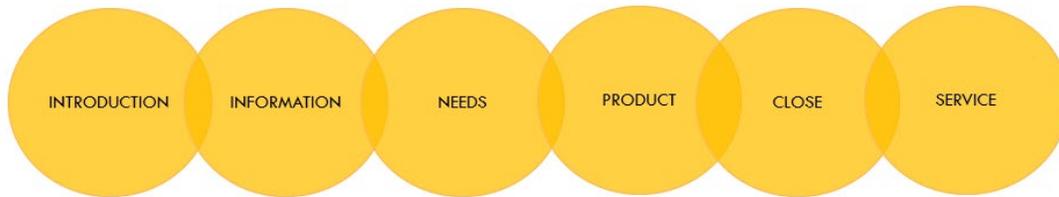


Digital Sales Training: Addressing Needs and Presenting Solutions



Introduction:

Since March 2020, digital products and services have become more important to our customers. Our sales organization has needed to work with their customers to offer more digital options for their schools and classes. In addition, they are often required to conduct a 'sales call' online. We need to provide sales with 'digital sales literacy' to open and close new business. We need to focus on the right questions to identify customer needs, and then demonstrate our organization's ability to solve them with our learning programs and services.

Even the best sales consultants need more training and opportunity to 'rehearse'. This back-to-basics sales training focuses on those situations and questions which come up commonly when 'selling digital'. The solution which best fits the customer may include print - but in this training we are going to focus on asking and answering the questions that come up when there is a digital need of some kind.

The session covers the following:

Bringing the World to All Classrooms

- **NGL Digital Story:** how we help our customers bring the world to all their classrooms. We have revised catalogs and print marketing materials to carry a digital message for our customers about how we help them to prepare, teach, assign, track, and assess their classes and learners. In addition to regional and local materials, the following are places to visit:
 - **Webpage:** [ltnl.cohttps://em/assets/html/digital-resources/](https://em/assets/html/digital-resources/)
 - **Slides:** slides for the digital message can be downloaded at [SharePoint](#)
 - **Survey:** slides summarizing the survey from 2020 can be found at [SharePoint](#)
- **Fo**Having a solid grasp of these data will ensure that your solution and your close will meet the foundational needs of the program.

- Technology/software/instructional tools currently in use
- Learning Management System
- Scope of adoption (levels, products, blended, digital)
- Teacher proficiency r other materials, please speak with your regional marketing team
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- **Information:**
- Gathering useful, concrete, and actionable information for the digital opportunities helps you create the right digital solution. with technology
 - Institutional readiness and capacity to manage digital operations
 - Technical support network within institution
 - Fulfillment/delivery expectation
 - Platform integration expectation
 - Professional development needs
 - Synchronoss/Asynchronous delivery
 - short term and long-term digital goals
 - Price concerns
 - Security and Privacy parameters
 - Assessment delivery and expectations
 - Technical requirements

Challenge: What to do when you cannot meet a basic requirement?

Challenge: What do you do when you customer does not know what to ask or how to answer?

Challenge: How do you communicate information to internal stakeholders?

Drilling in: Asking good follow-up questions is important to clarify ideas and develop a better understanding of the customer needs. Here are some questioning techniques you can use:

<p>Clarify: Ask follow-up questions to clarify potentially ambiguous terms.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Can you please explain what you mean by ‘integration’?” • “What do you need from ‘interactive’ eBook?” • “Can you clarify what you mean by ‘on-boarding’?”
<p>Confirm: Restate the need and ask if that is correct</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “You said that you wanted all of your instructor resources in one accessible place. Is that correct?” • “In summary, you will need tech support, correct?”
<p>Expand: Ask for more detail when the need is complex</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Can you expand on the type of on-boarding you need?” • “Could you give me more details on what you need for teacher support.”

Needs:

The better you are at gathering important basic information and unique digital needs, the more likely you will be to close the sale. Generally, asking open-ended questions works well to get the customer talking about goals, needs, and pain points. A useful tip is to ask open-ended questions that reflect National Geographic Learning values:

<p>(1) Be authentic: Ask questions whose answers you need to know. Avoid questions whose answers you can find easily and could have gathered prior to the call.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I know that you have a large program, between 500-600 students per session. How will you roster the students?” • “I am aware of X, but can you tell me more about Y.” • “I understand that you are using Canvas now, but what are your long-term plans for an LMS?”
<p>(2) Inspire: Ask questions that inspire critical thinking. Use language such as “assess,” “evaluate,” “imagine,” “describe.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Describe your ideal scenario.” • “Evaluate your current situation. How would you want this to look different?” • “Assess the most pressing issues you have.”
<p>(3) Engage: Ask about engagement. As we know highly motivating, engaging content is our core brand value. Shape the conversation with a good question.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “How important is student engagement and motivation as you assess materials?” • “What else are you doing to ensure that students are engaged?” • “What motivates your students?”
<p>(4) Be relevant: Be relevant by asking questions that use specific, concrete language of technology.* With SSO, LMS, there are specific terms that have definitive meaning, so it is important to know what they are and how to use them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “What applications are currently integrated into your LMS?” • “Is SSO the main benefit of integration, or is gradebook integration also important?” • “Can you describe what content you would like to host on your platform?”

*Note on terminology: It is important to be familiar (and comfortable) with basic terminology when discussing integration. Knowing and using the correct terminology with customers (1) establishes your credibility and (2) ensures clarity when discussing your customers’ specific needs. Below is a list of common terms that emerge in discussions around integration and where our products fit in.

Objections:

When handling objections, there are different tactics to take. One is to ‘challenge’ the objection. This is not to say that you would argue with the customer (of course), but rather address the objection and minimize its potential impact.

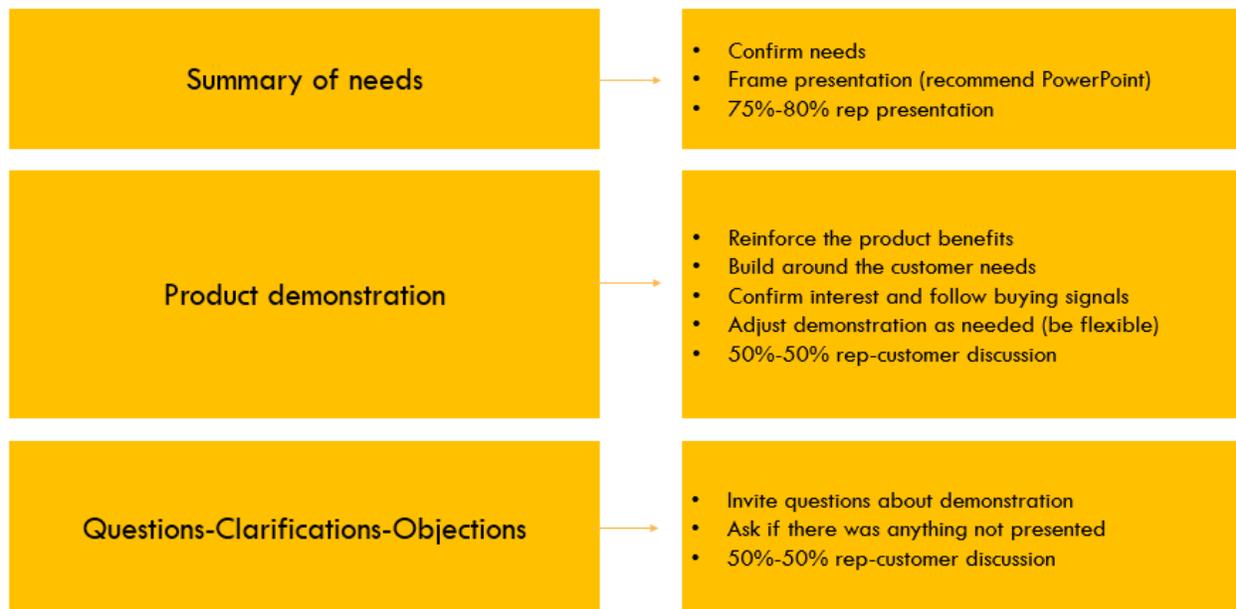
<p>Prioritize: Ask the customer to rank the importance of a need we cannot meet.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Is this a ‘need to have’ or a ‘nice to have?’” • “Among all of your top priorities, how important is this one?” • “How important is this for your students?”
<p>Question: Find the need beneath the objection.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Why is an interactive eBook necessary (when you have an online workbook)?” • “What is the problem you want to solve?” • “Is the need to have an LMS with gradebook and tracking data or is it to have Canvas?”
<p>Reframe: Paraphrase the objection (that we cannot meet) while focusing on a benefit you can address.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I understand the benefit of having all of the teacher resources in one platform, but my understanding is that the most important thing is to have all the resources.” • “It makes sense that you want Online Practice to feed into Moodle, but all of that functionality exists in the Online Practice platform, so you have the core functionality.”
<p>Pivot: Politely change the direction of the conversation by asking another question. It is useful to acknowledge the objection and say that you will try to resolve.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “This is helpful. But I have another question, if you don’t mind my asking.” • “I see that this is important to you. I’ll need to work on this with colleagues since I don’t have an answer now. Can I come back to you shortly?”
<p>Big Picture: Remind your customer of other evaluation criteria and summarize. Wait for a ‘yes!’ response.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “This is an important point, but let’s step back and look at the big picture about what’s most important to you: Student motivation, tracking, and outcomes.” • “So, stepping back for a moment, we could meet almost all of your essential needs, correct?”

Resolution: Product

The other tactic is to acknowledge the objection and promise to return with a solution. This is often necessary when the objection may require a creative solution or other groups within the company to help resolve it. Gathering information is critical at this point to ensure that there are no remaining objections. This approach gives you necessary time to find an effective solution. It will also give you credibility in the eyes of the customer because it shows that you are taking their concerns seriously and that you will find a custom solution to their unique needs. Avoid the “feature bomb”

Presenting to Customer Needs:

At the center of presenting a solution to a customer is need. By taking the time to understand individual customer needs, you will have more productive interactions and will be able to position NGL products and services effectively around them. With digital sales, understanding what the customer wants and needs is especially critical since there are far more variables involved with implementation, rostering, functionality, technical support, and training. Structure your demonstrations effectively around these needs, with the aim to adjust to customer interest appropriately.



10 tips for presenting digital in an online environment:

1. Master product features and content
2. Practice your talking points before each presentation
3. Create a script
4. Frame the presentation with a few PowerPoint slides to start
5. Select the features that you want to show based on customer need
6. Ask questions to confirm interest regularly (by name in groups)
7. Avoid a digital 'walk through'
8. Be comfortable with silence and pauses
9. Be patient: Avoid rapid click-throughs
10. Show high-impact content that best represents National Geographic Learning

Delivery: Use different appeals in your message and delivery so that you can appeal to a person’s sense of logic, trust, and emotion. Emotion is a particularly powerful driver.

- **Ethos:** Build on your **trust** with the customer by speaking to what’s most important to them. This sends the clear signal that they, the customer, are the focus of your presentation.
- **Logos:** By expertly presenting your products, you (1) appeal to your customers’ sense of **logic** and (2) confirm expectations that your solution meets their needs.
- **Pathos:** Decisions are strongly influenced by **emotions**, so investing your delivery with an emotional appeal will give it more impact. Fortunately, we have a strong brand and great story. Suggestions:

To delight	Use great NGL images in your PowerPoint presentation. Our unique and powerful photography evokes emotions and increases retention.
To inspire	Use global marketing videos to create a multi-sensory experience and evoke emotion. Videos create ‘atmosphere.’ Use video to complement, not replace your talking points.
To aspire	Integrate the NGL philosophy throughout your presentation: Our goal is to teach the world – and to teach English in the process.
To belong	Promote association with National Geographic and TED to communicate strong brand-value customers can be a part of
To build confidence	Infuse on-brand design elements in presentation to communicate confidence and instill trust.

Services:

While we don’t typically monetize them, speaking explicitly to these services creates a sense of value to the overall solution. How services are implemented will vary according to region.

Suggestions:

1. Gather as much information about your customer’s unique needs before presenting a solution
2. Use the information about customer needs to build your solution that is customer-centric
3. Lead with the customer needs. Present product features around those needs.
4. Speak to benefits as ‘yours’ (the customer’s), not the product’s: “Your benefit is that…”
5. Create value for all wrap-around services that are typically no-cost:

Service:	Cost*	Value to customer:
Rostering services	No-cost	High value especially to institutions with young learners
Integration (LMS)	No-cost	High value to customers who want SSO
Training – Product	No-cost	Required but valuable
Training – Methods	No-cost	High value to teachers with limited experience
Technical support (personal)	No-cost	High value especially for individuals at start of sessions
Technical support (Tier 1)	No-cost	Required but valuable
Community (webinars, blogs)	No-cost	High value when authors of adopted programs share content

Rubric

Introduction: clear and cohesive impact statement	1	2	3	4	5
Aligns digital message with the NGL brand and mission					x
Presents framework: Plan, Teach, Assign, Evaluate clearly & coherently					x
Communicates goals and outcomes for meeting					x
Allows the customer to adjust the agenda					x
Delivers with clarity and confidence					x

Information: Digital	1	2	3	4	5
Ascertains basic but essential customer information about instructional, administrative, and operational needs around digital					x
Acquires as much essential information prior to initial meeting so time with customer is spent on clarification, prioritization, and needs					x

Needs: questioning, listening, and confirming	1	2	3	4	5
Asks open-ended questions that provide insight into customer needs					x
Asks questions that explore problems, difficulties, and dissatisfactions					x
Asks good follow-up questions to gain deeper insight					x
Allows customers to respond to questions without interruption					x
Regularly checks for understanding and asks for clarification as needed					x
Acknowledges and confirms customer needs, goals, problems					x
Able to read a customer's interest and respond appropriately					x

Product: Solutioning					
Delivery:	1	2	3	4	5
Communicates solution with confidence and clarity					x
Uses delivery tools (PowerPoint, Zoom) smoothly and naturally					x
Presents products effectively using a balance of offline and 'live'					x
Product:	1	2	3	4	5
Consistently aligns product features to customer needs					x
Speaks directly about product benefits					x
Effectively demonstrates digital products using high-impact content					x
Services	1	2	3	4	5
Integrates value-add services including on-boarding (rostering), teacher resources, saleable product, training, and support					x
Objection-Handling	1	2	3	4	5
Handles objections politely, but effectively during a call					x
Able to drill into potential objections by asking probing questions					x
Able to effectively defuse negative customer feelings					x
Skillfully resolves objections through creative solutions					x

