Model for Handling Hidden Objections & Push-Back

Gather clues using a neutral statement

Tell me more about that.   Expand on that a bit.

State possible concern clearly / directly, and then check in

What I think you're saying is…   Is that right?

Sounds like…   Am I on the right track?

Suggest resolution or counter ('Validate' if that fits)
Check in to see if resolution or counter is accepted

Here's what I suggest… Will that work for you?

Clients have raised similar issues and we decided to include off-ramps in early phases of the contract. These make it easy to evaluate quality of the work specific to your project with much less risk. How does that sound to you?

Move on to next-steps

- Practice this at home! Especially the first two parts.

- Use Gather Clues when you're trying to get help or service but running into odd roadblocks.

- Use Gather Clues when you hear a completely mystifying statement.

- "Validate" if appropriate by mentioning clients, other people, or yourself.

  To avoid backing yourself into a corner try to stick with statements like, "some people *said*" or "clients have raised the same issue."

  As you offer a counter or resolution use the word "and" in place of the word "but."

- Set the stage to help prevent objections in meetings:
    - Say what you want to accomplish and/or talk about
    - Ask what they want to accomplish and/or talk about

- When selling or trying to persuade: Lots of objections can be handled by taking a step back to re-examine or discuss the issues, cons and pros, etc.. Don't be afraid to do this.

  On the other hand, it's often important to find out if people are actually open to discussing the issues before you try to go any further: "Is this open to discussion?"

- Still can't figure out what's on their mind? Stumped for a resolution? Give the ball to the other person: "Fair enough. What would you like to do from here?" (Leave the "I'm stumped" unsaid.)

> Ask—don't guess.
> Surfacing issues defuses them.
> NAP? Let go!