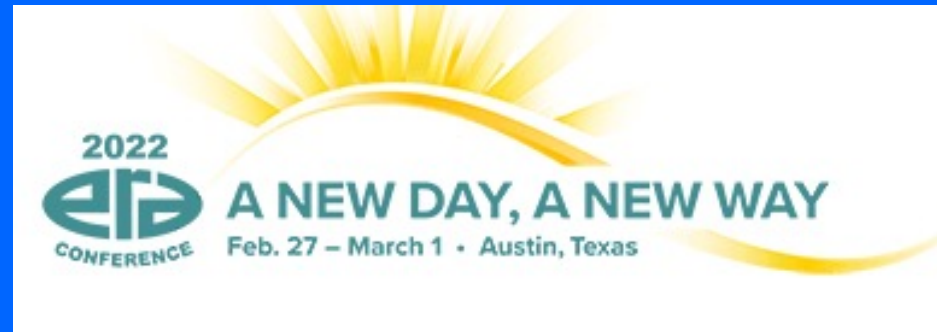




Virtual Selling is Here to Stay: Techniques for Remote Sales Success

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Session Objectives -- To Examine

- **Current shortcomings of salespeople in the virtual environment**
- **Key differences in virtual versus in-person sales**
- **The results of customer interviews**
- **Action points going forward**

***ABOVE ALL TO SHARE
INFORMATION AND LEARN
FROM EACH OTHER !!***



A Question ...



- **Why did you choose to come to this Breakout Session?**

Seismic Shifts in the World of Selling

“The shift to virtual selling that occurred in the nine months from March 2020 to January of 2021 would have taken ten years under normal conditions”

*Michael Schultz, CEO
The Rain Group*

Gartner expects that by 2025 ...

80%



of B2B sales interactions between suppliers and buyers will occur in digital channels

60%

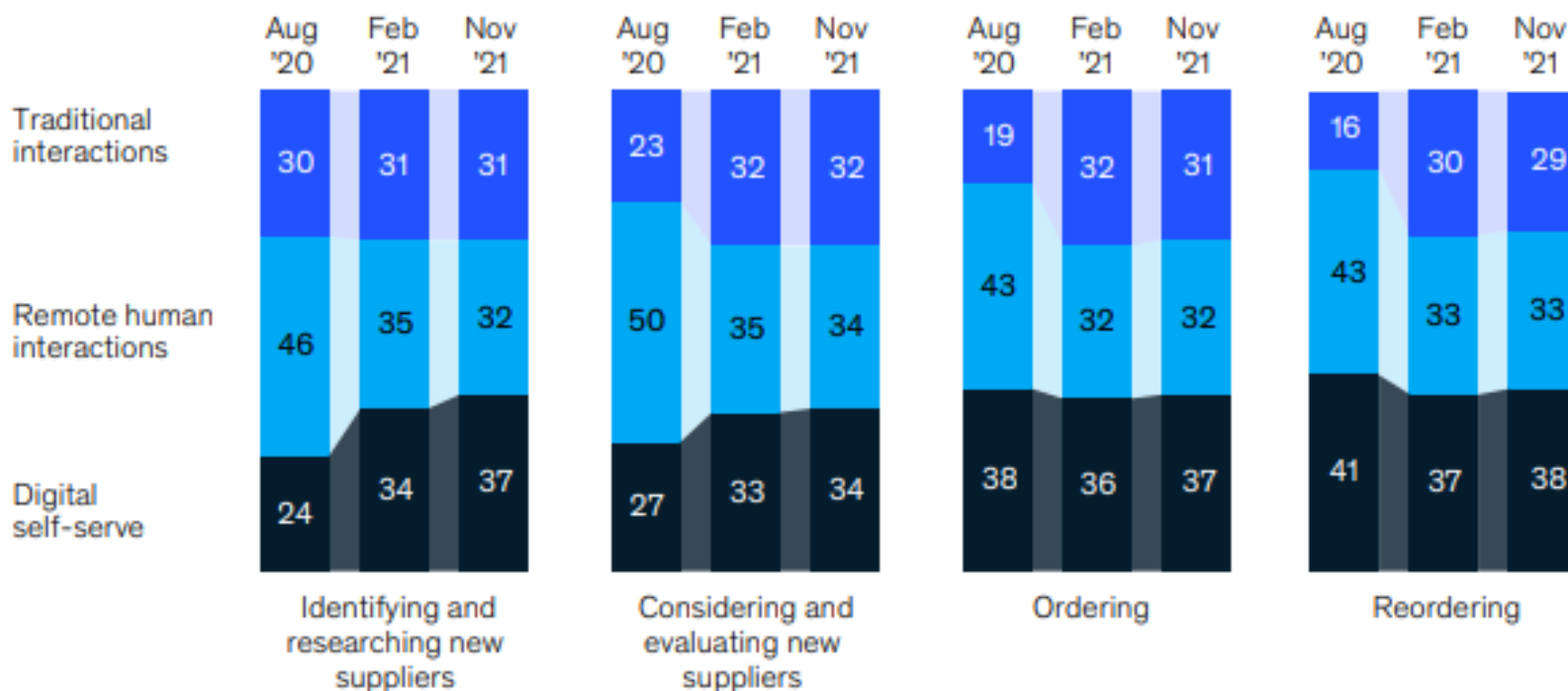


of B2B sales organizations will transition from experience- and intuition-based selling to data-driven selling, merging their sales process, applications, data and analytics into a single operational practice

Source: The Future of Sales in 2025: A Gartner Trend Insight Report

Current way of interacting with suppliers' sales reps,¹ by stage of process²

% of respondents, US only



~2/3

of buyers opt for remote human interactions or digital self-service

The Upshot?

- Virtual Selling is here to stay!



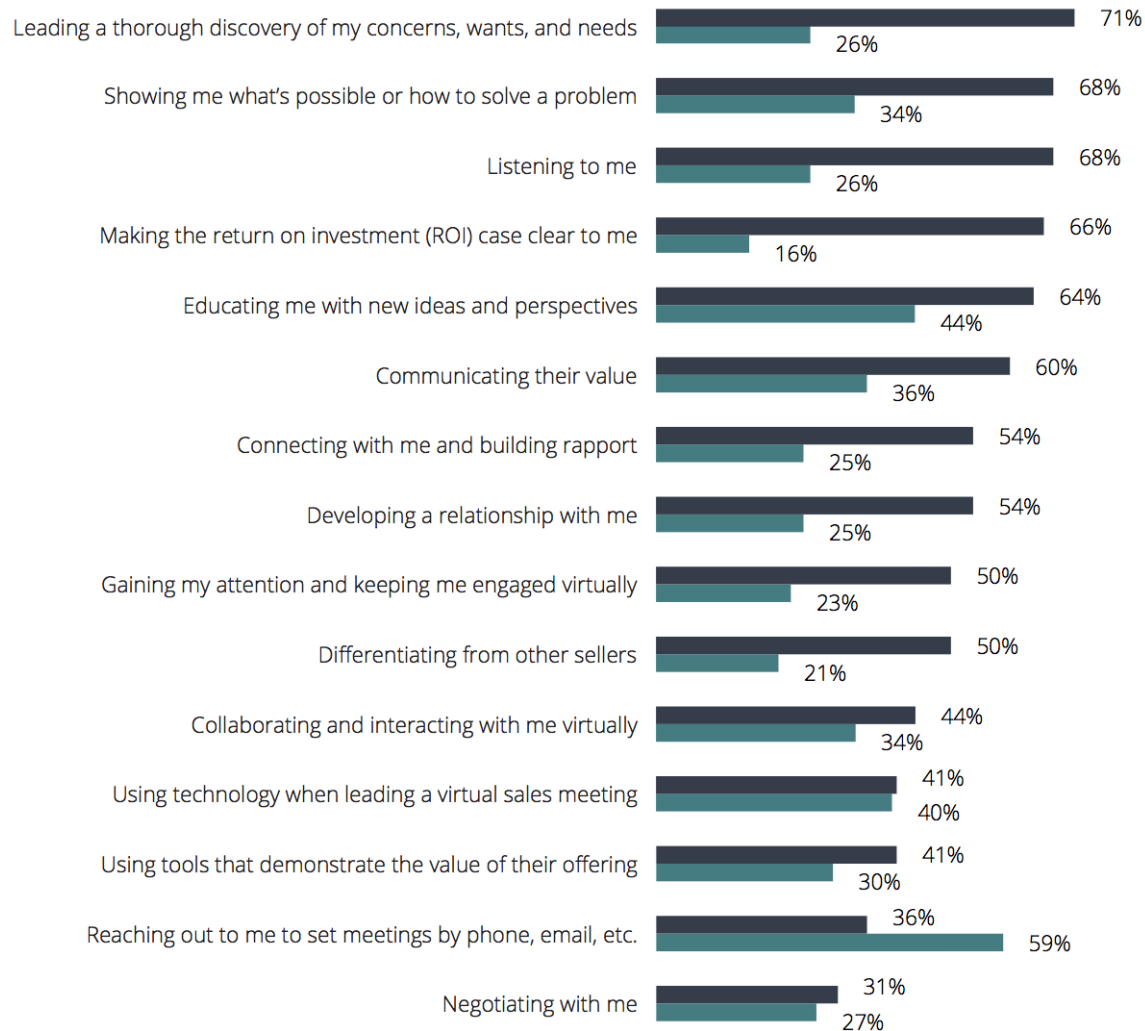
A quick discussion

- How do B2B customers rank the expertise of salespeople in virtual selling?



Virtual Selling Effectiveness

TOP PURCHASE DECISION FACTORS AND SELLER EFFECTIVENESS



Source: Virtual Selling 2020, The Rain Group

A quick discussion

- What have B2B customers listed as the most common mistakes salespeople make in virtual selling?



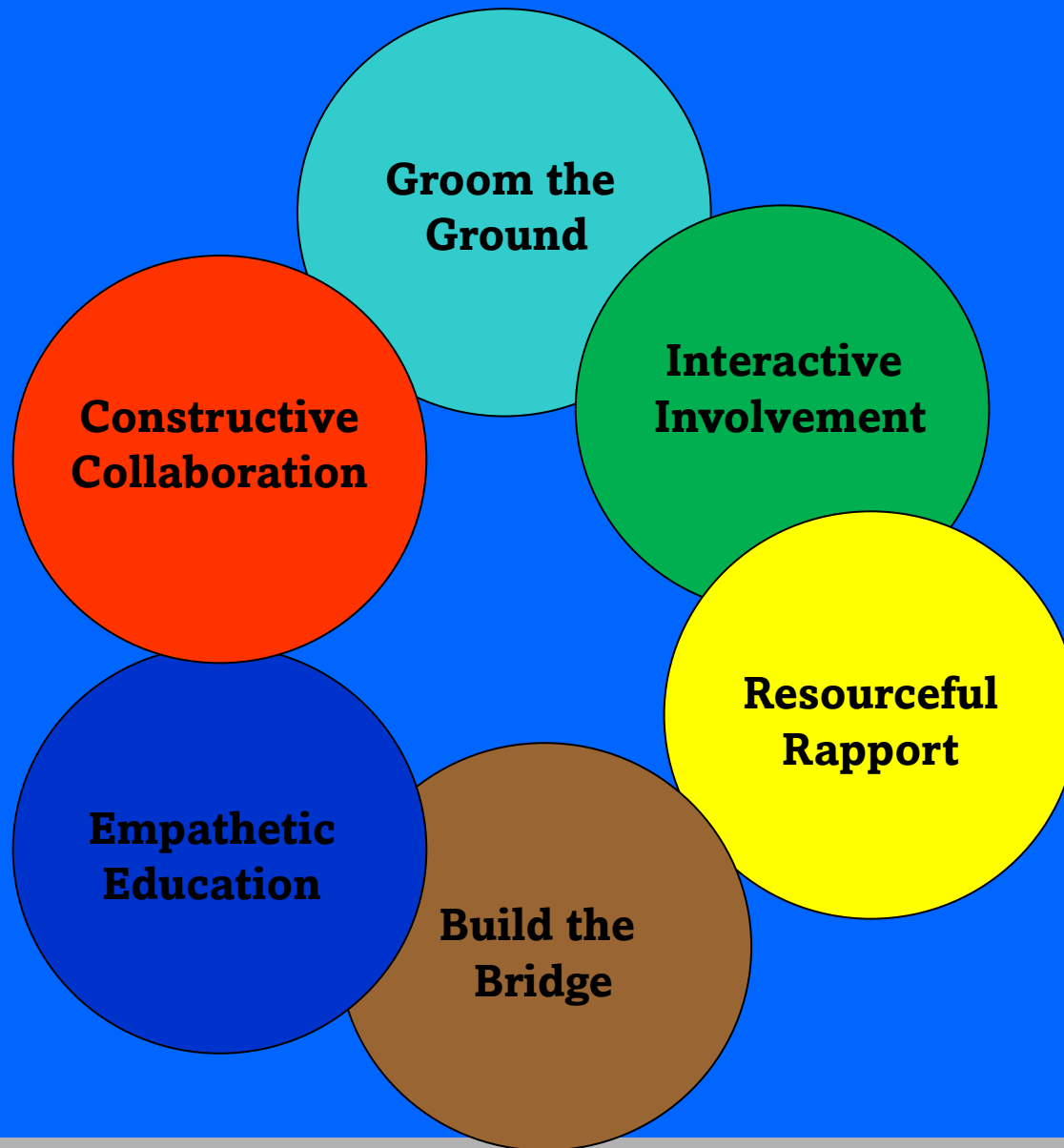
TOP VIRTUAL SELLING MISTAKES ACCORDING TO BUYERS

EXPERIENCED AT LEAST SOMETIMES BY BUYERS



Source: *Virtual Selling 2020*, The Rain Group

Six Common Interview Themes



Groom the Ground



Key Differences in the Virtual Environment

- Expectations of preparation
- Importance of advance communication
- Increased importance of your personal brand

Groom the Ground

- The biggest surprise from my interviews?
- preparation, preparation, **PREPARATION!**
- Industry, market, company, company's products, *and the person*



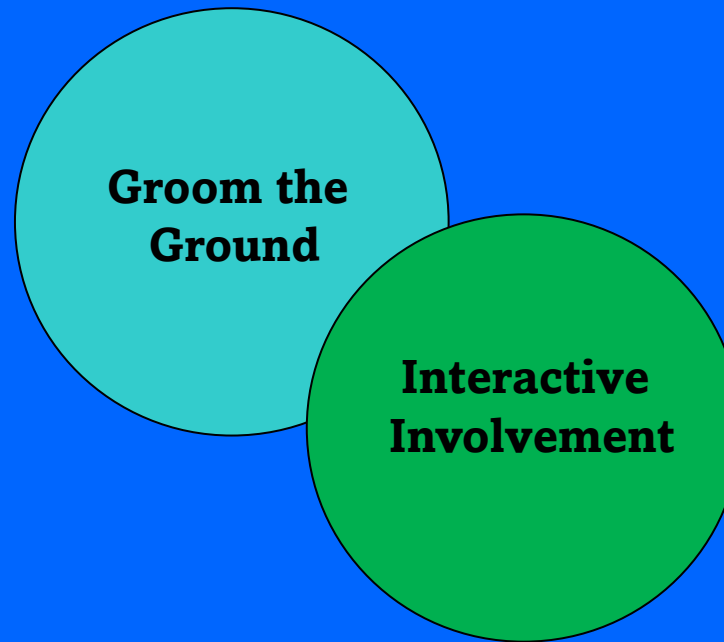
Advance Communication

- E-mails
 - Short and to the point
- Title and purpose of meeting
- Agenda
- Send slides, other materials

Build your 'Personal Brand'

- You LinkedIn profile
- Professional photo
- Background image
- Headline
- Summary – mission, motivation, skills
- Work experiences, skills developed
- Request recommendations

Six Common Interview Themes



Key Differences in the Virtual Environment

- Expect a different level of engagement
- Prepare for a new kind of schedule
 - Shorter time frames
- Virtual presentation ‘hygiene’

Interactive Involvement

- Plan for 20 minutes
- Do Technical run-through
- Prepare materials
- Activities on your agenda to get your customers involved
- Prepare yourself

Virtual 'Hygiene'

- **WIFI upgrade?**
- **High quality camera, microphone**
- **Platform?**
- **Lighting and background**
- **Test sound, video, files**
- **Dress for success**
- **Body language**
- **Camera at eye level**
- **Close, open files**
- **Turn off notifications**
- **Minimize background noise**
- **Stay present**
- **Be semi-animated**

Engaging the Customer

- **8+30+3 Rules of engagement**
 - 8 seconds to grab audience's attention
 - 30 seconds to engage them
 - Re-engage every 3 minutes



Grab attention

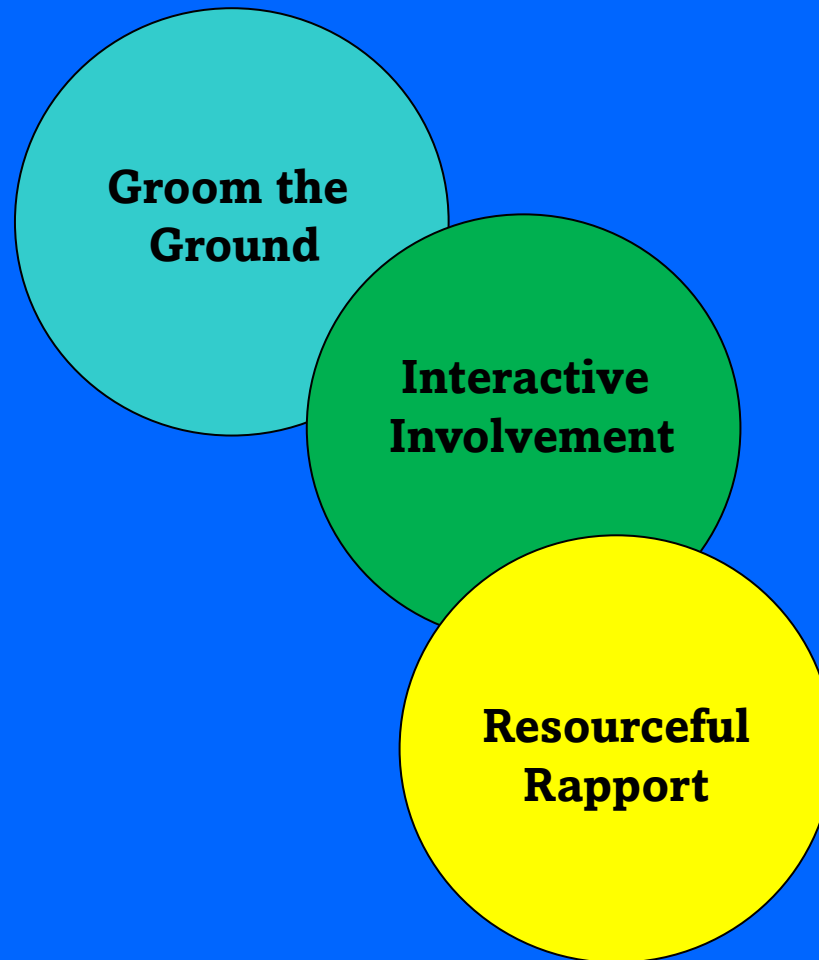
- Use a 'spike'
 - Sentence or phrase that gets to the heart of your presentation
- Statistic
- Analogy
- Humor
- Quote
- Story



Engaging the Audience

- **Have a plan to engage throughout**
 - Questions, videos, white boards, testimonials
 - i.e., get question responses in chat area
- **Communicate on agenda ahead of time**
 - Allows them to prepare
- **No ‘busy work’ engagements**

Six Common Interview Themes



Key Differences in the Virtual Environment

- Understand that rapport will not occur naturally
- Expect a different level of engagement
- ‘Effective’ listening
- Remember to use a structured approach

Rapport Will Not Emerge Naturally

- **Moving from 3D to 2D environment**
 - Means more effort is needed to move from casual to formal discussions
- **Four key rapport-building activities**
 - Cultivate Empathy
 - Authenticity
 - Similarity
 - Shared Experience

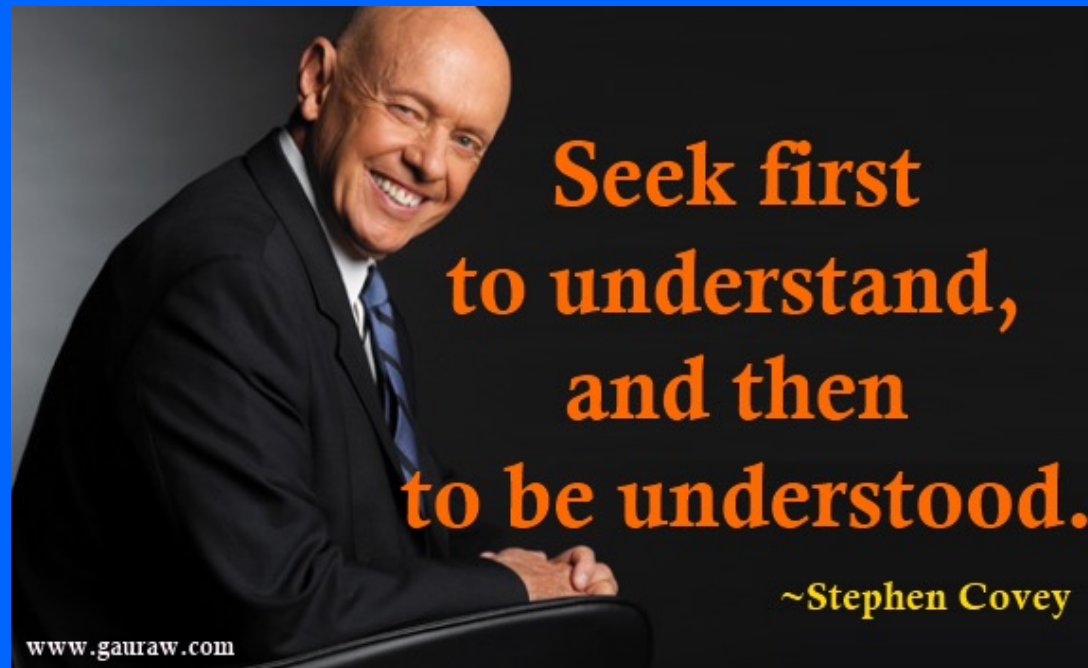
A Different Level of Engagement

Authentic Curiosity



Why is this important?





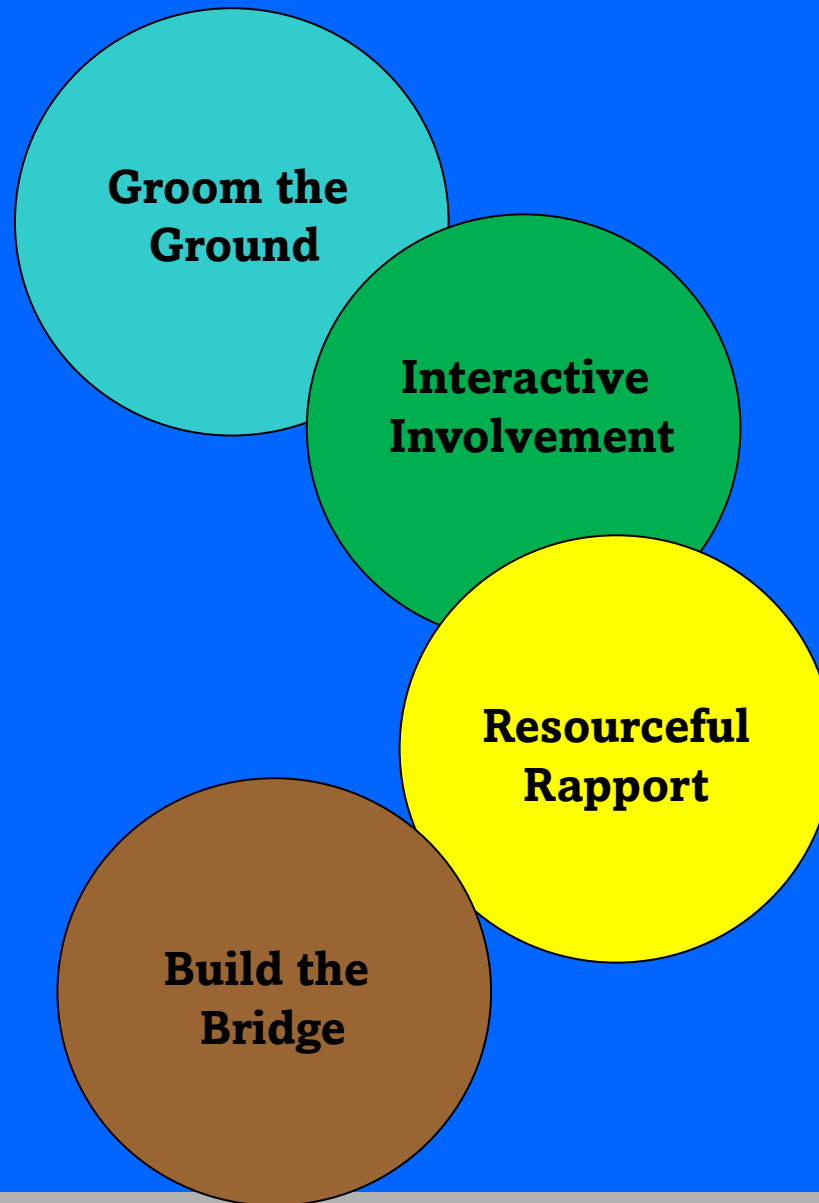
***Listen with the intent to understand
rather than to respond***

A Structured Approach

- Remember: Keep it Short!
- Emphasize the most important 2-3 key factors
- Discover *‘What’s in their Kitchen?’*
- “WIMITY”

What Is the Most Important
Thing to You?

Six Common Interview Themes



Key Differences in the Virtual Environment

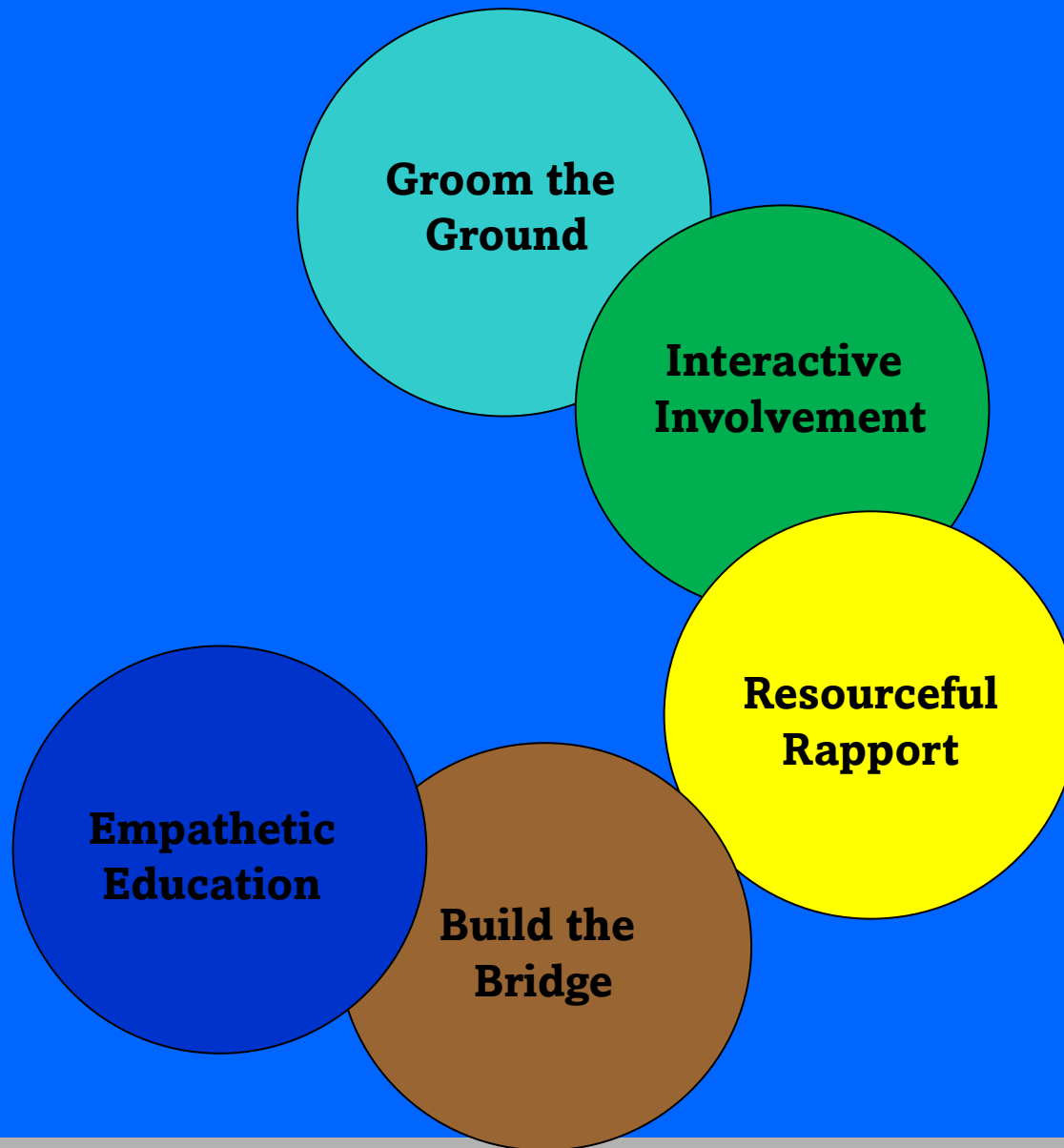
- More difficult for customers to make the connection between their problem and your solution



Build the Bridge

- Make the connection between their situation and your solution
- Don't assume they're going to make that connection
- “ ... *What I heard you say was ... the best way to solve this is ...* ”
- Check for understanding!

Six Common Interview Themes



Key Differences in the Virtual Environment

- Bar has been raised
- “Functional Fixedness”
- Conversation rather than presentation
- The importance of the ‘human touch’

Empathetic Education

- “Good enough is not good enough”
- Dealing with ‘Functional Fixedness’
 - Having a mental block against using an object in a new way
- Have a ‘conversation rather than make ‘presentation’
- Shorter presentation
 - Speak slower
 - Choose words carefully
- Practice standing and moving around

The Importance of the “Human Touch”





- Leads to *Status Quo Bias*

The secret to making it in the digital sales world: The human touch

Companies that add the human touch to digital sales consistently outperform their peers. They achieve five times more revenue, eight times more operating profit, and, for public companies, twice the return to shareholders. That data holds true over a four- to five-year period.

THIRD EDITION

salesforce research

State of Sales

Insights and trends
from over 2,900 sales
professionals worldwide



The majority of salespeople credit a combination of their own ingenuity and data-driven insights in turning an opportunity into a deal. Knowing how to integrate these insights into their daily routine is an emerging soft skill in and of itself.

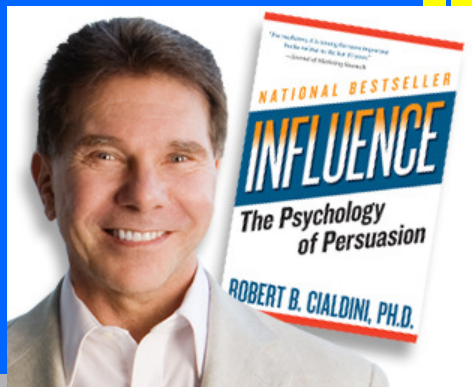
**THE TOP TWO FACTORS FOR
CONVERTING PROSPECTS ARE
A MIX OF HUMAN SKILL AND
DATA-DRIVEN INSIGHTS.**

Providing the Human Touch – “Social Proof”

Providing the 'Human Touch -- The Principle of 'Social Proof'

“95% of people are ‘imitators’ and only 5% ‘initiators’; so people are persuaded more by the actions of others than by any proof we can offer”

Robert Cialdini



What does this mean?

- If someone similar has done it or says it, it carries more credibility and is more likely to influence others than if we say it.
- Testimonials
- Success stories

Providing the 'Human Touch'

- Become a 'curator of information'
 - Remember 'WITMITY'?
- Connect with relevant resources
- Clarify information
- Collaborate to help them learn
 - *"Let me help you make sense of all this"*
- Builds confidence for them
- Builds trust in you

Customers feel confident when sellers help them to:



Determine the right questions to ask themselves and their suppliers



Identify which information matters most in their purchase decision



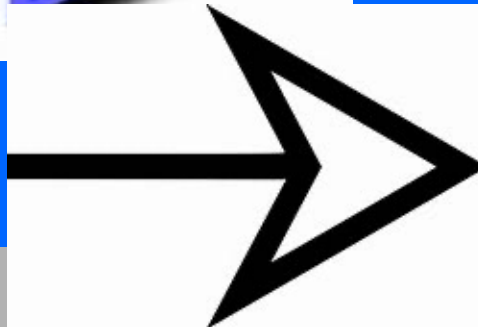
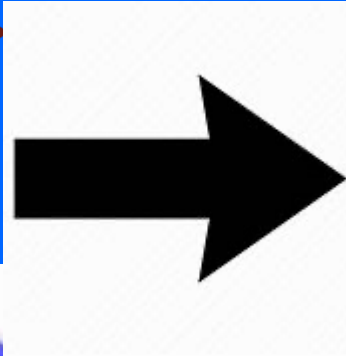
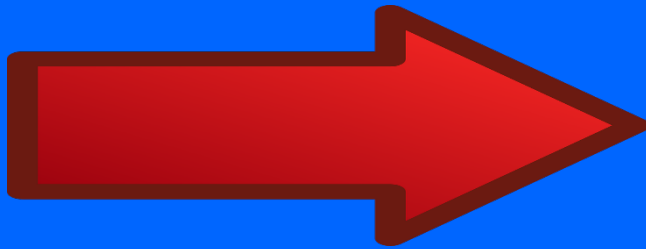
Identify consistent patterns or themes in the information, despite origin, they encounter during the purchase

‘In many ways, today’s high-quality deals are less about what customers know, and far more about how they feel about what they know.’

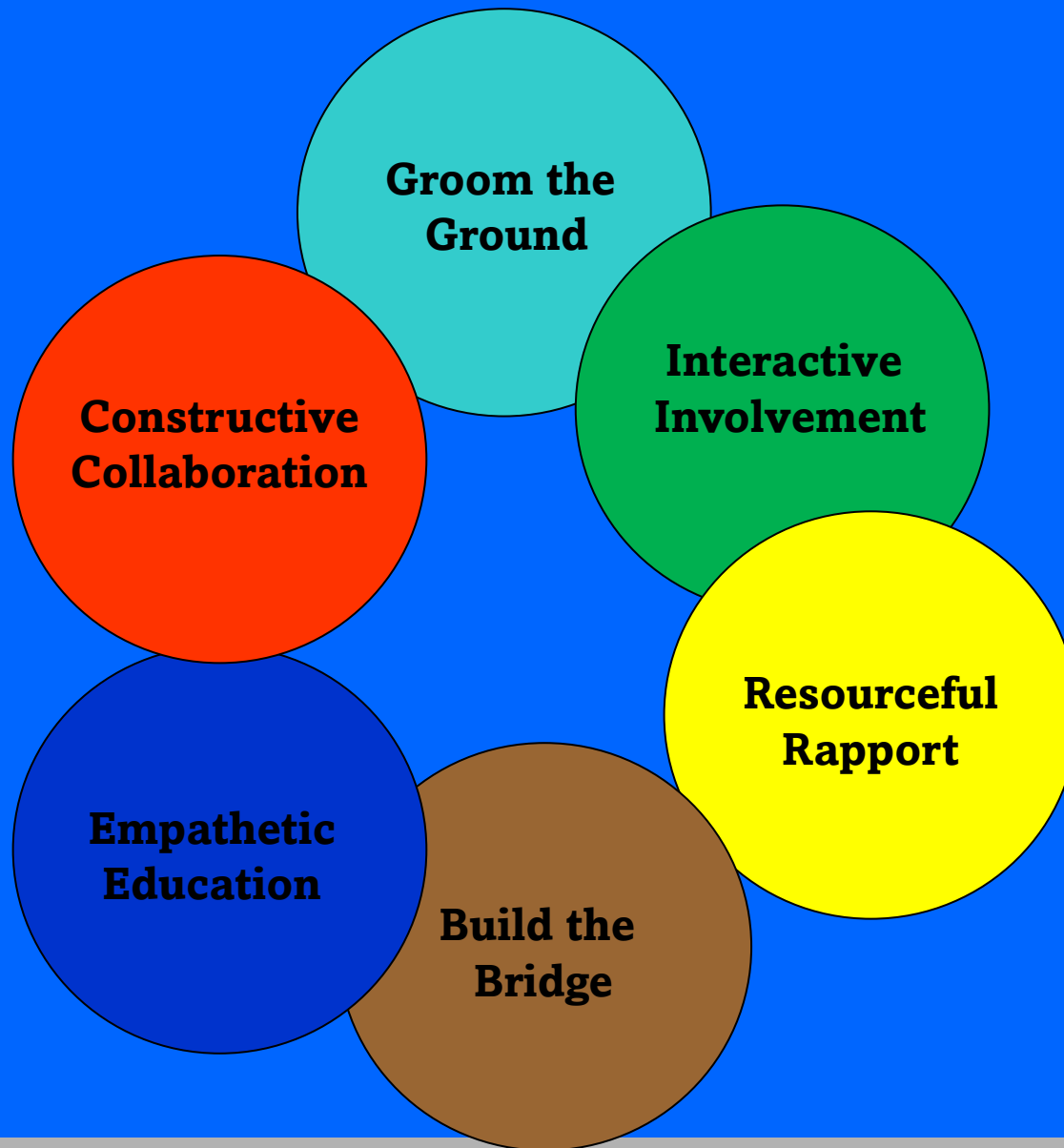


Brent Adamson
Gartner Distinguished VP

Which leads us to



Six Common Interview Themes



Key Differences in the Virtual Environment

- Use of the 'Socratic Method'
- Create psychological ownership in the mind of the customer
- Be there to the end!

The success of those who collaborate

- 2.2 times more likely to work together to create value
- Mutual brainstorming leads to 95% chance of working with them again
- *Was 17th out of 22 factors that 'Sales Winners' engaged in*

The Socratic Method

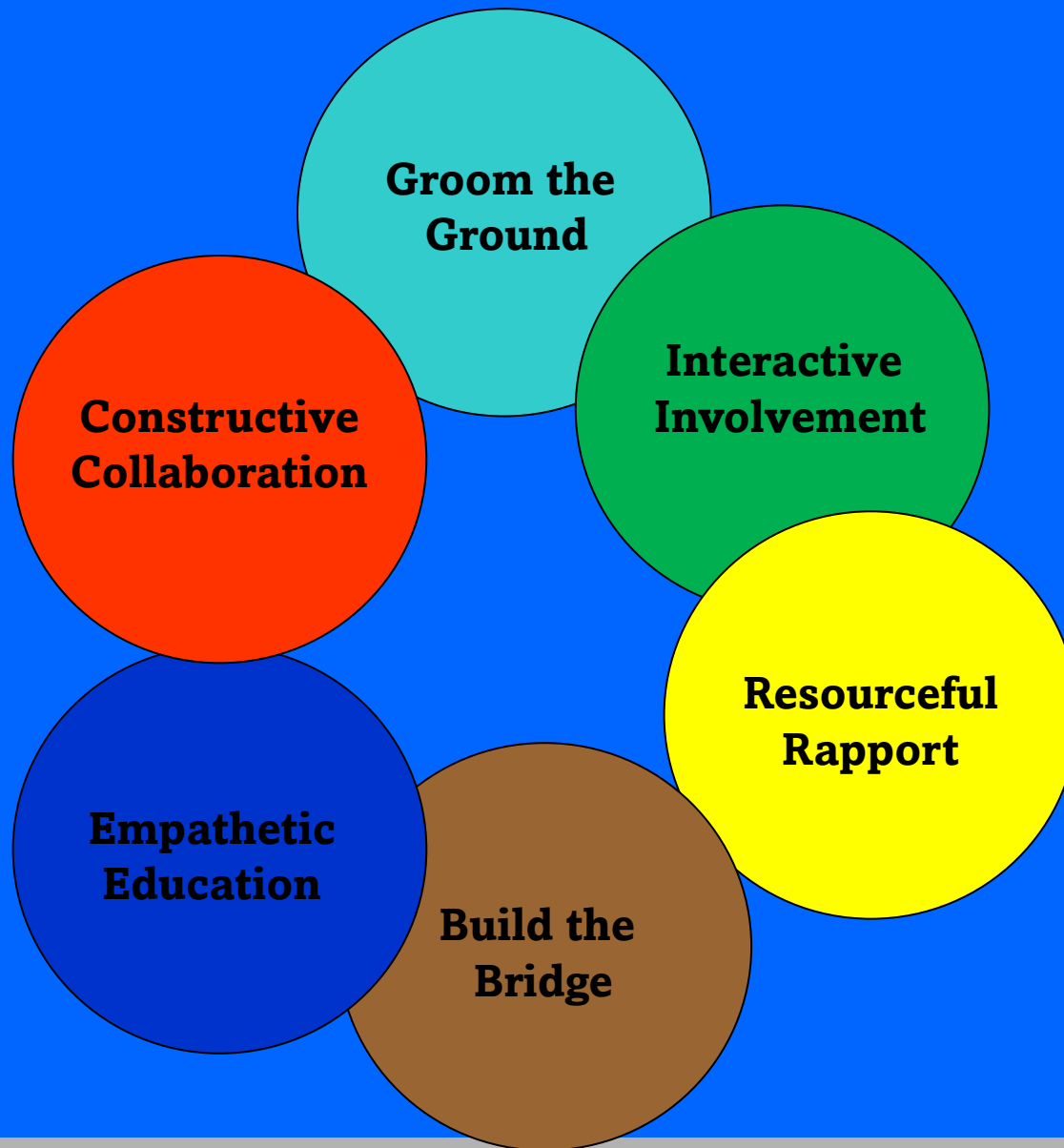
- Using Solution – Based questions
- Why?
- Creates the ‘IKEA’ effect
- Creates Psychological Ownership
 - Perception of Control
 - Increases customer confidence
 - Customers value ‘what’s theirs’

And finally ...

- Be there to the end !



Six Common Interview Themes



So, what were the key takeaways for you from this session?



Questions?

