

# 5 THINGS EVERY SPEAKER SHOULD KNOW BEFORE THEY START TRAINING

THURSDAY, JULY 25, 2024  
10 - 11 AM PT / 1 - 2 PM ET



1

## MEET YOUR TRAINER




**AARON WOLOWIEC**  
he/him/his  
MSA, CAE, CMP Fellow  
Founder & President  
Author, Speaker,  
Strategist & Facilitator




2

## LOGISTICS




- ✓ We're scheduled to be together for the next 60 minutes
- ✓ We do not have a formal break scheduled during this presentation
- ✓ Take care of your needs and those in your care
- ✓ We encourage you to silence the things that ding, ring and buzz
- ✓ Use technology to help keep you in the "room" today
- ✓ During today's session, we are broadcasting in Zoom webinar format; please ask questions via the Q&A function in your Zoom navigation bar
- ✓ We will make all slides available to you following the presentation
- ✓ 1 CAE credit is available for participating in the live program only

EVENT  GARDE

3

## AIMS




### RATIONAL AIMS

- ✓ Whether you're a novice or a veteran industry speaker, this session will provide fresh ideas and strategies to enhance your training sessions.
- ✓ Those responsible for professional development opportunities will gain valuable insights to support and develop their speakers.

### EXPERIENTIAL AIMS

- ✓ Today's session is intentionally designed to prioritize content over interaction.
- ✓ Take this time to get curious about which of these tactics will have the biggest impact on the sessions you design and deliver.

EVENT  GARDE

4

# AGENDA

**LOGISTICS**

Consider and effectively manage all logistical aspects of your speaking engagement.

**AUDIENCE**

Identify and empathize with your audience by exploring their needs, perspectives, and experiences.

**ENGAGEMENT**

Unlock the three secrets to developing a session that engages 100 percent of participants.

**RELATIONSHIPS**

Discover the importance of networking and how to facilitate meaningful connections among learners.

**CREATIVITY**

Engage the five senses to heighten creativity and to create fun and memorable sessions.

**5 THINGS EVERY SPEAKER SHOULD KNOW**

**EVENT GARDE**

5

# IDEA 1: LOGISTICS

**CONSIDER + EFFECTIVELY MANAGE ALL LOGISTICS**

**EVENT GARDE**

6

## WHAT



- What is the name of the organization and event?
- What is the purpose of this event and session?
- What type of session am I being asked to give (e.g., general session vs. breakout session)?
- What is the anticipated format of this session (e.g., lecture, roundtable, hands-on lab)?
- What is the expected level of interaction/engagement during this session?
- What is my role in this session (e.g., moderator, panelist, facilitator)?
- Is there a speaker agreement I am being asked to sign?
- If yes, what terms and conditions am I being asked to commit to?
- What is the compensation for this speaking engagement?
- What travel arrangements will be made for me vs. what am I expected to coordinate and pay for?
- What will be done with my session, content, and materials post-event?

7

## WHEN




- When is the speaking engagement scheduled (date/time)?
- What is the scheduled duration?
- Does the session include Q&A and, if yes, for how long?
- When can I get into the space to set-up/prep?
- When do I need to be out of the room for the next speaker/activity?
- What is the timing of this presentation in relation to the overall event or program?
- What dates/times would I need to arrive/depart?
- What is the timeline of key milestones/deliverables?

8



## WHERE


- Where will the speaking engagement take place (venue, floor, room)?
- Where am I to park and/or enter the building?
- Will there be a stage/riser, podium, head table, etc.?
- What is the participant seating arrangement for this session?
- What are the acoustics like in this space?
- What AV (e.g., screen, projector, Internet, microphone) will be provided?
- What supplies (e.g., pens, paper, markers, flipcharts) will be provided?
- If the venue is not a hotel: Where is the closest hotel you recommend?
- If online: What technology platform/features will be used and what are the limitations we should be aware of?

EVENT  GARDE

9

## DELIVERABLES

- Do I need to provide one or more of the following?
  - Headshot
  - Bio
  - Title
  - Description
  - Learning outcomes
  - Outline
  - Slides
  - Handouts
  - AV/supply requests
- Do I have the ability for direct contact (e.g., pre-work, expectation setting, post-work)?
- Are there any branded organization/event templates I'm supposed to use?
- Will continuing education units be offered?
  - If yes, how does that change my deliverables?
- Will the session be evaluated?
  - If yes, what is the rating system?
- Should something arise last-minute/onsite, who and at what number should I contact?

EVENT  GARDE

10

# IDEA 2: AUDIENCE

## IDENTIFY + EMPATHIZE WITH YOUR AUDIENCE



11

**Empathy Map Canvas**

Designed for: \_\_\_\_\_ Designed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Version: \_\_\_\_\_

**1 WHO are we empathizing with?**  
Who is the person we want to understand?  
What is the situation they are in?  
What is their role in the situation?

**GOAL**

**2 What do they need to DO?**  
What do they need to do differently?  
What job(s) do they want or need to get done?  
What decision(s) do they need to make?  
How will we know they were successful?

**6 What do they HEAR?**  
What are they hearing others say?  
What are they hearing from friends?  
What are they hearing from colleagues?  
What are they hearing second-hand?

**7 What do they THINK and FEEL?**

**PAINS**  
What are their fears, frustrations, and anxieties?

**GAINS**  
What are their wants, needs, hopes and dreams?

**5 What do they SEE?**  
What do they see in the marketplace?  
What do they see in their immediate environment?  
What do they see others saying and doing?  
What are they watching and reading?

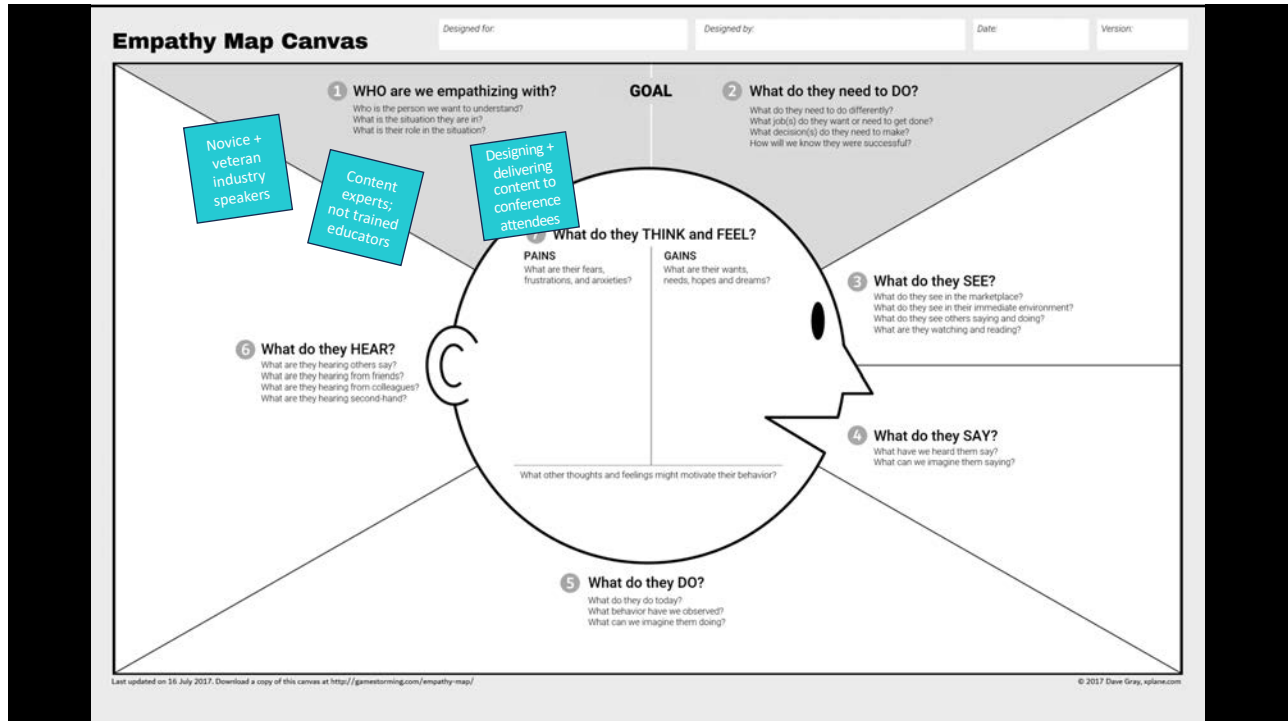
**4 What do they SAY?**  
What have we heard them say?  
What can we imagine them saying?

**5 What do they DO?**  
What do they do today?  
What behavior have we observed?  
What can we imagine them doing?

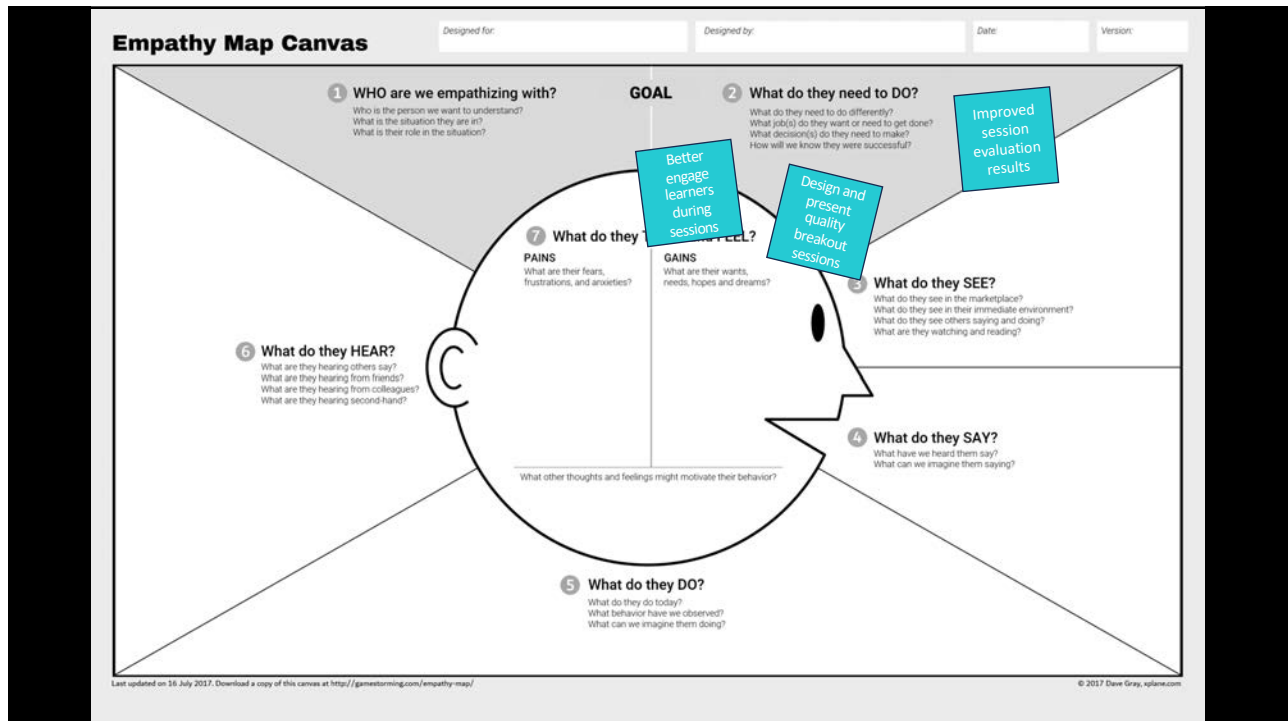
What other thoughts and feelings might motivate their behavior?

Last updated on 16 July 2017. Download a copy of this canvas at <http://ggnetstorming.com/empathy-map/> © 2017 Dave Gray, spleen.com

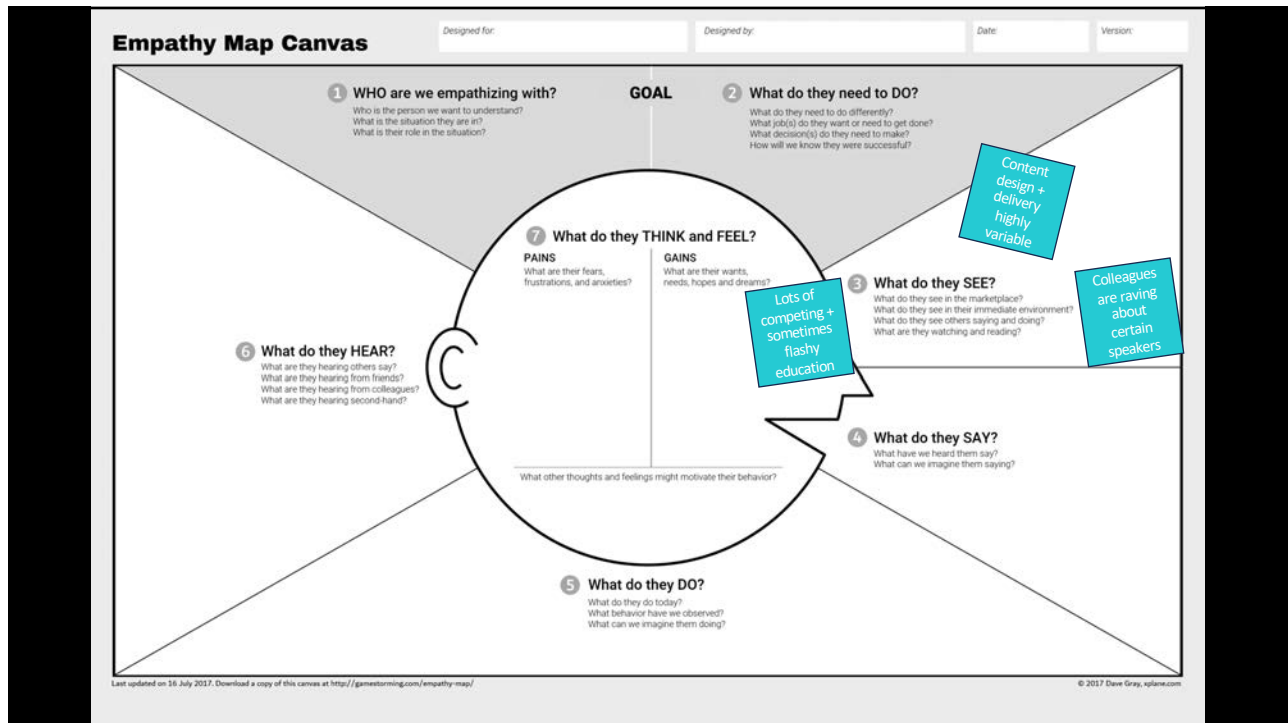
12



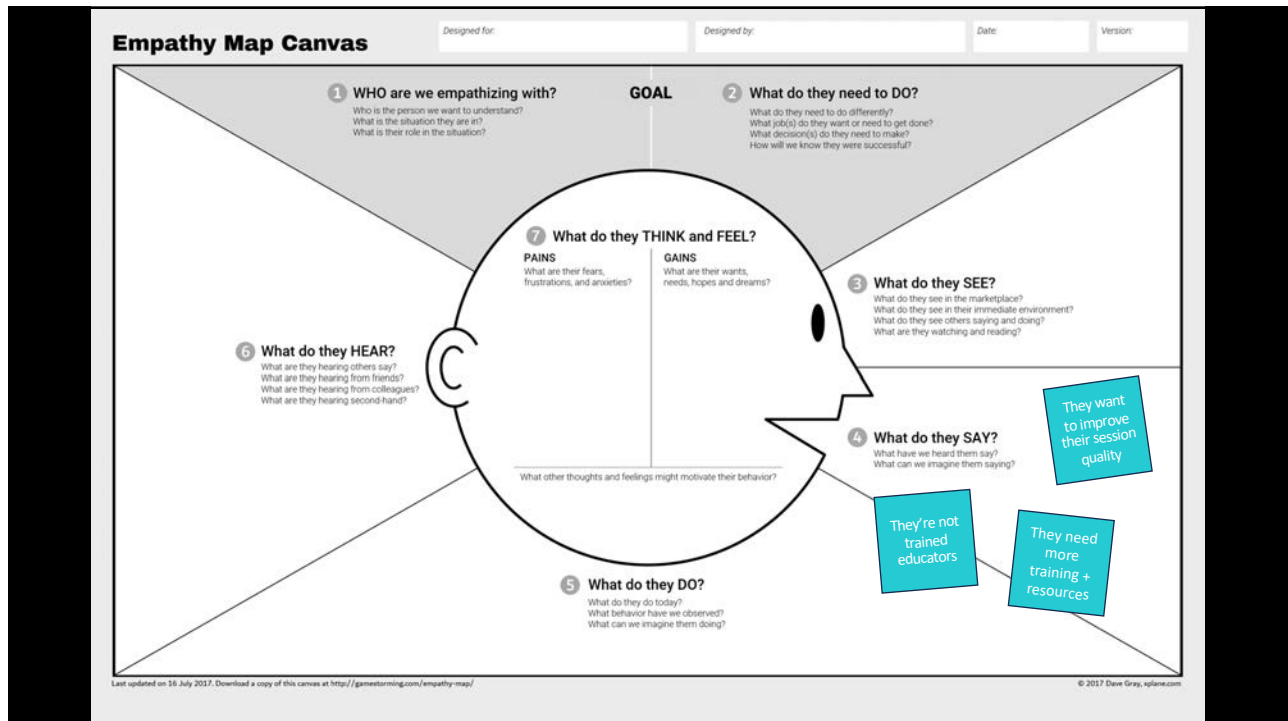
13



14

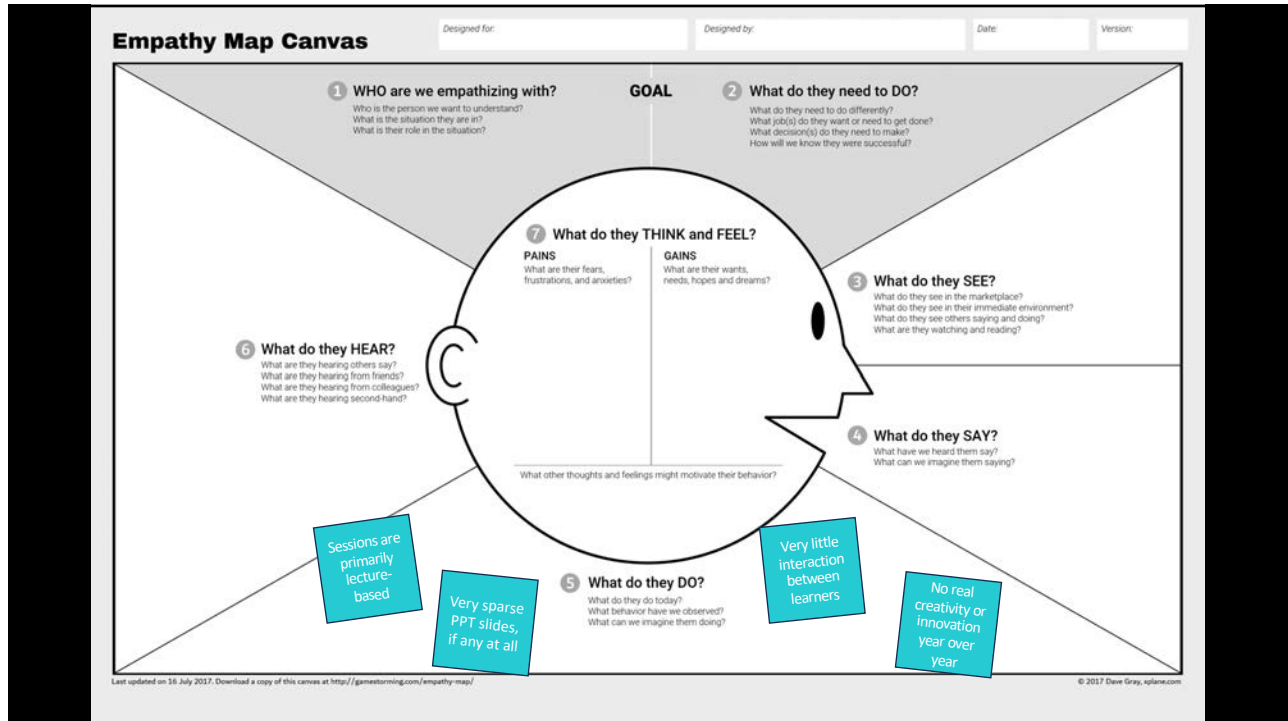


15

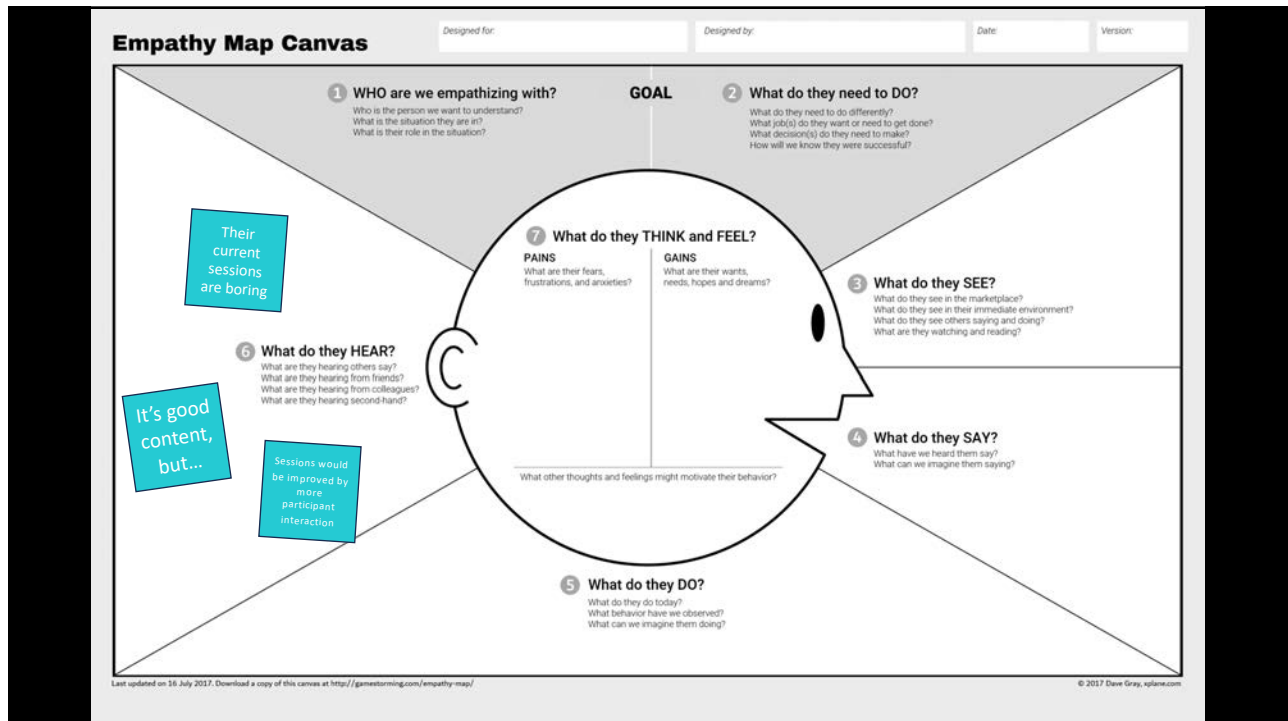


16

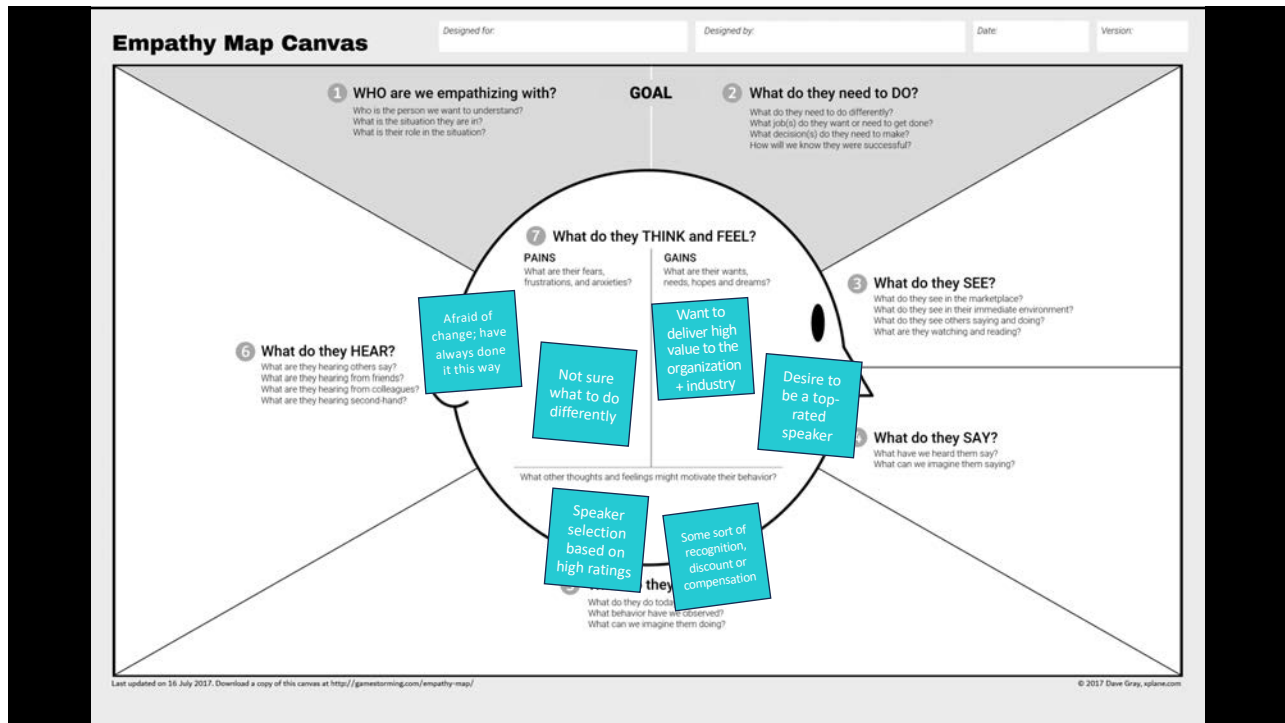




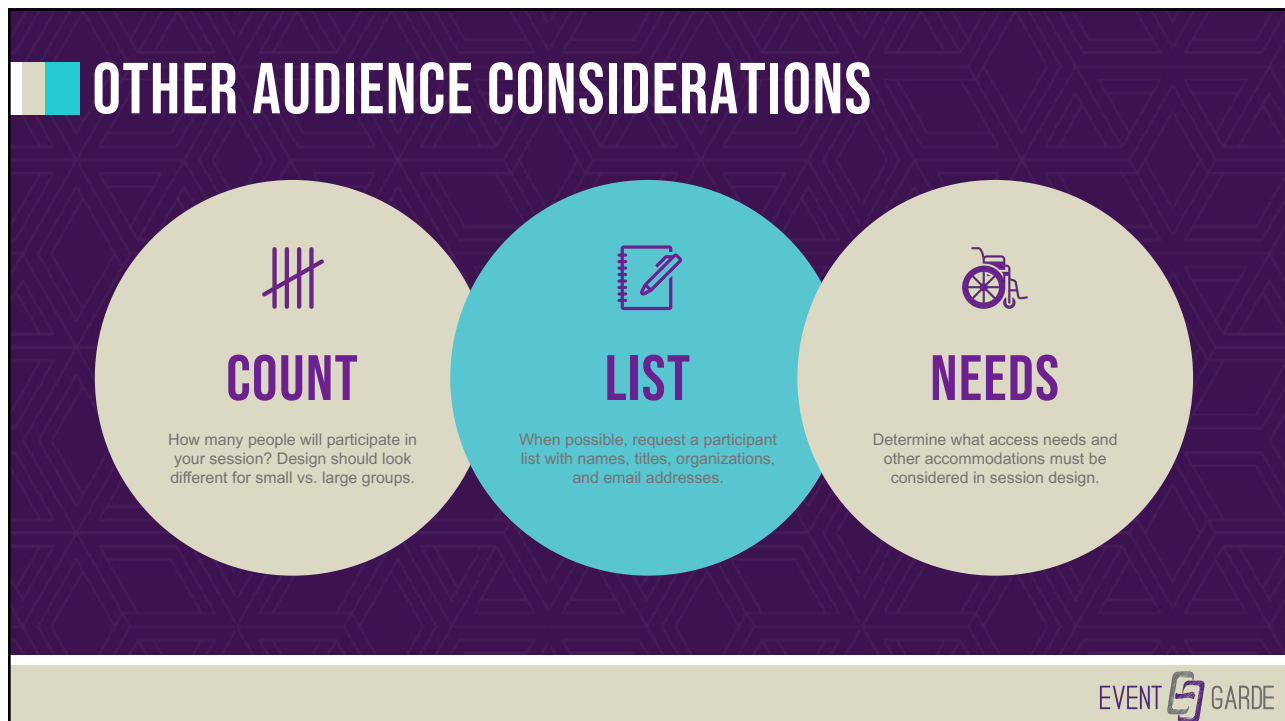
17



18



19



20

# IDEA 3: ENGAGEMENT

DEVELOP A SESSION THAT ENGAGES 100% OF PARTICIPANTS

EVENT  GARDE

21

## ENGAGEMENT IS NOT:



- **Activities** – something that a person/group does.
- **Attendance** – being present during the session.
- **Contribution** – giving one's view in a discussion.
- **Conversation** – formal exchange of ideas by spoken word.
- **Interaction** – working with a neighbor or in a small group.
- **Involvement** – simply participating or note taking during the session.
- **Nonverbals** – visual communication cues (e.g., body language).
- **Novelty** – taking notice of something interesting/important.
- **Participation** – taking part in something.
- **Sharing** – high volume of social media posting.
- **Satisfaction** – fulfillment of wishes, expectations or needs.

*Each of these tactics can play a contributing factor in learner engagement; however, each tactic on its own cannot be defined as engagement.*

EVENT  GARDE

22

## ENGAGING LEARNERS


A new and better definition of learner engagement comprises three key elements.

- 
**ACTIVE PARTNERSHIP**  
 Speakers must create intentional and active partnerships with learners.
- 
**PERSONALIZATION**  
 Speakers must personalize new information for learners – simple exposure is not enough.
- 
**APPLICATION + BEHAVIOR CHANGE**  
 Speakers must help motivate learners to try, apply and refine new ideas on the job.

EVENT  GARDE

23

## ACTIVE PARTNERSHIP



### DESCRIPTION

According to Peter Brown et al. in *Make It Stick*, “The responsibility for learning rests with every individual.” In other words, engagement is not something that a speaker can “do” to a learner. Learners must be receptive. Content leaders must be prepared to bolt on new learning to where the target learner’s understanding leaves off.

### EXAMPLE

In a workshop on effective communication, a speaker fosters an active partnership by initially assessing participants’ knowledge through live polls, then engaging them in a role-play exercise to demonstrate key concepts like active listening. This collaborative learning is further enhanced by participants sharing their experiences and co-creating a set of communication guidelines, thereby transforming them from passive recipients to active co-creators of knowledge. This method exemplifies mutual responsibility in learning, as both speaker and participants actively contribute to the educational experience.

EVENT  GARDE

24






## PERSONALIZATION

**DESCRIPTION**


Simple exposure to content is not enough. We must employ strategies to help learners personalize and process information so they know where it deepens their understanding and what they can do with it. What we have commonly called engagement are in fact activities – the technologies we use to shift passive presentations (lecture) into active learning. The activities themselves are not engagement. To trigger engagement, they must be meaningful, relevant, and appropriately challenging.

**EXAMPLE**

During a personal finance seminar, a speaker asks participants to input their own financial goals into a shared app, which then customizes the content of the presentation in real-time to address each participant's specific objectives, such as debt reduction or retirement planning. The speaker then facilitates breakout sessions where participants with similar goals can collaborate, share strategies, and discuss challenges they face. This approach personalizes the learning experience, making the content directly relevant and actionable for each attendee.

EVENT  GARDE

25




## APPLICATION + BEHAVIOR CHANGE

**DESCRIPTION**

When we learn something new, physical change occurs in the brain as attitudes, knowledge structures, skill, and competence changes. Rarely does a single conference session encompass an entire learning cycle. Rob Brinkerhoff's research tells us why: We pour too many resources into developing a session and not nearly enough in post-event follow up where most actual learning happens – when we try on new ideas. To facilitate transformational learning, we must reach into the context of application and offer transfer support.

**EXAMPLE**


During a leadership development workshop, a speaker introduces a new conflict resolution technique and pairs it with a commitment exercise, where participants pledge to apply the technique in their next team disagreement. The speaker also schedules a follow-up virtual meeting two weeks later, encouraging participants to share their experiences and results. This approach not only teaches the new skill but also supports the application phase, ensuring that participants have a structured opportunity to practice and reflect on their learning, thereby facilitating actual behavior change.

EVENT  GARDE

26

# IDEA 4: RELATIONSHIPS

## FACILITATE MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS AMONG LEARNERS



27

## IMPORTANCE OF NETWORKING



**?** **WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE ARE THE TOP REASONS MEMBERS JOIN YOUR ORGANIZATION?**  
Select up to three responses.

TOP REASONS MEMBERS JOIN ORGANIZATION					
	Total (n = 571)	IMO (n = 217)	Trade (n = 193)	Combination (n = 161)	
<b>TOP 1</b>	Networking with others in the field	67%	60%	71%	70%
<b>TOP 2</b>	Continuing education/professional certification	42%	54%	32%	39%
<b>TOP 3</b>	Accessing specialized and/or current information	32%	26%	40%	32%

Resource: 2024 MGI Membership Marketing Benchmarking Report



28

## TRADITIONAL ICEBREAKER CHALLENGES



### LACK OF RELEVANCE

Many icebreakers lack a clear connection to the event's goals or themes. Participants might feel that the activities are arbitrary or time-wasting, especially if the icebreakers seem unrelated to the covered content.



### DISCOMFORT & INCLUSIVITY

Some icebreakers require personal disclosure or physical activity. This can alienate attendees who may have physical limitations, introverted personalities, or privacy concerns.



### ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL

When we do not consider diverse audiences or different cultural backgrounds, ages, or professional levels, participants could feel marginalized or less engaged if the activity doesn't resonate or seems culturally insensitive.



### SUPERFICIAL ENGAGEMENT

Many common icebreakers lead to superficial interactions that don't meaningfully help participants get to know each other. This can result in missed opportunities for deeper networking or collaboration.

EVENT  GARDE

29



## ICE MELTERS (COINED BY JAN KECK) ARE INTENDED TO:

- Build trust
- Increase engagement
- Foster deep connections

All without making people cringe!

EVENT  GARDE

30

## IMPROMPTU NETWORKING – PART 1



- ✓ In three rounds, participants who are able are asked to get up from their seats, raise their hands, and pair up with someone they don't know or don't know well. (Be prepared to work directly with participants who may need physical modifications.)
- ✓ As soon as they pair up, participants can lower their hands (but unpaired participants will know who is still available).
- ✓ Each round, participants will be given about five minutes (two-and-a-half minutes each) to answer the following two questions:
  - ✓ What big challenge do you bring to this gathering?
  - ✓ What do you hope to get from and give this group or community?

31

## IMPROMPTU NETWORKING – PART 2




- ✓ Before sending participants off to find their first pair, be sure to ask if there are any questions of clarity.
- ✓ Additionally, clearly identify the sound participants should be listening for as a prompt to move on to the next pairing/discussion (e.g., a set of chimes, a bell, or a whistle). You'll note here that even if you have a microphone, calling the group back together with your voice alone will simply cause them to speak louder in their pairs.
- ✓ Finally, I always find it helpful to clearly post the two questions for all to see and refer to throughout their discussions (e.g., PowerPoint slide or flipchart).

32



# MODIFICATIONS



POSSIBLE  
FORMAT  
CHANGES

ROUND ROBIN

DURATION

QUESTIONS

VIRTUAL

For a smaller group, consider doing a single round robin around the room vs. pairing off in multiple rounds.

---

Vary the amount of time pairs have to discuss questions and/or use some time for group debrief/reporting of themes.


---

Consider how you might tweak the questions for maximum relevance without losing the spirit of the networking activity.

---

Alternatives in the virtual space might include a Google slide/Excel sheet and/or calling on participants to answer.

---



33

# IDEA 5: CREATIVITY

## ENGAGE THE 5 SENSES TO HEIGHTEN CREATIVITY



34

# PREDICTABILITY












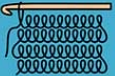
Often, predictability in conference agendas and individual session formats leads to disengagement, but by injecting novelty and intentionality into our design and preparation, we can maintain participant interest and involvement – leading to engagement.



35

# 5 SENSES



				
TASTE	HEARING	SIGHT	SMELL	TOUCH
				

36

## TASTE



CORE CONCEPT	IN-PERSON	VIRTUAL
Offering a variety of healthy snacks and meals keeps participants energized and engaged. Diverse food options cater to taste preferences and dietary needs, enhancing the overall experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mints</li> <li>• Chocolates</li> <li>• Trail mix</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participant care packages</li> <li>• Relying on participant snacks</li> </ul>

37


## HEARING




CORE CONCEPT	IN-PERSON	VIRTUAL
Proper sound systems for presenters and audience contributors helps ensure all participants can hear session information. Likewise, strategic use of music and sounds can create a mood that either energizes or relaxes attendees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chimes</li> <li>• Microphones</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Music</li> <li>• Soundbox</li> </ul>

38

## SIGHT




CORE CONCEPT	IN-PERSON	VIRTUAL
An appealing setting with vibrant colors and dynamic visuals grabs attention. Digital displays and thematic graphics can enhance the visual appeal and reinforce the event's message.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PPT slides</li> <li>• Flip charts</li> <li>• Polling data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Miro Board</li> <li>• Whiteboard</li> <li>• Chat waterfall</li> </ul>


EVENT  GARDE

39

## SMELL



CORE CONCEPT	IN-PERSON	VIRTUAL
Utilizing aromatherapy can subtly improve the environment. Calming scents like lavender or invigorating ones like citrus can enhance the atmosphere, but it's important to consider potential allergies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential oils</li> <li>• Scented markers</li> <li>• Peppermint candy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participant care packages</li> <li>• Relying on participant scents</li> </ul>

EVENT  GARDE

40



# TOUCH

CORE CONCEPT	IN-PERSON	VIRTUAL
<p>Providing items like fidget toys and creative supplies like colorful paper, pens, and markers, encourages hands-on engagement and helps maintain focus and creativity during sessions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fidget toys</li> <li>Handouts</li> <li>Mobile devices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keyboard</li> <li>Journaling</li> <li>Drawing</li> </ul>


41

# WRAP-UP + NEXT STEPS


LEVERAGE NEW IDEAS TO IMPROVE LEARNER ENGAGEMENT + SESSION OUTCOMES

42

# RESOURCES




- PPT presentation: 5 Things Every Speaker Should Know
- [Updated Empathy Map Canvas](#)
- [Engaging Learners: A Guide to Successfully Designing Engaging Learning](#)
- [2024 MGI Membership Marketing Benchmarking Report](#)
- [The Art of Melting the Ice](#)
- [The Last Relationship-Building Activity You'll Ever Need](#)
- [Environment Matters: Engaging the Five Senses](#)

EVENT  GARDE

43

# RECAP



**LOGISTICS**  
Consider and effectively manage all logistical aspects of your speaking engagement.


**AUDIENCE**  
Identify and empathize with your audience by exploring their needs, perspectives, and experiences.

**ENGAGEMENT**  
Unlock the three secrets to developing a session that engages 100 percent of participants.

**RELATIONSHIPS**  
Discover the importance of networking and how to facilitate meaningful connections among learners.

**CREATIVITY**  
Engage the five senses to heighten creativity and to create fun and memorable sessions.

**5 THINGS EVERY SPEAKER SHOULD KNOW**

EVENT  GARDE

44

# REFLECTION:


## WHAT 1 IDEA FROM THIS PRESENTATION WOULD YOU LIKE TO TRY ON?

- Is this for yourself or speakers you're working with?
- What will have the lightest lift, but the biggest impact?
- What additional resources do you need to explore?
- What conversations do you need to have with colleagues?




45

## REACH OUT WITH QUESTIONS



**AARON WOLOWIEC**  
he/him/his  
MSA, CAE, CMP Fellow  
Founder & President  
[aaron@eventgarde.com](mailto:aaron@eventgarde.com)  
517.402.2019



46

