

# Practice Conversations Across Buying Moments

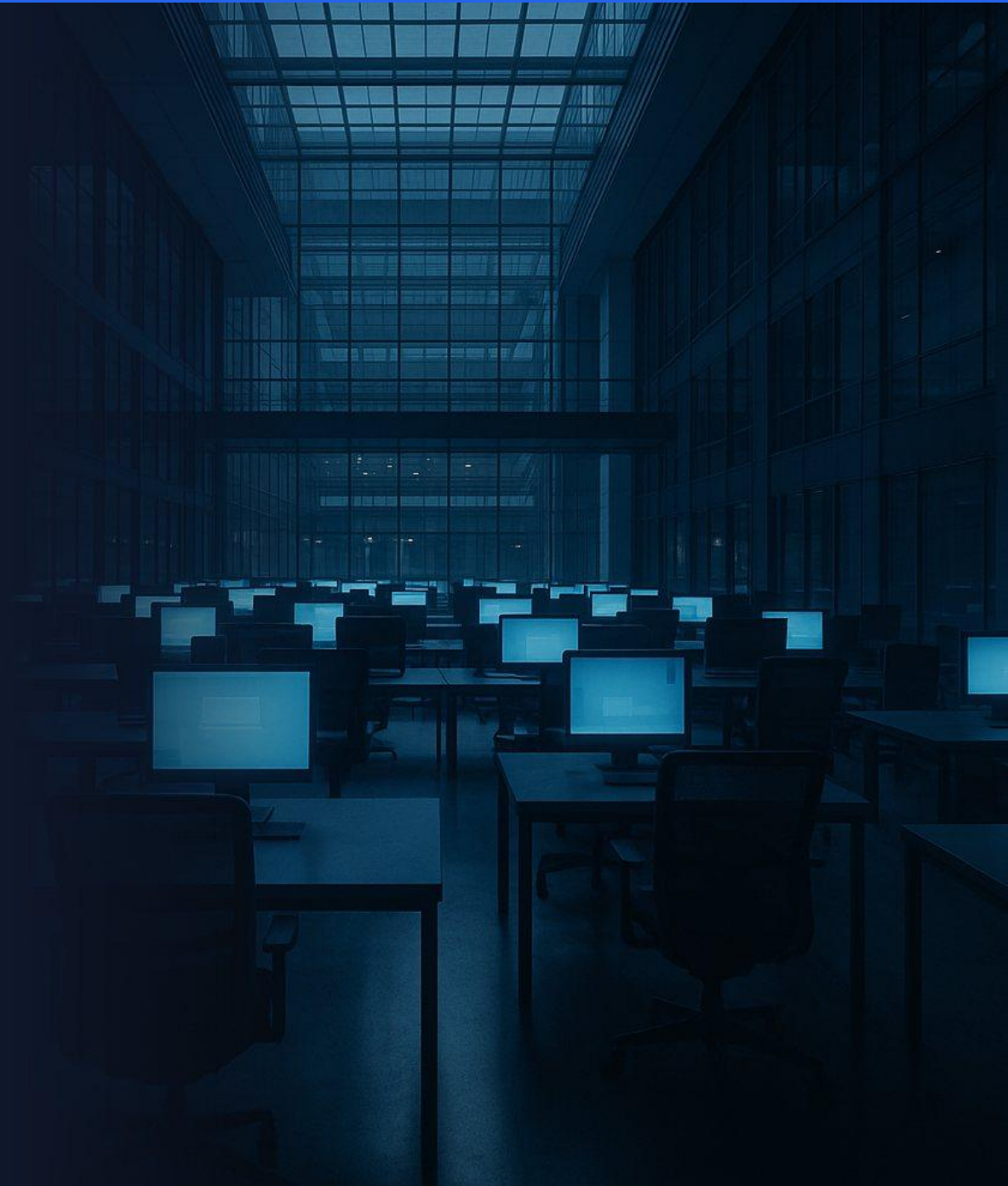
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How discovery, demonstration, objection handling and commitment differ — and why rehearsal changes the outcome.

Theory session

Beginner

Running case: ClinicFlow



# Where this session sits

3.1 defined the stages; 3.2 rehearses the conversations that move between them

## MODULE 1

Product Build  
and Validation

## MODULE 2

MVP Economics  
and Measurement

## MODULE 3

**Sales Launch  
and Operations**

### SESSIONS IN THIS MODULE

3.1

Design a Repeatable Sales Process

Stages, entry criteria, owners and exit conditions

3.2

**Practice Conversations Across Buying Moments**

Discovery, demonstration, objections and commitment

YOU ARE HERE

3.3

Launch Through Channels, Delivery, and Support

Activating a channel and running the operation behind it

# What this session explains

Four distinct conversations, and what each one is for

## 01 Each buying moment has its own job

Running a demonstration during discovery wastes both.

## 02 Timing is part of the conversation

The same words land differently depending on when they arrive.

## 03 Objections are information

They tell you what has not been established yet — which is usually earlier in the process.

## 04 Commitment must be specific

A conversation that ends without a dated next step has not ended.

# Four conversations, four different jobs

The most common error is running all four at once, in the first meeting

1

## Discovery

Understand their situation, the cost of it, and how they decide. You should be talking for well under half the time.

2

## Demonstration

Show the product doing **their** job, using their language and, if possible, their data. Not a feature tour.

3

## Objection

Surface and address the real reservation — which is frequently not the one stated first.

4

## Commitment

Agree a specific next step with a date and an owner. "I'll think about it" is not a next step.

5

## Between them

Every conversation ends by naming what happens next and who does it.

### THE SEQUENCE RULE

## Do not jump ahead

A demonstration before discovery is a guess.  
An objection handled before the problem is agreed is an argument.

# Questions that open and questions that close

The wording decides whether you learn anything or confirm what you assumed

## CLOSING THE CONVERSATION

### Leading and hypothetical

#### TYPICAL FORM

"Would better scheduling help you?" "You must find that frustrating?"

#### WHY IT FAILS

It supplies the answer, and politeness supplies the agreement.

#### WHAT YOU GET

Confirmation of your own hypothesis, and no new information.

## OPENING THE CONVERSATION

### Concrete and past-tense

#### TYPICAL FORM

"Walk me through last Tuesday." "What did you do when that happened?"

#### WHY IT WORKS

It asks for a memory, which is specific, checkable and hard to invent.

#### WHAT YOU GET

The real workflow, the real cost, and who else is involved.

## THE TEST AFTERWARDS

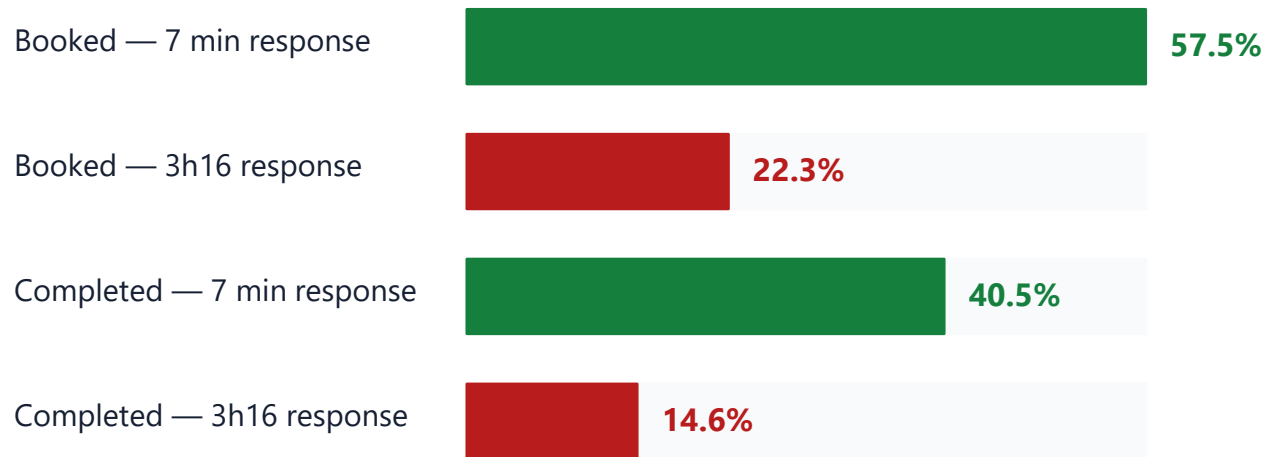
A useful measure: if you cannot name three things you did not know before the call, it was not a discovery conversation.

Rackham, N. (1988). SPIN Selling. New York: McGraw-Hill. · Fitzpatrick, R. (2013). The Mom Test.

# Speed changes what is possible

Lahzo's comparison held everything constant except response time

## REPORTED OUTCOMES: IMMEDIATE CONVERSATION VS FORMS-BASED FOLLOW-UP



Same leads, same practice. The difference is when the conversation happened.

## WHY IT WORKS

### Intent is perishable

Interest is highest at the moment of enquiry and decays quickly. A response hours later reaches a different person.

## THE SECOND FACTOR

### Coverage

Round-the-clock availability removed the after-hours gap where intent simply waited.

## THE LESSON

### Design for the moment

Speed of first response is often a larger lever than anything said in the conversation.

# Showing the product and showing the job

The difference decides whether they can picture themselves using it

## THE FEATURE TOUR

### Organised by product

#### WHAT HAPPENS

You walk through the interface, area by area, covering what it can do.

#### WHY IT IS TEMPTING

It is easy to prepare, and the same one works for everybody.

#### THE EFFECT

The buyer has to do the translation into their own situation — and usually does not.

## THE JOB DEMONSTRATION

### Organised by their problem

#### WHAT HAPPENS

You run the specific task they described in discovery, in their language.

#### WHAT IT REQUIRES

A discovery conversation first — which is why the sequence matters.

#### THE EFFECT

They see their own Tuesday, not a sample account.

## THE PREPARATION RULE

Use their vocabulary, their volumes and — where possible — their data. A demonstration that could have been given to anyone will be remembered by no one.

# Five objections and what each usually means

The stated objection is often a symptom of something missed earlier

| What they say                   | What it often means                                           | Where to go back to                                       |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| "It's too expensive."           | The value has not been quantified against their current cost. | Discovery — what does the problem cost them today?        |
| "Not right now."                | There is no consequence to doing nothing this quarter.        | Discovery — what changes if this waits six months?        |
| "I need to discuss internally." | You have not met the person who decides.                      | Qualification — who signs, and what do they need?         |
| "We already have something."    | The switching cost looks larger than the gain.                | Demonstration — show the gap in their own terms.          |
| "Send me some information."     | Usually a polite decline, occasionally a real process step.   | Commitment — ask what they would do with it, and by when. |

## THE GENERAL RULE

Handle an objection by returning to the stage where the gap actually is. Arguing at the point it surfaces rarely works.

# Four steps that keep an objection a conversation

The instinct is to answer immediately; that is usually the mistake

## ONE OBJECTION



### THE STEP THAT DOES THE WORK

The exploration step is where the real objection appears. Skipping to the response answers the version they were willing to say out loud.

# How a conversation ends

The ending determines whether anything actually happens next

|                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>NO COMMITMENT</b><br><br>"I'll think about it and get back to you." The deal now depends entirely on them remembering. | <b>SOFT COMMITMENT</b><br><br>"Let's speak next week." Better, but nothing is scheduled and nobody owns it. | <b>SPECIFIC COMMITMENT</b><br><br>A dated next step, a named owner on each side, and a stated purpose. Booked before the call ends. |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## WHAT A SPECIFIC COMMITMENT CONTAINS

| Element           | Example                                                                              |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| What happens next | A thirty-minute session with the practice manager, using their own utilisation data. |
| When              | Thursday 14:00 — in both calendars before this call ends.                            |
| Who, on each side | Their practice manager; our implementation lead.                                     |
| What it decides   | Whether to run a two-week pilot, and on which measure.                               |

# Why rehearsal matters more than talent here

These are performance skills, and they respond to the same training

## WORKING DEFINITION

Deliberate practice means rehearsing a specific, difficult part of the conversation, receiving immediate feedback, and repeating it — not simply holding more sales calls.

1

### Rehearse the hard five minutes

Not the whole call. The price question, the competitor question, the moment the champion goes quiet.

2

### Get feedback immediately

Recorded calls reviewed within a day. A month later, nobody remembers what they were thinking.

3

### Practise on colleagues first

Real prospects are an expensive place to discover that your answer does not work.

Ericsson, K., Krampe, R. & Tesch-Römer, C. (1993). The role of deliberate practice. *Psychological Review*, 100(3), 363–406.

# Three conversations that feel productive and lose the deal

Each one leaves both sides satisfied and nothing agreed

## The pitch

**Looks like** You talk for forty minutes.

**Why it fails** You learn nothing, so nothing you said was aimed at anything.

**Fix** Track your talk ratio; aim well under half in discovery.

## The happy ending

**Looks like** A warm call with no next step.

**Why it fails** Enthusiasm is free and decays within days.

**Fix** Do not end the call without a dated, owned next step.

## The premature answer

**Looks like** Responding to the first objection immediately and fluently.

**Why it fails** You answer the polite version and never hear the real one.

**Fix** Explore before you respond, every time.

## CASE STUDY

# Lahzo

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The same leads, the same practice — and a response time that changed the result.

# The same conversation, hours earlier

Only the timing changed, and the outcomes roughly doubled

## THE COMPARISON

### Forms-based follow-up

#### RESPONSE TIME

About 3 hours 16 minutes from enquiry to follow-up.

#### THE GAP

A call-centre model left after-hours enquiries waiting for the next staffed period.

#### THE RESULT

22.3% of leads booked an appointment; 14.6% completed one.

## THE CHANGE

### Immediate conversation

#### RESPONSE TIME

About 7 minutes, with twenty-four-hour coverage.

#### WHAT CHANGED

Scheduling happened inside the conversation rather than as a separate follow-up step.

#### THE RESULT

57.5% booked; 40.5% completed an appointment.

## READING THE CASE

Nothing about the offer changed. A conversation held at the moment of interest, rather than hours later, is a different conversation.

Drawn from the session case pack.

# Bringing the theory to ClinicFlow

A rehearsal plan for the four moments

| Moment        | What you prepare                                | ClinicFlow example                                                                |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Speed         | The maximum acceptable time to first response.  | Under fifteen minutes during working hours; an honest auto-response outside them. |
| Discovery     | Five past-tense questions.                      | "Walk me through last Tuesday's no-shows. What did the front desk actually do?"   |
| Demonstration | Their data, their vocabulary.                   | Load their published clinic hours; show the gap their own schedule creates.       |
| Objections    | The three you get most, each with evidence.     | "We already have a system" — show the backfill rate their current one achieves.   |
| Commitment    | The specific next step you will always ask for. | A thirty-minute session with the practice manager, booked before the call ends.   |
| Rehearsal     | The hard five minutes, weekly.                  | One recorded call reviewed each Friday against these five rows.                   |

WHAT COMES NEXT

Session 3.3 takes the closed deal and asks whether the operation behind it can actually deliver.

# What to carry out of this session

1

**Four moments, four jobs.**

Demonstrating during discovery wastes both conversations.

2

**Speed of first response is a lever on its own.**

Lahzo's booking rate rose from 22.3% to 57.5% on timing alone.

3

**Ask about last Tuesday, not about whether it would help.**

Memories are specific and checkable; hypotheticals produce agreement and no information.

4

**An objection points backwards.**

Handle it by returning to the stage where the gap actually is.

5

**End every conversation with a dated, owned next step.**

Enthusiasm without a calendar entry decays within days.

# Sources for this session

Primary references behind each concept

|                     |                                                                                                                                    |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| DISCOVERY           | Rackham, N. (1988). <i>SPIN Selling</i> . New York: McGraw-Hill.                                                                   |
| QUESTIONING         | Fitzpatrick, R. (2013). <i>The Mom Test</i> . London: Founder Centric.                                                             |
| MODERN BUYING       | Adamson, B., Dixon, M. & Toman, N. (2012). The end of solution sales. <i>Harvard Business Review</i> , 90(7), 60–68.               |
| SALES SKILLS        | Roberge, M. (2015). <i>The Sales Acceleration Formula</i> . Hoboken: Wiley.                                                        |
| DELIBERATE PRACTICE | Ericsson, K., Krampe, R. & Tesch-Römer, C. (1993). The role of deliberate practice. <i>Psychological Review</i> , 100(3), 363–406. |
| RESPONSE SPEED      | Oldroyd, J., McElheran, K. & Elkington, D. (2011). The short life of online sales leads. <i>Harvard Business Review</i> , 89(3).   |
| NEGOTIATION         | Fisher, R. & Ury, W. (2011). <i>Getting to Yes</i> (3rd ed.). New York: Penguin.                                                   |