

Opposition & Setbacks Reference Card

Module 3.10 - Read the Resistance, Adjust, Go Again

The Setback Taxonomy

Type	What It Means	Response	Key Insight
Tactical Failure	Approach didn't work, goal is still right	Try different angle, channel, or messenger	Most setbacks are this
Strategic Failure	Goal itself needs rethinking	Reassess target, timeline, or ask	Rarer — but ignoring it wastes resources

Diagnostic Questions

#	Ask This
1.	Was the goal wrong, or was the execution wrong?
2.	Did we target the right people?
3.	Did external conditions change?
4.	Is this a one-time failure or a pattern?
5.	What did we learn?

The Opposition Playbook (5 Tactics)

Tactic	How It Works	Your Response
Discredit the messenger	Attack your credibility instead of your argument	Redirect to the issue
Flood the zone	Show up in numbers to dominate the narrative	Your diversity > their volume
Reframe the debate	Shift conversation to their turf (jobs, freedom)	Acknowledge, then redirect
Delay and exhaust	Request more studies, more hearings	Name the tactic politely
Co-opt the language	Adopt your rhetoric while opposing your goals	Hold them to specifics

Pivot or Persist Signals

Question	Yes =	No =
Making progress (even slowly)?	Persist	Pivot
Coalition holding together?	Persist	Pivot

Reaching the right audience?	Persist	Pivot
Opposition predictable?	Persist	Pivot
Still have energy and resources?	Persist	Pivot

Remember: Opposition is information. The conversation that goes badly teaches you more than the one that goes well.