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Your Persona Demo is Failing!

One of the biggest failures in Presales Consulting may be reliance upon Persona-Based Demos! It is (sadly) a perfect talk track, however, if you have not invested in discovery, know very little about your prospect or client, and want to present a 'Harbor Tour' demo that fails to connect with your audience. Fortunately, there are a few tricks available to turn a persona demo into a Great Demo!

The breakdown with persona-based demos is the lack of ability to fully connect the challenges your audience is having with the value your solution provides. Can you imagine purchasing a car and the salesperson not addressing what you need specifically in an automobile? Can you imagine that person describing the experience someone else had while driving the car instead of putting you in the driver's seat (particularly if you are shopping for a sports sedan and the persona exemplified buying a pick-up truck?)



Unfortunately, that scenario is representative of what we are doing when presenting to an audience while speaking about someone else. We fail to engage the audience and provide them with ownership.

You can rectify the challenge and switch from a persona-based demonstration easily. Consider the following example:

Traditional Approach: *'Today we will be looking at the system from the view of an end-user named Cassandra. When Cassandra logs into the system **SHE** sees....'*

Great Demo! Approach: *'Today we will be looking at the system as an end-user named Cassandra. However, I would like you to imagine you are Cassandra and you are walking through this specific task. What **YOU** will see...'*

The word 'You' has immense power. Erik Peterson and Tim Riesterer, In the book 'Conversations that Win the Complex Sale,' report that *"You phrasing helps you sell in another way. When you use you phrasing your prospect's unconscious mind tries out your solution as you describe what he can do with it."*

He is no longer a passive listener. You phrasing pulls your prospect into the story you are telling. And once that happens, you get a measurable impact.”

However, just using you phrasing is not enough to qualify your demo as a Great Demo! Great Demos prioritize the customer needs and focus on the specific capabilities your audience needs. They are also highly **conversational!** You need to engage your audience with a story (vision generation if you have not had sufficient discovery) and ask questions as you go redirecting your demo to where the client has an interest. A student of mine reported after attending one of my Great Demo! methodology courses that his demo flow was altered tremendously using the suggested conversational approach, but in the end, he ultimately showed the same capabilities. He reported the difference in using the approach resulted in increased customer engagement, more conversation that dramatically reduced his time to close deals.

Here is more proof! Gong.io reported in a 2018 blog post titled [‘A Sure-Fire Sign You’re Killing Your Sales Demo \(According to New Data\)’](#) that superstar sales teams receive 28% more questions from their buyers during product demos and technology-related discussions than “average” sales teams. Superstar teams engage their audiences and focus on the specific capabilities needed which enhances the back-and-forth conversation and questions received. Accordingly, the amount of dialogue you are having and the number of questions you receive is an indicator of the level of success you are having in your demo, which is not typically the result created from delivering monologue-based persona demos.

Here is my recommendation. Invest in Discovery, show your clients the specific features they need, ask questions as you go, and use you phrasing. If your clients are not engaged, they will not remember the most important parts of your demo...the value you provide, and how you solve their critical business issues.

Happy Selling!

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