# 5 SELF-DEFEATING THOUGHTS KILLING YOUR PHARMACEUTICAL SALES CARREER (AND THE SECRET TO SUCCESS)

BY: EA JOHNSON

# INTRODUCTION

**Breaking the Chains of Limiting Beliefs**

Pharmaceutical sales can be one of the most rewarding, yet challenging, careers. Every day, you step into a competitive world, armed with knowledge about your product and a genuine desire to improve lives. Yet, despite your best efforts, roadblocks like rejection, time constraints, and difficult conversations with healthcare providers, can feel overwhelming.

If you've ever found yourself doubting your abilities, second-guessing your approach, or feeling like you're not cut out for this field, you're not alone. The truth is, it's not the external challenges that hold most sales professionals back—it's the internal ones. Self-defeating thoughts, those nagging doubts that creep into your mind, are often the invisible barriers preventing you from reaching your full potential.

This eBook was created to address those thoughts head-on. It's not just about identifying the five most common self-defeating beliefs in pharmaceutical sales—it's about dismantling them and replacing them with a mindset of confidence, clarity, and purpose. By the end, you'll have a new perspective on the challenges you face and the tools to overcome them.

# INTRODUCTION

You'll also be introduced to a powerful framework called VIBE—Vision, Intention, Belief, and Execution—that will serve as your foundation for self-confidence and lasting success. This eBook is the first step in a journey to unlock your potential, and there's more waiting for you in the online course and live trainings where we dive even deeper.

It's time to let go of the doubts and fears holding you back and embrace the tools and mindset that will elevate your career to the next level. Let's start by shining a light on the self-defeating thoughts that may be sabotaging your success and replacing them with strategies that work. Ready? Let's get to work!

# THOUGHT #1

## The Provider Isn't Interested in My Product

**The Thought:**

You walk into a clinic or hospital, and before you even begin your pitch, you tell yourself, "This provider probably isn't interested in my product." It's easy to fall into the trap of assuming disinterest, especially if you've faced previous rejection or are met with a rushed demeanor. But is this thought based on reality—or just fear?

**Reality Check:**

Providers are some of the busiest people you'll encounter, often juggling full schedules, patient concerns, and administrative responsibilities. Their initial response may feel like disinterest, but that doesn't mean they don't care about your product or what it can do. In fact, most providers are constantly searching for solutions to help their patients, streamline their practice, or address specific challenges. What they don't have is time to sift through irrelevant information.

# THOUGHT #1

When you assume disinterest without evidence, you miss the opportunity to engage with someone who may truly benefit from your product. Providers aren't disinterested in you; they're disinterested in wasting time on something that doesn't directly serve their patients' needs.

**Debunking It:**

To overcome this thought, shift your focus to connecting the value of your product to the provider's specific needs. Here's how:

1. **Do Your Homework:** Research the provider's specialty, patient demographics, and challenges they may face. Tailor your pitch accordingly to make it relevant and concise.
2. **Ask Questions:** Instead of launching into a full presentation, start with questions like:
   - "What are some of the biggest challenges you're seeing with patients in this area?"
   - "What would make treating [condition] easier or more effective for you?"

These questions show genuine interest in their perspective and can guide you toward framing your product as the solution.

# THOUGHT #1

3. **Highlight the Patient Impact:** Providers care about outcomes. Emphasize how your product will improve the lives of their patients—whether it's through better efficacy, improved adherence, or cost savings.

4. **Be Respectful of Time:** Acknowledge their busy schedule and focus on delivering a concise, impactful message. Something as simple as:
    - *"I know you're busy, so I'll get right to the point. This product has been proven to [insert key benefit], and I'd love to share more when it's convenient for you."*

When you approach providers with confidence and focus on how your product solves their specific challenges, you'll quickly realize that their "disinterest" isn't personal—it's about how well you align your pitch with what they need. By changing your mindset and strategy, you'll transform potential disinterest into engaged conversations that can lead to long-term relationships and sales success.

# THOUGHT #2

## 'I'm Bothering Them Too Much When They're Busy'

**The Thought:**
You hesitate to follow up with a provider or office staff because you fear being seen as a nuisance. The idea of interrupting someone's busy day can leave you second-guessing whether reaching out again is the right move. You think, "If they're interested, they'll let me know. Otherwise, I'm just annoying them."

**Reality Check:**
Persistence is not the same as being intrusive. In fact, persistence—when done with professionalism and respect—is a critical ingredient in successful sales. Providers are busy, and it's easy for them to unintentionally overlook or forget about your product amidst the demands of their day. A well-timed, respectful follow-up serves as a reminder and demonstrates your commitment to offering value.

Many successful sales happen after multiple touchpoints. Research shows it can take 5-8 interactions for a prospect to take action. When you stop yourself from following up, you're potentially leaving opportunities on the table.

# THOUGHT #2

**Debunking It:**
Here's how to follow up in a way that's respectful, professional, and effective:

1. **Set the Expectation Early**: When you first meet with a provider, let them know you'll follow up. For example:
   - *"I'll check back next week to see if you've had a chance to review the materials."*
   - Setting this expectation makes your follow-up feel planned rather than intrusive.
2. **Focus on Adding Value**: Each time you reach out, make it about them. Share something relevant, such as:
   - A quick fact or study about your product.
   - An update on insurance coverage or patient support programs.
   - A brief success story from a similar provider or patient demographic.
   - This shows you're not just checking in for the sake of it—you're offering helpful information.

# THOUGHT #2

1. Respect Their Schedule: Timing matters. Avoid reaching out during peak hours (e.g., early mornings or right after lunch). Instead, ask for their preferred times or use context clues from previous interactions.

1. Leverage Multiple Channels: If direct calls or visits seem intrusive, try softer touchpoints like a follow-up email, a handwritten note, or even a quick text message if the relationship allows. This shows persistence without feeling pushy.

1. Be Concise: Respect their time by keeping your follow-ups short and to the point. For example:
    - “I just wanted to check in and see if you had any questions about the patient program we discussed. Let me know if there’s anything I can clarify!”

# THOUGHT #2

6. Know When to Pause: If you've followed up multiple times without a response, it's okay to give them some space. Let them know they can reach out when they're ready:

- "I understand things are busy on your end. I'll touch base again in a few weeks, but please don't hesitate to reach out in the meantime if you have any questions or need support."

By shifting your mindset from "bothering" to "building relationships," you'll see follow-ups not as interruptions, but as opportunities to remind providers of the value you bring. Respectful persistence not only keeps your product top-of-mind but also shows that you're invested in their success—and that's something busy providers will always appreciate.

# THOUGHT #3

**'My Product Won't Be Covered by Insurance'**

**The Thought:**

- Before even stepping into a provider's office, you're already doubting your product's chances of success. You think, "This product won't be covered by insurance, so the provider won't want to prescribe it." Anticipating this obstacle makes you hesitant to bring it up or present your product confidently.

**Reality Check:**

- While insurance coverage can be a hurdle, many products are covered, partially covered, or have programs in place to reduce costs for patients. Assuming that coverage is a deal-breaker can lead you to dismiss the opportunity before it even exists. Providers and patients alike face challenges with insurance, but they are often willing to work through these issues if the product offers significant value.

# THOUGHT #3

In addition, many pharmaceutical companies provide copay assistance programs, patient assistance initiatives, or reimbursement resources designed to help mitigate coverage concerns. When you're equipped with the right tools and information, you can turn this perceived obstacle into an opportunity to build trust and credibility.

**Debunking It:**
To address coverage concerns effectively, preparation and proactive communication are key. Here's how:

1. **Know the Coverage Landscape:** Research insurance plans and formularies in your region to understand which plans cover your product. This knowledge allows you to anticipate and address potential concerns before they arise.
2. **Leverage Support Programs:** Familiarize yourself with any copay assistance or patient support programs offered by your company. These programs can make a significant difference in patient affordability and reduce provider hesitation. Be ready to explain how these programs work and provide materials for the provider's office.

# THOUGHT #3

3. **Educate the Provider:** Proactively address potential coverage concerns during your conversation. For example:
    - "I understand insurance coverage is always a consideration. I wanted to let you know that this product is covered by several major plans, and we also offer a patient assistance program to reduce out-of-pocket costs."
4. **Offer Reimbursement Support Resources:** Many pharmaceutical companies offer reimbursement support teams or hotlines that can help providers navigate insurance questions. Be sure to highlight these resources as a way to simplify the process for their staff.
5. **Be Transparent:** If coverage is limited, don't shy away from the conversation. Instead, position yourself as a problem-solver:
    - "For patients whose insurance doesn't cover this product, we have a copay card that reduces costs significantly. I'd be happy to walk your staff through how to access it."

# THOUGHT #3

6. **Prepare Success Stories:** Share real-life examples of how your product has been successfully prescribed, even in cases where insurance was initially a challenge. This builds confidence in your ability to help navigate such obstacles.
7. **Stay Calm Under Pressure:** If a provider raises coverage concerns, acknowledge them empathetically while offering a solution:
    - "I completely understand that insurance coverage is a critical factor. That's why we've made it a priority to provide tools and programs to make this product accessible to as many patients as possible."

By equipping yourself with resources and approaching the topic confidently, you can overcome insurance-related objections and position yourself as a knowledgeable, solutions-oriented partner. Providers will appreciate your proactive approach and willingness to help their patients, building trust and credibility for future conversations.

# THOUGHT #4

## 'The Copay is Too High'

**The Thought:**
You assume that patients won't be able to afford your product's copay or won't want to spend extra money on it. This thought makes you hesitant to promote the product confidently, thinking the cost will deter both the provider and the patient.

**Reality Check:**
While affordability is a legitimate concern, it's important to avoid prejudging a patient's ability or willingness to pay. Many patients are willing to invest in products that significantly improve their quality of life, reduce their symptoms, or address a critical health issue. For providers, the question is often not just about the cost but whether the product delivers value that justifies the price.

Additionally, most pharmaceutical companies offer patient assistance programs, copay cards, or other resources to help reduce out-of-pocket costs. Providers and their patients often rely on these tools to make medications accessible.

# THOUGHT #4

**Debunking It:**
Here's how to overcome the assumption that the copay is too high and turn it into an opportunity to highlight your product's value:

1. **Focus on Value, Not Cost:** Highlight the benefits of your product, such as its effectiveness, ease of use, or potential to improve patient outcomes. When providers see the value, they're more likely to present the product to patients—even if there's a cost associated.
   - Example: "This medication has been shown to improve patient adherence by 30%, leading to better long-term outcomes."
2. **Introduce Patient Assistance Programs Early:** Be upfront about resources available to help reduce patient costs. Explain how copay cards or assistance programs can significantly lower the financial burden. For example:
   - "I understand affordability is a concern, which is why we offer a copay card that brings the cost down to as little as $20 per month for most patients."
3. **Equip the Provider's Office with Tools:** Provide the staff with clear, simple instructions for accessing copay cards, reimbursement programs, or patient assistance options. Make it easy for them to help their patients.

# THOUGHT #4

4. **Emphasize Quality of Life:** Position your product as an investment in the patient's well-being. Help the provider see how the benefits outweigh the cost.
    - Example: "Patients who use this product have reported significant improvement in daily activities and symptom management, which makes a meaningful difference in their quality of life."
5. **Share Real-World Success Stories:** Highlight examples of patients who were able to afford the product with assistance programs and experienced positive outcomes. This builds confidence in the product's accessibility and value.
    - Example: "We recently helped a patient with similar concerns access the copay program and they're now seeing amazing results."
6. **Don't Assume Provider or Patient Objections:** Let providers and patients decide for themselves what is affordable. Your job is to present the product and resources clearly and confidently, without making assumptions.

# THOUGHT #4

7. **Be Prepared to Address Cost Concerns:** If a provider mentions the copay, acknowledge it empathetically while offering a solution:
    - "I completely understand that cost is a factor. That's why we've ensured this product has options to make it affordable, even for patients with high deductibles or copays."
8. **Reframe the Conversation Around Accessibility:** Instead of focusing on "high cost," shift the focus to how you can make the product accessible through available programs.

By leading with value, presenting solutions, and avoiding assumptions, you can effectively navigate cost-related objections. Providers will see you as a resourceful partner who prioritizes patient care and outcomes over sales, building trust and setting the stage for future success.

# THOUGHT #5

## 'I Don't Want to Come Off as Too Pushy'

**The Thought:**
You hesitate to reach out, follow up, or present your product too enthusiastically because you're afraid of being labeled as "pushy" or aggressive. The fear of rejection or alienating a provider leads you to hold back, leaving opportunities untapped and conversations unfinished.

**Reality Check:**
There's a significant difference between being assertive and being aggressive. Assertiveness is about confidence, clarity, and respect for both yourself and the provider. It's not about forcing someone to say "yes"—it's about offering value and fostering a genuine dialogue. Providers expect pharmaceutical representatives to be confident in their products and consistent in their follow-up. If you approach conversations with the mindset of building relationships rather than just making sales, your assertiveness will be seen as professionalism, not pushiness.

# THOUGHT #5

**Debunking It:**
Here's how to reframe your mindset and approach to avoid feeling "pushy" while building genuine, lasting relationships:

1. **Shift from Selling to Serving:** Start viewing your role as a consultant or problem-solver rather than just a salesperson. Ask yourself, "How can my product genuinely help this provider and their patients?" When you focus on serving rather than selling, your confidence will naturally come across as authentic.
    - Example: "I believe this product can truly make a difference for your patients, and I'd love to show you how."
2. **Ask Questions and Listen:** A great way to avoid feeling pushy is to engage in a two-way conversation rather than a monologue. Ask thoughtful questions to uncover the provider's needs, challenges, or priorities. Listening actively will show them you care and help you position your product as a solution.
    - Example Questions:
        - "What challenges are you seeing with patient adherence in this area?"
        - "What's most important to you when recommending a treatment for [condition]?"

# THOUGHT #5

3. **Set the Tone with Empathy:** Acknowledge their time and workload, showing that you respect their priorities.
    - Example: "I know your time is valuable, so I'll keep this brief and to the point."
    - This approach demonstrates professionalism and reduces the perception of being pushy.
4. **Be Transparent About Follow-Ups:** Let them know upfront that you'll be following up so it doesn't feel unexpected.
    - Example: "I'll check back with you in a week or two to see if you have any questions or need additional materials. Does that work for you?"
5. **Focus on Long-Term Relationships:** Providers are more likely to engage with reps who focus on building trust over time rather than rushing to close a deal. Consistent, value-driven touchpoints will show you're in it for the long haul.
6. **Provide Value with Every Interaction:** To avoid coming off as pushy, make sure each interaction offers something useful—whether it's new clinical data, patient success stories, or updates on reimbursement options. When you deliver value, your follow-ups are welcomed rather than ignored.

7. **Respect Their Decision-Making Process:** Understand that providers need time to consider their options. Your job is to equip them with the information and support they need to make an informed decision, not to pressure them into one.

# THOUGHT #5

- Example: “I’m here to provide the tools and information you need—let me know how I can help.”

8. **Practice Confidence, Not Forcefulness:** Being confident in your product and its ability to help is key. Speak clearly and assertively, but never cross the line into overbearing. Confidence inspires trust, while forcefulness alienates.
9. **Read the Room:** Pay attention to verbal and nonverbal cues. If a provider seems rushed or uninterested, adjust your approach and offer to reconnect at a better time. Respect for their time builds goodwill.
10. **End Every Conversation with an Open Door:** Leave interactions on a positive, non-pressuring note that invites future dialogue:

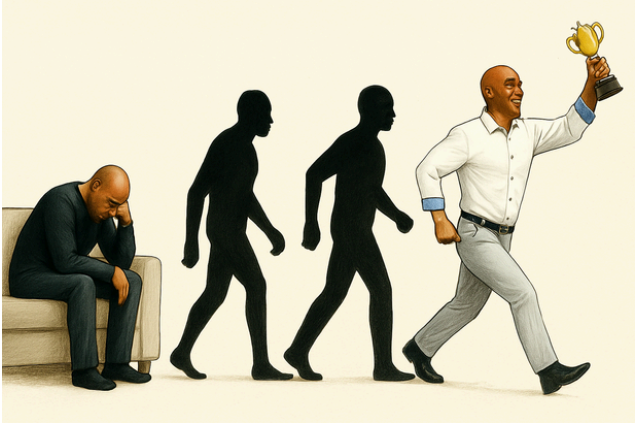
- Example: “I understand you’re busy, and I appreciate your time today. I’d love to circle back when it’s convenient to answer any questions or provide more details.”

By reframing your mindset from "selling" to "serving" and focusing on building genuine relationships, you’ll exude confidence without being pushy. Providers will see you as a trustworthy partner who respects their time and truly cares about their patients, paving the way for stronger connections and better results in your sales efforts.

# PART #2

## The Secret to Replacing Self-Defeating Thoughts — EA Johnson and the Power of the SUCCESS V.I.B.E.

Success in pharmaceutical sales doesn't come without challenges, and few know this better than EA Johnson. Early in his career, EA struggled with many of the same self-defeating thoughts you've read about in this eBook. He doubted his abilities, feared rejection, and questioned whether he could truly excel in such a competitive field. But instead of allowing these thoughts to hold him back, EA committed to changing his mindset, refining his approach, and building the confidence he needed to thrive.



# THE SUCCESS V.I.B.E.

Through persistence, faith, and intentional growth, EA climbed the ranks to become one of the top pharmaceutical sales representatives in his field. His journey wasn't just about learning to sell—it was about learning to lead, inspire, and serve. Along the way, he discovered that the key to overcoming self-doubt lies in four foundational principles: **Vision, Intention, Belief, and Execution,** or **V.I.B.E.**

www.EAjohnsonspeaks.com

# V.I.B.E.

**Introducing the VIBE Acronym**

- **Vision:** The ability to see your goals with clarity and specificity.
- **Intention:** The purposeful actions that drive you toward your goals.
- **Belief:** The mindset shift that fuels your confidence and resilience.
- **Execution:** The discipline to turn plans into reality, even in the face of obstacles.

The VIBE framework isn't just a set of abstract ideas—it's the formula I used to transform my career and life. It's about more than sales; it's about building a mindset that allows you to overcome challenges, achieve your goals, and grow into the best version of yourself.

This framework is the cornerstone of each training session, where students dive deep into each component to help pharmaceutical sales professionals take their careers to the next level. For now, this eBook introduces the principles of VIBE as the starting point for replacing self-defeating thoughts with a confidence-driven, results-focused mindset.

# MEET EA JOHNSON

**Meet EA Johnson: The Author Behind the Confidence Formula**

EA Johnson's path to success has been shaped by his experiences both on and off the field. As a former youth basketball coach, he learned the importance of leadership, discipline, and inspiring others to reach their potential. His work as a motivational speaker blends his background in sports, his strong Catholic faith, and his sales expertise to create a unique approach to personal and professional growth.

EA's story is a testament to what's possible when you align your vision, intention, belief, and execution. His passion for helping others succeed has driven him to create transformative tools and training, empowering sales professionals to overcome self-doubt and unlock their full potential.

The VIBE framework is your next step toward confidence and success in pharmaceutical sales. As you continue this journey, remember that success starts with your mindset—and EA Johnson is here to guide you every step of the way.

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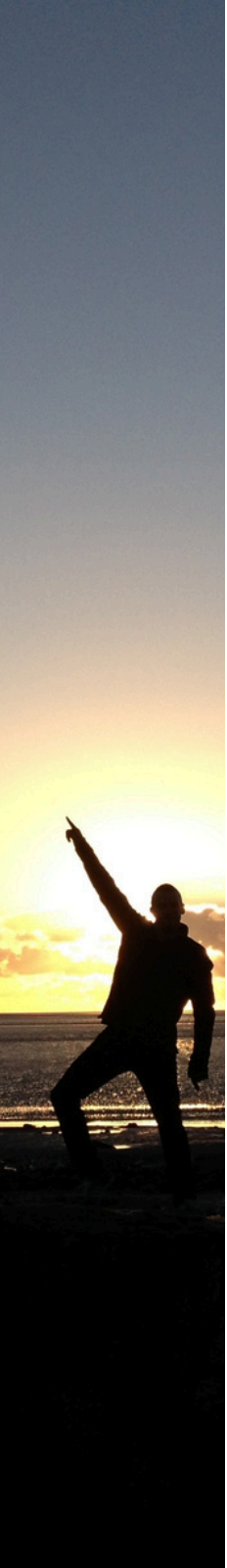

# PART #2

## Conclusion: SUCCESS is a VIBE

Pharmaceutical sales is as much about mindset as it is about strategy. This eBook has walked you through five of the most common self-defeating thoughts that hold sales professionals back, from assuming disinterest to fearing rejection. By addressing and replacing these thoughts, you open the door to greater confidence, stronger relationships, and career success.

At the heart of this transformation is EA Johnson's journey. EA began his career facing the same doubts and challenges many sales professionals experience. But through persistence, self-reflection, and a commitment to growth, he rose to the top of his field. His success isn't just a result of sales techniques—it's built on a mindset he calls VIBE: Vision, Intention, Belief, and Execution.

# MEET EA JOHNSON

**Your Next Steps Toward Confidence and Success**

Now that you've identified the self-defeating thoughts that may be holding you back, it's time to take action. Here's how you can get started on your journey:

1. Reflect: Think about which of the five thoughts resonated most with your own challenges. Awareness is the first step toward change.
2. Explore EA's Resources: EA's online courses and live trainings provide a deeper dive into the VIBE framework, helping you build confidence and execute at a higher level.
3. Take the First Step: Sign up for a free consultation, webinar, or download EA's lead magnet resource to begin applying these principles to your career today.

# MEET EA JOHNSON

**Call to Action: Transform Your Career**
Ready to take the next step? Visit [insert website link] to:

- Access EA's free resources to jumpstart your growth.
- Enroll in his online course to master the VIBE framework.
- Reserve your spot in one of EA's live training sessions to gain actionable insights tailored to your goals.

Success isn't about avoiding challenges—it's about mastering your mindset. With VIBE and EA Johnson, you'll break through barriers and unlock the success you deserve. Ready to take the first step?