

Common Seller Objections/Questions and Sample Answers (Sorry, it's not a "script" ...)

There's no "script" for answering all seller objections, and here's why: no single seller is going to have the same set of objections, and even though there are some that you'll hear versions of over and over again, there will always be some seller who throws a new one at you, no matter how long you've been at this.

Also, it's my experience that "scripts" don't really work for real investors. If it's your intention to be friendly, transparent, rapport building, and so on, you are, eventually, going to have to find words that YOU feel comfortable saying in response to the random objections that you do get. Using someone else's techniques works. Using someone else's words makes you sound stilted, rehearsed, and odd.

Finally, the kinds of objections you most commonly get depend a lot on the kind of offer you typically make. The objections sellers make to low cash offers are different than the ones you'll hear to offers that include taking over payments, or having the seller carry financing.

This is a list of the objections I've heard over and over for decades in a row, and how I would typically answer them.

Here's how I'd use this guide if I were you:

1. Read the objections and make sure you understand what they are, and my answers to make sure you understand the gist of the response. HOW is it answering the question or overcoming the objection? By lobbing it back into the seller's court? By creating a 'takeaway'? By explanation?
2. Next, read my answers out loud several times. See how they feel to you. Natural? Too stilted? Not formal enough?
3. Think about the words you'd use to convey the same message, and write them down so you can practice them over and over.
4. Practice, a LOT. Try to put yourself into the position to GET these objections, and use your answers, again and again. In other words, talk to a lot of sellers, even ones that don't seem particularly motivated, so that you can get as much real-life experience as possible as fast as possible.

>> Seller's asking price is far above your maximum allowable offer, and he doesn't seem to have any particular pain point.

"[Seller's name], let me explain a little bit about what I do. I buy distressed properties from sellers in distressed situations, who have their properties priced accordingly. That doesn't sound like you. Would you agree?" (if he agrees) "Well, I appreciate you reaching out, but I don't think any offer I could make you would make you very happy. If anything changes, please call me again." (if he happens to say that he IS motivated) "OK, but I need you to understand that the offer that I'll probably make is going to be significantly less than what you've been telling me you have to have. Do you still want to hear it?"

>> Seller's asking price is far above your maximum allowable offer, and he DOES seem motivated to sell

First: ask questions: *"How did you decide on that price? What are you going to do if you can't get that price?"*

"[seller's name], here's the problem: I get the feeling that you really do need to get rid of this property, but I'm not sure how any investor is going to be able to pay that price for it. In looking at what similar properties in the same condition are selling for, I suspect I'd be WAY below that number. When I have a better idea of my own numbers, do you want to hear it, even if it's less than what you're asking?"

If you know how to make creative offers, and the deal makes sense at a higher price if you could get terms:

"I can offer you a couple of options here: if you're open to [taking payments, a take-over payments deal], I think I can get a lot closer to your asking price that way. If you want to hear an offer like that, I can come over, take a look, and tell you the most I could pay for cash and also the most I could pay in payments, and you can decide if you like either of those offers."

>> Seller says he has a higher offer

"You're going to take it, right? All investors pretty much make offers based on the same formulas, so if someone made you a serious, written offer of a lot more than this and they're still willing to pay it, you should probably grab it. Is there some reason you haven't accepted it already?"

>> Seller says he has other investors making offers

"Sure, I understand. Really, we're all using the same formula about what we can pay, so you're going to see a lot of similar numbers.

But if I can, let me give you some advice: you have to take the offer that's right for you, but if you get someone in there who offers you a price that seems a lot higher than the others,

and is all cash, but then needs 45 or 60 days to close and has to get a partner to approve the deal, be careful. There's no reason it should take 60 days to get cash.

Really, they're just going to try to find someone who will pay a higher price, and if they can't, they'll disappear. My number will be a real number, and as long as there are no title problems and the inspections go ok, it will actually close. I'm the real deal"

>> Seller asks how you do business, how you make offers, or how much you pay for properties

"It really depends on the property; some houses are best for rental, some are best to fix up and resell, and if it's one I can't handle alone, I have partners that I can go to that have a ton of money and experience.

I can tell you this for sure: I have a dozen people a week calling me wanting me to buy their house, so I don't have time to play the "I'll lowball you and see what you come with" game. If it's ok with you, I'm going to do the math and give you the best offer I can. If you like it, we'll do a deal, and if you don't, we'll shake hands and part as friends. Is that ok?

>> Seller asks how you found him/why you think his house is for sale

"Oh Jeez, I sent out 50 of those postcards last week for a bunch of different reasons. If I had my database in front of me I could tell you why yours caught my eye, and I can look at that later if it's important to you. In the meantime, are you looking to sell it?"

>> Seller asks if you've done this before/have any experience

This is sort of a trick question: no one EVER asks this.

But IF it did happen and IF you had no experience at all: "Actually, I'm working on getting my first deal, but I've been taking tons of classes and I have a partner who's done over 1,000 deals that's helping me out"

If you DO have experience: "Sure, I've done several deals."

>> Seller asks what you're going to do with the property

"well...truth is, I don't really know yet. It all depends on the property and the terms: I might fix it up and rent it. I might fix it and sell it. I might partner up with someone else who will fix it. I won't really know until I've seen the house and taken a closer look at the area."

>> Seller says "I'm not going to give away my property" or "I'm not going to let you steal my property"

<laughing> "Well, of course not. I wouldn't expect you to. My goal is just to find out what you need and make you the best offer I can, no games. If you like it, great. If not, no hard

feeling. It's just business, no one is going to be mad. So at what price would you not feel like you were 'Giving it away'?"

>> Seller won't say what he wants for the property

"Hey, I hear you, but I don't want to waste your time or mine. I talk to about 10 sellers a week, and I have to decide which ones to actually go look at and which ones I won't have time for. I need SOME idea of what you're thinking price-wise, or my (wife, husband, partner, mentor) isn't going to let me put your house on the schedule.

Let me ask this, if I was going to bring you a sack of money, how much money would have to be in that sack for you to give me the house without feeling like you've been cheated?"

>> Seller won't sign contract because of the inspection clause, because he only wants to sell the property "as is"

"Yes, I'm buying it as-is, which means I'm not going to ask you to fix anything or spend any money, or hold you responsible if something turns out to be wrong with the house after I buy it that I didn't see. But that's exactly WHY I need to get inspectors in here: so I know exactly what it is I'm getting. "

>> Seller seems impatient/hostile

"You sound like this isn't a great time to talk, and I have about 10 minutes' worth of questions I need to ask you to decide whether this is a good fit or not. Is there a better time, or can we do it now?"

>> Seller doesn't want to give information, just wants you to "come out and make an offer, because you're the one who sent to letter..."

"Hey, I understand but I need to help you understand what my time limitations are. I talk to a dozen people a week who want me to make an offer on their houses, and I just don't have the time to see all of them because [there are too many/I have a fulltime job/I have 2 young kids at home], so I need a LITTLE info on the house and the situation so I can tell you whether it's a good fit. Otherwise, I'm not going to be able to make a decision about putting you on the schedule.

If you can talk for 5 minutes, either right now or later, I can tell you right over the phone around what I can pay for it. If that number sounds ok, then I'll come out and take a look and write you up a formal offer. Sound fair?"

>> You make your offer, Seller says "I'll just list it"

"That's definitely the best way to get a lot of people looking at it, and there might be someone out there who's eventually willing to pay more than I am.

Make sure you get an agent who's comfortable with houses that [need a lot of work, are over financed] and who doesn't insist that you do a bunch of stuff to it before he or she lists it like most agents do.

And so you know, I've found that a lot of agents insist on a higher commission for houses that are going to end up selling relatively cheap. Do you have the name of an agent like that, or do you want me to give you one?

Ok, just do me a favor and ask the agent to put an exclusion in your listing contract for me, in case it turns out that after all your costs, my offer is actually better than the 'higher' offers you might get. Otherwise, if you end up selling to me while it's listed, you'll have to pay the agent a commission even though YOU found me. Can I call you back in a month or so and see how it's going?

>> Seller says "I'll just keep it/rent it" when you make your offer

"You have to do what's right for you, and I get that. But I sort of thought you told me that this house was a problem for you, but if you're willing to keep it, that's definitely a way to wait out the market until it's worth more and you owe less. Is it ok if I check back in with you sometime and see how that's going?"

>> Seller thinks the property needs \$7,000 in work. It needs \$50,000

"Who gave you that bid?? I need his number, because I can tell you for sure my contractors would charge me \$45,000 or \$50,000 to do everything I'd want to do in there. In fact, why don't you just go ahead and have your guy do it? If you do, and it's done right, I guarantee I can pay you a lot more for the house.

>> Seller says "I have an appraisal for/the tax value is/Zillow says it's worth.." and that number is far higher than yours

IF they just recently started trying to sell...

"Yeah, I hear that a lot, and what I always ask people is, do you think if you stuck a sign in the yard and asked that, you'd get it? Or do you think that number is high?"

I find that the tax value is usually the most the county thinks they can charge you for without you complaining. Plus, they never see the inside of your house, and it doesn't take the condition into account.

OR

I find that the Zillow Zestimate is always really high. If I could sell my house for what Zillow says it's worth, I'd move tomorrow"

IF they've been trying to sell for a while...

Has anyone offered you that price? No? Why do you think that is?"

>> Seller names his “bottom dollar” and it’s still higher than what you probably can pay

"So {seller}, are you telling me that if I can't pay you every dime of {bottom dollar} that I shouldn't even bother making an offer at all? You just don't want to hear it, no matter what it is?"

>> Before you’ve even talked price, you find out that seller wants something (like to take something from the property that you need as part of the sale, or to stay in the property for 6 months after closing) that is just not acceptable to you/your exit strategy

"I tell you what, [seller's name], let's set this particular thing aside for right now and see if we can agree on the other stuff. If we can, we'll circle back to this and talk it through. If we can't agree on the other stuff, then we really don't need to figure this issue out anyway."

>> AFTER you’ve agreed on the price, you find out that seller wants something (like for you to pay back taxes, or to stay in the property for 6 months after closing) that is just not acceptable to you

"Wow, I did NOT take that into consideration when I named my price, and that's a real deal-changer. I might be able to do it, but we'd have to talk about a lower price. How important is this to you?"

>> Seller says that your offer isn’t acceptable, he needs ‘more’, but hasn’t said how much more

"[seller's name], I've shared what I can do, and you're telling me that it's not enough without giving me in guidance on what WOULD be enough. You tell me what (price, terms) you'd like better, and I'll look at my math again and see if there's any place I can cut some costs to get there, but I don't even know where to start if you don't tell me what you're willing to do"