+”, and the busy business owner, “x++”.

11.) Unable to pay the price after the freebie –

It is recommend you sell (or at least offer) on instalment terms. And even rich people like to buy that way. You will always boost sales by offering financing options.

I’ve heard owners mention they offer “care credit”... the very mention of the word “credit” is enough to scare people off! They’ve got enough credit cards and letters coming through the door without one from you!... Much better to offer an “easy payment” plan and have a simple direct debit style payment plan set up to collect the TOTAL of the suggested treatment plan i.e 15 visits, equalling \$1500 – split into 2, 3, or 4 collections (interest free and without any credit agreement or forms to sign!)

Note: there are MANY facilities out there to help you do this and often taking just 30 seconds to set up and costing just 1% of the whole value of the transaction! I use a company called “GoCardless”.

If the patient asks, what if I need less than the 15 visits, tell them in no uncertain terms they WILL need the 15 visits. You are an EXPERT remember and experts know precisely HOW LONG it takes to resolve.

As soon as you say “we’ll see how it goes” you’ve just exposed your self as not really knowing what you’re doing and therefore the patient will pick up on your lack of confidence!

People want absolute confidence and certainty – and they’re looking at you to take them away from fear and regret and making bad choices. If you give it to them, they will pay you for it handsomely!

12.) Cannot justify purchase to others –

To friends, to spouse, to boss etc... In some cases, a person must justify it, in other cases he or she only feels a compulsion to do so – but just about every patient has the FEAR that he will be called on to defend his buying decision, and criticized or made fun of if he is unable to justify it – or worse, if they get to the end of the treatment and it doesn’t work and others will say “I told you pt wouldn’t work!”

Solution: Find out what external influences are on the prospect. Ask: “what does your husband think about your back pain? Is he keen to help you get a resolve?”... “Does he know much about pt?” Tip: If HE is the decision maker in the household, you’re going to have to get him on side too. INVITE him to the free first session is a way to overcome this – so that he feels like he’s in on the decision and spending of the \$\$\$!

There may also be some “friends” or family who have had bad experiences at the hands of a pt.. you need to ask this so that you can begin to change their view of it and show how what YOU do, is different from the others!

13.) Ego in way –

If a person has to admit, even privately, to himself, that he is in any way “inadequate”, that he needs advice, help etc...especially from a peer, look-out – especially men. After all, real men do not read instruction or ask for directions – and men have testosterone.

Solution: re-connect the patient to their original concerns and if male, ask them to consider what life might be like for his family if back pain persists, gets worse, or requires surgery! Appeal to the alter EGO - the one which wants to protect his family (and not improve his own health!)

14.) Not emotionally involved or motivated -

Often, follow up teams get caught up trying to sell people what they should want, need or ought to have (vs. what they really want!), and it's always a losing battle.

This is why “Lead Generation”... is so powerful, you already know that the prospect you are talking to HAS some form of desire and emotional interest to end their problem.. other wise they would never have called in the first place!...

It's also why EVERY call must begin with talking about their concerns and goals, NOT about their back pain. We need to emotionally motivate them to be able to “finally enjoy playing with their kids this weekend!”... NOT, to “ending back pain”! if you fail to do this, you are a commodity and open to apples to apples comparison and at the mercy of ANY (cheaper) clinic stealing your prospect!

This is VITAL if you are cash based or trying to raise prices for your services.

15.) Fear of loss or dissatisfaction –

Everybody owns things they bought that failed to live up to promises and expectation, that never got returned, and money was wasted on. They are around the house or business as a constant reminder. No one likes peeing away money or feeling ripped off.

Strong assurances are required that they wont be wasting their TIME. And in some cases, open acknowledgement of previous disappointments are appropriate.

Solution:

“I know that you may have been to a chiropractor or PT in the past who let you down and made promises but did not keep those promises... but this is different... and that's why our FREE session is perfect for you if you feel that way... it lets you get a sample of what we're all about and how different we are, so that YOU can confidently decide for yourself if we are the right company for you moving forward...”

16.) Worry over difficulty of dealing with insurance –

Here we must juggle doing business to fit our preferences with making it easy for customers to buy, and offering them as many options for doing so as possible. If it's likely to be a problem, BRING it up before they do.

Solution:

- “If you're worried about the hassle of dealing with your insurance, I want to may you aware of our very popular “insurance concierge” service... if after your first free session with us, you do decide you want to become one of our patients...then we'll work with you and your insurance to make sure that it's all taken care of in the manner that your insurance or network requires...”

Not having or offering something like an **“insurance concierge”** to patients is akin to having a strong, thriving Sales PREVENTION Department.

This is vital if you are cash based and expecting people to recoup costs having paid you up top!