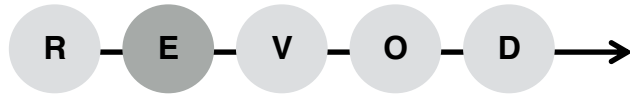


Explore

to create **true** value



Ask tension (towards and away) questions

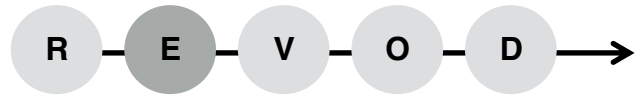
Tension questions enable you to *understand* more about the challenges or opportunities ahead whilst also creating *emotional buying tension* in the customer. They help the customer explore impact around what they want or want to avoid. Tension questions create action and movement. Logic makes people think, emotion makes people act. Stir things up a little by creating intelligent and relevant tension.

E.g. 'What if...?' 'Have you thought about...?' 'Why is xyz happening?' 'What's that costing you?' 'What if unexpected surprises began to reveal themselves?' 'What's the impact of that on your business?' 'What's the impact of that on you, in your role?' 'How would that impact your boss?' 'How would that impact the CEO?' You can include questions that enable you to differentiate yourself from your competition. E.g. 'is it important to you to have the confidence of a strong negotiation team helping to move things forwards?' If they say 'yes', dig deeper and explore why, impact etc.

List some typical tension questions you could ask your customers. Cover 'toward', 'away' and 'USP questions':

Service drivers

what sort of service is worth paying for?



Seth Godin (Google him) suggests that B2B buyers that are *not the business owner or CEO* tend to prioritise the following criteria in the order written when making buying decisions:

They want to:

1. avoid risk
2. avoid hassle
3. gain praise
4. gain a degree of power
5. find the work with you fun (whatever 'fun' is to them)
6. gain profit/a tangible return

Thoughts:

- people tend to buy emotionally and justify with logic
- logic makes us think. Emotion makes us act.
- pain avoidance tends to be a stronger motivator for people than gain (although you must determine which is the stronger influence for your specific customer)

It's worth exploring these 'wants' with your customers by creating and asking some interesting questions, once you have rapport.

E.g.

"Where do you feel is the biggest risk here?" (risk avoidance)

"What if things continue as they are?" (risk avoidance)

"What's this costing you, not just financially but in terms of time and energy?" (hassle avoidance)

"Which part of this tends to cause you the biggest headache or hassle that you'd like to avoid?" (hassle avoidance)

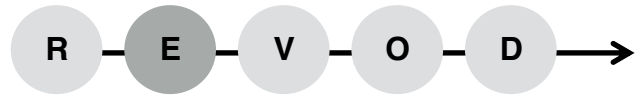
"Once this project is completed and you've achieved what you set out to, what's next for you?" (gain praise/power).

"What do you find most enjoyable or fun about this sort of challenge?" (gain enjoyment - don't underestimate this information. If you can subtly include and refer to it in your proposed solution, it adds up.)

Obviously there must be a solid business case based around value (it would be rather risky for them if there wasn't!) But ensure you explore some of these emotional buying drivers too, since they will enable you to position yourself and potentially **differentiate yourself from your competition**. If any of these are on your customer's mind, it's your job to gradually uncover them and use them to position your solution.

Service drivers

what sort of service is worth paying for?



Some examples of conversationally probing for 'service drivers' around some of your unique value.

1. It depends on how you want to tackle it and what's most important to you and your business? We tend to be the choice for businesses who want more certainty moving things forwards. They tend to value our decades of knowledge to draw upon having connected miles and miles of cables over 30 years and they want to get the journey ahead right with certainty.
2. What do I mean by certainty? Well, as you'd probably expect, there can be many complex 'moving parts' to a project like this. Things can go wrong, or be overlooked. In some cases we've heard of customers landing in trouble because the ICP they were using had it's accreditation taken away during the project!
3. What importance do you put on things moving more seamlessly? The reason I ask is because when we need things like permits to start the work, we know who to ring to move things forwards fast, because we've build a strong network of relationships needed to get the job done. We're connected to the right people so it keeps things moving. What we don't have to do is keep stumbling and having to get back to you to tell you that we haven't managed to get through to the right person and so on.
4. Similarly, what sort of service are you looking for when it comes to having to negotiate around way-leaves or easements? That's often outsourced by ICP's which can present some unknowns, but if you want some negotiation power behind that, our in-house negotiation team take care of it. Is that something you've thought about?
5. How confident are you about the process ahead right through the build phase? And do you know what you would do in the event of [add potential challenge here]? Customers often appreciate the fact that we hold their hand as it were throughout the entire process, and particularly at the build phase, which means we can help them navigate and make decisions and remove risk or room for error.
6. On the subject of risk, I'm not sure how risk averse you are on a project of this nature and your tolerance for 'extra steps' throughout the process? That might be worth thinking about. You probably know that we take care of everything, so we're not subbing-out any parts, which minimises risk and further unexpected costs.