

Emotional Relevance™

BACKGROUND

The methodology of Emotional Relevance™ has been created through many hours of research in the last few years. It is based on the innate essence we all have as creatures who need and respond to emotions and feelings; and it utilizes Neuroscience, psychology and the world of Emotional Intelligence (EQ). Emotional Relevance™ in the business world is a powerful tool that will enable you to be remembered the way you choose and impact whoever you are doing business with on the level and form you select.

Maya Angelou once said: *"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them FEEL."* And whether she based it on science or not, she was right.

Getting personal is an important part of Emotional Relevance™.

And I know that for some of you it may be uncomfortable. However, utilizing Emotional Relevance will also help you learn how to get out of your comfort zone.

Especially today, when we are forced to work primarily online, and we cannot meet our customers face-to-face, it is imperative to fill that emotional need by being more personal. Replacing that emotional impact of physical being, the chit chat before and after your meeting, that wine and dine experience simply must come from opening up in a more personal manner and connecting emotionally with our customers. Even when we are not with them in the same physical space.

I hope you take advantage of this powerful and emotional tool called Emotional Relevance™ in your work and in your life.

Emotionally yours,
Alon Zaibert

THE THREE

Pillars of Emotional Relevance

Emotional Relevance™ is based on 3 pillars:
Stand Out, Make an Impact and Get Personal.

These 3 pillars encompass the underlined goal of this approach which is to be remembered and establish trust.

Emotional Relevance™ in today's business world is becoming more and more critical as the corporate world has become more personal, more forgiving, and more... emotionally open.

While in the past, our emotional innate needs used to be the best kept secret in the industry, it is more often today to hear someone share their feelings in a corporate environment.



Stand Out



Make an Impact



Get Personal

Stand Out - the back story:

Standing out means being different. And being different is one of the basic elements of being remembered. Now, you may think that you need to do weird things or big goofy gestures to be different but the truth, and especially in the virtual world, is that it could be very subtle. And subtle it should be - as a key takeaway from this pillar is the need to be different, in small doses, over time.

Think about one of your last online interactions with one of your customers. Focus for a minute and try to remember - did you notice anything different in his/her surroundings? Did you pick up on anything particular in your conversation? You see, those little things that stand out, peak the interest of our "old brain" (some refer to it as our reptilian brain or the croc brain). This part of the brain is constantly scanning. Looking for danger, for potential attacks. And every time it detects something that is out of place, it locks in on it for a split second. As if it marks it as something out of the ordinary to pay attention to. It then examines it, makes sure it is not a threat to you and categorizes it either in a positive or a negative light. And that is exactly what we want as these subtle elements will make us stand out and be remembered without the other side even noticing. And here is the kicker - when you stand out, at any point, when your customer is facing a decision to select your service over another option (assuming the base of the offerings is the same) they will tend to select the one that stands out.... you.

Think about the response and reaction of your customer when noticing a subtle element of standing out, when their brain is signaling to them that there is something out of the ordinary. Assuming it is relevant and positive, imagine them being slightly surprised and smiling gently. Thinking something like.....hmmmm....cool. Their subconscious in their old-brain will signal something along the lines of - hey, good experience, I am positively curious about this and probably want some more of that. As you can imagine, this will cause your customer or anyone else you are communicating with to want to get closer to you, to learn more about you. Your first layer of your Emotional Relevance™ foundation is set. The challenge with standing out over time is to create a constant stand-out element while keeping the change going.

Before you speak with your customer or send them an email or have a virtual call - find something subtle to be different in. Preferably something related to your customer.

Online: A mug with something on it that may relate to them or perhaps something on your desk that has their favorite team's logo on it (or even their team's biggest rivalry).

A phone call: Find a way to share a hobby of yours. Perhaps your bike ride over the weekend. More details related to this in the Get Personal chapter but in this aspect here, sharing something a bit more personal than both of you are accustomed to will stand out.

Here is another angle - on your last online call, what did you notice behind or by the person you were communicating with that caught your eye? Maybe something was written on their mug, or a drawing on the wall? Something they wore? Try to go back to that moment you noticed it. What were you thinking? Now imagine for a second that the same thing you noticed on your previous call, appears on the next call. How would you feel about it the second time you notice it?

Stand Out in the real world:

A 46 years old consultant based in Atlanta who works for a well known brand was on a sales call with a prospect in Boston. A phone call. They have exchanged a few emails prior. The consultant did some research on the guy from Boston, looked him up on LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram. It appears the guy grew up in Boston, he is a huge Red-Sox fan and has 2 kids. While on the phone, the prospect from Boston said: "well, I suspect your sales efforts are not that hard working for a company where everybody knows your name". At that moment, a trigger of Emotional Relevance was sparked in the consultant's mind. A tune started playing in his head that took him to his last visit to Boston with his family where they went to see the bar where the show Cheers was filmed and the famous theme song to it was "sometimes you want to go where everybody knows your name". He immediately connected the dots and replied to the prospect: "Ahhhhh.....I get it - (singing) where everybody knows your name. Man, I used to watch that show when I was in college. Good memories." The prospect, puzzled for a few seconds, responded with: "ha...ha...ha....I didn't even mean that but yes. I get it now, good show. And I actually had guests from out of town last week and I took them to see that bar where it was filmed".

The consultant replied: "Well, I assumed, being in Boston and all, that you said it on purpose. In any case, I was there at that bar a couple of years ago. Anyway, believe it or not, it's not that simple even when everybody knows your name. We work hard every day to maintain the level of professionalism and integrity to ensure our customers realize the value we deliver".

The call went along for a few more minutes. They agreed on doing an online video chat the following week to dive into the details of the potential implementation of the initial services. On the follow up email, the consultant thanked the prospect and at the end of the email he wrote: "By the way, it looks like the SOX are playing the Braves here in Atlanta this weekend and here, NO ONE KNOWS THEIR NAME...;-). Have a great weekend...."

This short tag line has become their standing out item. Their special thing. A stake in the ground for establishing trust. Yes, this little thing, if used properly, now will be their "go-to". Their own inside joke. Their Emotional Anchor. The consultant from Atlanta realized it and took advantage of it. In the next interaction over a Zoom call, after the Braves lost to the SOX during that past past weekend's series, he had logged in to the call and modified his on-screen name to: Braves - no one knows their name. The prospect noticed, laughed and the two spent the next 4 minutes exchanging personal experiences from the weekend while the consultant changed his on-screen name back to his real name.

Once a repeating motive has been established (the Cheers theme song in this case), it is important to use it through ALL communication channels. In this particular example, it started over a phone call, reiterated through an email and followed up on a Zoom video call. Now this could be it for this specific element. You may want to stretch it a couple of more times and then find another. You should get back to this motive in a later time of course and trigger that connection but you also cannot stretch it for too long.

Stand Out - Practice:

Say you are writing an email to your customer. Usually, if you are planning properly, you are thinking about what you would like the response to be. Or you are thinking about what you are hoping your customer will do after reading the email - to respond with a certain detail you are looking for, to schedule an online follow up call, to get their boss involved etc. You follow the vibe of the current connection with this particular customer and write your email in a very cordial and professional manner.

Now think about such an email you recently sent and try to realize what the recipient of that email FELT when they read it. Instead of what they did, what they felt. And did that feeling get them to do eventually what you wanted them to? Now, think of what you could have written differently, something subtle to make it stand out a bit, and what would you like them to feel when reading it.

Try this scenario: Your customer and you have been corresponding for a few weeks about this project you are trying to finalize the details for. For some reason, in the last 3 emails, it seems you simply cannot get to her. You are supposed to get back to her with some details regarding the date and duration of the project after your last discussion and this is your opportunity. Write an email and find a subtle way, to stand out, to be a bit different in your verbiage. However, write the email and ask for a phone call where you will be discussing the final details of the project. Then, think of a way to stand out while on the call and write it down.

Read more about Standing Out in Alon's blog:

[When we remember Zion](#)

[Oh yeah those guys](#)

[Is remembering a feeling?](#)

Stand Out

Key Takeaways & How to:



Key Takeaways

While thinking about being different, keep in mind:

- The desired response you are seeking.
- One of the main goals is the element of surprise. Trigger curiosity.
- No need to be extravagant when trying to stand-out.

Finding an ongoing constant element to stand out by is challenging, but has a great long term impact on the overall level of openness and trust. Identifying a repetitive, standing-out motive that can be used as an emotional anchor is one of the keys for establishing that trust.



How To:

Things to consider before you communicate with your customer:

1. Look at your desk. Is there something that could stand out for the other side to see on your next video call?
2. Anything special, different, or new you can share with your customer on this upcoming communication?
3. Anything different or special you can recall about your customer that stood out during your discovery or previous conversations that you could bring up?

Make an Impact- the back story:

Making an impact is the pillar that is probably the most substantial one as it is directly involved with the Emotional piece of Emotional Relevance™. And as we learned in the opening session, since it is emotional, it stays for a long period, hence, making an impact.

Look at this picture by Starbucks.



Imagine for a few seconds it is you holding that cold drink (as a side note - ponder why you selected the one you did VS the other). If you really look at the hand in the picture and imagine it is your hand, after about 3 seconds you could actually feel how your hand gets cold. Now focus on the straws. Look at where both straws intersect. Can you hear in your brain the sound the lightsaber makes when it's launched and when it's slicing one another? Are you smiling right now?

When we feel something, the slightest feeling, it has an impact on us. When we felt something previously and then are faced with it again in a certain form, we can feel it again.

Research has shown that people respond in a fonder way when they feel warm, welcomed, comfortable and more secure.

In the virtual world, there are many things you can do to make an impact and because it is online, many of these elements are impacted through the visual sense. People are visually-oriented:

90% of information transmitted to our brain is visual and presentations with relevant visuals are 43% more persuasive. Oh, and 65% of us are visual learners and if that's the case, then might as well take advantage of it.

Look at your surroundings, your background, what's on your desk. But it's not enough just to be aware of it. What would you like the impact on your customer or colleague to be when their old brain is constantly looking at your image. Not your face, your image. Subtle elements could make a huge impact.

Make an Impact in the real world:

A few years ago, an experiment was done with a few prospects in a face-to-face meeting. A drink was offered to them when they came to the meeting. One group of prospects was offered a cold drink and the other a hot drink. The cold drink was served in a can. No glass to pour the drink into. The warm drink on the other end was served in a mug without a handle. This way, they were forced to have a direct contact with the can or the mug and feel the temperature of the drink. Later, after answering a brief set of questions and analyzing their reactions during the meeting, it was clear that the prospects who were holding the cold drink felt more defensive, guarded, and actually purchased less than the group who was holding the warm drink.

One great way to think about making an impact in an online session is to think about the ambiance in this virtual room you are in. You see, when we meet in a physical room, the atmosphere in the room is set by the temperature in the room, the lighting, the furniture in the room, the view we all see through the same window we all look through. And in an online session what we see and hear sets the ambiance. However, unlike in the physical world, in the virtual world we can control the ambience in an easier way. It's enough for you to have a dark setting or a certain object on your desk that can affect the overall feeling of the call. And if you do have that power it is important to use it wisely. Now think about your ongoing relationship with your client and the different channels of communication you use to communicate with them. How can you control the vibe, the ambiance when you speak on the phone? When you email? When you text?

Say you are a consultant in the midst of a large rollout to a strategic customer. You have an online call scheduled for tomorrow and your main goal is to influence your customer to understand that the rollout is a process with ups and downs, surprises, fall backs and recoveries. Basically you want to impact them to be patient as the process begins. It's enough for you to have a picture with a quote about processes on it behind you during the call to plant that message in their mind and get the desired impact. Or if during your call you are sipping periodically from this cup...the message on it will subtly resonate with the other side. Unlike in the first pillar where something on your desk could simply peak an interest in order to Stand-Out, here the focus is on the actual impact of what you are showing, doing or setting up.



Make an impact- Practice:

List 5 things you think can impact the feeling and atmosphere of an online session and what kind of a feeling or atmosphere are these? For example - a feeling of being in a rush and hurrying up - speak loudly and at a fast pace. Or for a casual environment, wear a T-shirt and start the call with some casual semi-personal conversation.

In your next online session, challenge yourself. Get your favorite mug with whatever is on it, make sure the writing on it faces the camera when you drink from it and see how it impacts the other side. And if you really are up for it, ask whoever you are meeting with, before the call, to bring a hot drink to the call as well. During the call, mention it. Say something like - "well, I figured, this is the closest we could get to having coffee together". Imagine the ambiance you just created.

Imagine the impact that feeling you just created will have on the rest of the session. And what you did right there is covering both Standing Out as well as Making an Impact. And if your message on your mug actually says something you want to convey and blend in to the relationship....you are golden.

Read more about Making an Impact in Alon's blog:

Go ahead mark that bench

There Is a place like home

Bird or Lime?

Who Moved My Starbucks?

Make an Impact

Key Takeaways & How to:



Key Takeaways

- Even a small laughter, excitement or a minor disappointment is considered an emotional experience.
- Feelings - if you are able to make your customer FEEL you are making an impact
- There is no second chance for a first impression - set whatever ambience you want early in the engagement (phone, video call, email) and the rest will follow.



How To:

1. Make sure your slides or visuals have a relevant image on it.
2. Before you send an email, call or get into an online session, think of the feeling you want to convey during the interaction and figure out how to do it. For example: If you want your customer to be emotionally surprised - you might want to look into a previous discussion and bring back something from there.
3. TAKE NOTES!! During your communication with whoever you are with, please, take notes. Not just business related notes. Not only minutes. Take notes about things they said. Things they reacted to emotionally. Those will serve you very well later on in the relationship.

Get Personal- the back story:

Getting personal, unfortunately for many of us, goes in a way, against what we've been told for many years in the corporate world. Don't make friends at work, don't share emotions or feelings, don't take it personally.

If Making an Impact is the emotions and feelings pillar of the three pillars of Emotional Relevance™, this one is likely the one you will challenge yourself the most by. Challenging yourself to get uncomfortable. To get out of your comfort zone.

The good news is that it will not be as harsh as you may think, as it is something we as humans actually want, need and is part of our DNA.

Across individuals, societies, and even eras, humans consistently seek inclusion over exclusion, membership over isolation, and acceptance over rejection. As Roy Baumeister and Mark Leary conclude, humans have a need to belong: "a pervasive drive to form and maintain at least a minimum quantity of lasting, positive, and impactful interpersonal relationships" (1995, p. 497). And most of us satisfy this need by joining groups.

By Donelson R. Forsyth University of Richmond

So, in a sense, this pillar will give you a sort of permission to be.....well...yourself.

Doesn't really matter what you are offering or selling. If you want to be remembered. If you want your customers to have an emotional relationship with you that will result in a much deeper level of loyalty – be Personal.

Getting personal means to share some personal information about yourself in order to cause a similar response from whoever you are speaking with. Alternatively, get them to share something personal and then reciprocate with a mirrored personal experience of your own.

Opening up, has been proven to result in an immediate increased level of trust leading to sharing business information on a much deeper level. In the virtual world, interestingly enough, by default, you are already in many cases, in a very intimate environment. You are sitting in your kitchen by the dining room table while your kids walk by and your customer is in their bedroom where you can literally see their linens. Although you are not physically next to one another, the intimacy level is higher. And that intimacy gives you a better setting to be even more personal than you would have been in a face-to-face meeting in an office or a board room environment.

Get Personal in the real world:

In a recent research study conducted during online sessions, two scenarios were looked into: 1. First sales call and 2. 3rd or 4th call into the sales cycle with the same person. In both cases, the salesperson has been asked to initiate a personal discussion at the beginning of the call and get the customer to share some personal, non-work-related information and then to reciprocate. The customers, before the beginning of the call, were asked to rate the level of trust they feel towards the salesperson (from 1-10). After the customer shared some personal information (for example: "my daughter has gotten accepted to this school" or "I pulled my hemi yesterday while training for a marathon"), the salesperson shared a personal insight of their own, as close and similar as possible to what the customer mentioned (in the example of the daughter getting accepted to school: "oh, yes, my son will go through this next year. Any tips are welcome" and in the example of the pulled hamstring: "I have been contemplating a marathon for years but can't seem to get past 10K. Any advice?"). Among the group of first-time sales calls, the average level of trust before the call was 2.4 and after the call the average was 7.2. With the other group, the beginning level average was 5.3 and following the call was 8.8 on average.

It makes sense that the first group's initial level of trust is lower and also that the jump in level of trust is higher with that group VS. the second group. In any case, it is clear that the getting personal concept adds to the level of trust in a very impactful way.

By the way, 78% of the salespeople participating in this study reported a pretty high level of discomfort in getting personal and 93% of them reported a much easier conversation with their customer following the exercise. Additionally, a higher level of openness that revealed new information regarding the business relationship was reported as well.

Getting personal does not mean you need to share all of your most intimate problems or issues. But it does mean that it is not enough for just one of the sides to share. It is critical to establish through 2 - way communication. It is essential to follow up with personal information from the other side. The trust effect can be substantial only when both sides are getting personal.

Get Personal- Practice:

List three contacts you are dealing with currently. Could be a prospect you just started a relationship with, an existing customer or one of your partners. At least one of them, you just started the relationship with. Now, next to each one of them, write down 2 personal, non-work-related details you know about them. Then, next to each one, write two personal details they know about you. And I don't mean details like the fact that you like coffee or that they just moved to the West Coast recently. Why did they move? Who did they move with? Are they happy with the move? Remember - a bit uncomfortable but go for it. Lots of blank spaces? Good! On your next communication with them, share something personal. Give them a chance to respond with a personal story of their own and see what happens. Then go back to the little table you created and add the relevant details (tip: save this table and keep adding information for each one of your points of contacts)

Here is an example:

Type of relationship	Who?	Personal things about them	Personal things about me
Early stage - Prospect	John Smith at Acme Corp.	1. Moved to the West coast recently Moved to the West Coast recently as his girlfriend got a new job at facebook (does this trigger any stories you can share back? You have a friend who works at FB perhaps? Do you know someone in the area they are moving to and can offer a connection?)	1. I like coffee 2. I am a coffee snob. I used to date this girl who taught me to appreciate my coffee. No Starbucks for me - I get mine ordered and blended just the way I need it.
Existing - 2 years customer	Lisa T at Digisave	1.	

To learn more about Getting Personal, read Alon's blog:

How did you feel when they called your name
no really how are you
come down to their level in every way get personal

Get Personal

Key Takeaways & How to:



Key Takeaways

- No need to overwhelm them with personal elements. Subtle details (at least at the beginning).
- Remember that this is a need. In all of us. Be bold and make the first move.
- You will feel when the trust is built. Be aware of it so you know when to take it to the next level.



How To:

1. When communicating on a Monday, get beyond just the usual “how was your weekend”. Say something like: “Hey, I want to share something. A bit personal, do you mind?” Then, share something you did over the weekend. Perhaps: “Not sure what’s your take on it but I went to a Yoga class this weekend for the first time” or “Can I ask for some small somewhat personal advice? This past weekend I lost it at the house. Slammed my hand on the table, yelled at everyone to leave me alone and went out of the house. Unusual for me. Happened to you before?”. I know. You are feeling a bit uncomfortable. But go ahead and give it a shot.
2. Cheat-sheet: form a system that fits you and take notes of every personal information they share with you. Refer back to it during coming iterations and see how the trust level deepens.
3. Trust level: Before your call/online session/email/IM, write a number between 1-10 of how the trust level between you is at that moment. Then at the end of this communication cycle, write it down again and compare. This little exercise will make wonders for your business relationships.

ABOUT ALON



Alon Zaibert is a relationship-driven sales executive who successfully harnesses his energetic personality and interpersonal psychology skills.

Along with a track record of significant bottom-line results and decades of management experience, Alon has earned the reputation of a highly impactful motivational leader.

His passion for inspiring people, establishing processes, and building authentic business relationships are truly unique. Tapping into his infectious energy and positive attitude, Alon teaches his clients to find their own power.

Alon's gift of storytelling is evident in his popular blog, "**Two Weeks Notice - A Touch of Emotional Relevance Every Couple of Weeks**", where he brings to life examples of relationship building and Emotional Relevance™.

After many years of studying American culture, Alon has learned to view the nuances of his teachings through intercultural and interpersonal perspectives.

He's a multifaceted talent who loves engaging an audience with his singing and was once a professional basketball player overseas.

"Essentially, what we are promoting is trust, and trust is a relationship based on emotions and relevancy."

contact us



info@alonzaiibert.com



www.alonzaiibert.com

AFZ

BUSINESS CONSULTANTS & PEOPLE CONNOISSEURS