Finding the real weak point in a professional training journey

A professional training offer looked messy in several places. The evidence pointed to one narrower problem, and three practical changes rather than a rebuild.

The situation

The business sold a substantial live professional training programme. Prospects were committing real time, money and participation. When they hesitated, there were plenty of plausible suspects: the sales page, emails, checkout, support, onboarding and even the first live session. I wanted to know which one mattered first.

What I looked at

I followed the journey from serious consideration through the first live experience, using sales assets, buyer survey data, prospect and customer emails, support questions, transactions, onboarding records, attendance, early refunds and a previous cohort for comparison.

Main finding

Good prospects generally understood the value. The repeated weak point came later, when they had to answer:

“Is this actually right and workable for me now?”

Interest → FIT / FEASIBILITY DECISION → Purchase → Onboarding

First meaningful weak point

Some hesitation was legitimate. This was substantial training: real money, time and participation. Better copy cannot fix childcare, cash flow or calendars.

But some friction was avoidable. Suitable prospects still worked too hard to understand fit, attendance and certification, flexibility, price and payment options, or who could give them a reliable answer.

What was causing the friction

1. **Real-life feasibility:** Some people had genuine money, timing, workload or family constraints. “Not this cohort” could be right.
2. **Important questions were being answered too late:** Important participation requirements sometimes surfaced only after purchase or during onboarding.
3. **Human support was doing too much of the work:** Flexibility helped, but serious questions could depend on someone noticing, remembering and closing the loop. Human flexibility is a strength. Human memory being the operating system isn’t.

What I didn't treat as the main problem

There were problems elsewhere: checkout glitches, onboarding issues and some early refunds. But onboarding was largely working, and the evidence did not show that any of these was the first material point of loss.

Nor did it suggest the main problem was “explain the value better”. Good prospects already understood the appeal. A noisy journey can make a broad rebuild feel sensible, but in this case the evidence supported something narrower.

What I’d change

1. **Make it easier for prospects to decide whether the programme is right for them:** Create one concise decision guide covering fit, experience, workload, live attendance, certification, flexibility, professional scope, missed sessions, price and payment options, and when waiting is sensible.
2. **Have one version of the truth internally:** Keep current commercial and participation rules in one trusted source, then make sure sales pages, emails and support answers draw from it.
3. **Make sure serious questions cannot quietly disappear:** Give genuine buying questions a clear owner and simple follow-up, so a call request, broken link or unanswered question does not become part of the buying experience.

What I left alone

I did not recommend cutting the standard price, sending much more sales email, redesigning the curriculum, rebuilding checkout or onboarding, removing human flexibility, or trying to prevent every early refund.

Finding possible changes was easy. The useful work was deciding which ones the evidence actually justified.

The commercial logic

The goal wasn't to push as many people through checkout as possible.

For a substantial professional training, the better goal was to help the right people reach the right decision with less unnecessary friction: fewer suitable prospects lost, fewer repetitive support conversations, fewer surprises after purchase, and better information about why people buy, wait or walk away.

What this shows about the diagnostic

- Looking across marketing, sales, support and onboarding as one connected journey
- Using customer language, transactions, support records and behaviour to test competing explanations
- Distinguishing real constraints from avoidable friction and narrowing a messy list to three practical priorities

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