

Communicating Effectively - Marketing to Seniors and Their Families

Defining Generic Key Terms and Concepts:

- **What is the ‘Cardinal Rule in Marketing’?** The Cardinal rule in marketing is that you must know your audience in order to select the most appropriate and useful marketing tactics. You need to really understand what makes your target market tick and how to effectively segment that audience to meet your particular business goals. The watchword here is “*diversity*”.
- **Socioemotional Selectivity:** This theory suggests that, as the perceived future shortens, people focus more of their attention and energy on emotional goals, such as maintaining satisfying interpersonal relations, and less on knowledge-related goals, such as getting an education, or researching and comparing different insurance plans. The result is that positive emotions become a high priority – seniors put a great deal of emphasis on how a situation makes them *feel* when making decisions (Benson, 2003).
- **How would you market differently to Senior Women?** According to Martha Barletta, author of *Marketing to Women: How to Understand, Reach, and Increase Your Share of the World’s Largest Market Segment*, women draw motivation from different perceptions, priorities, and preferences than men do. Statistics show that women make 85 percent of all consumer buying decisions, and women tend to live longer than men. Women put great emphasis on connection, communication, relationships, and trust. Women hate to feel like they are being sold on something. As a marketer, it is absolutely essential that you slow down, avoid at all costs rushing to close a sale, and do some things differently. Quality service, exceptional customer care, follow-through, ethical business behaviour, and customized programs are some of the key hot buttons in winning women’s trust and confidence. Also women tend to become more assertive and in control as they age, while men tend to become less combative, less aggressive and more mellow. This is due in large part to some elemental biochemical changes that occur to both men and women as they age. Barletta refers to this as “hormone” flip with women experiencing diminishing estrogen levels, paving the way for testosterone to dominate and men seeing a dramatic drop in testosterone levels to the point where, by age 72, men actually have three times more estrogen in their blood than women do.

What does it mean to “Lead with the right and follow with the left”: This is a whole brain approach in designing client acquisition programs and attendant marketing messages which

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draws on the hemisphere principle of communication. This principle acknowledges the need to emotionally engage prospects by positive stimulation of their right brains before trying to persuade them through facts, figures, and logic that are processed primarily in the mills of reason of their left brain.

Sell it with a Story. List the advantages to using stories as a powerful communication and marketing tool.

1. The most effective technique for increasing sales is a story. When you understand the power of using strategically crafted stories, you can achieve amazing results.
2. Becoming a polished public speaker allows you to take advantage of opportunities to speak in front of groups, rather than taking months or years to connect with people one at a time.
3. Becoming an effective, successful speaker gives you credibility
4. People look up to successful and respected public speakers
5. Effective stories create an instant rapport when used one-on-one. A story that directly relates to a customer's unique situation demonstrates your understanding of their needs.
6. Stories can be used to overcome objections. Listen carefully to what your customer is saying. As they speak, they reveal clues that tell you what story to tell. Using the right story at the right time will either overcome the objection or stimulate the customer to tell you a story of their own.

Define:

Conversational Reciprocity: This refers to effectively listening to and acknowledging what another person (friend, client, prospect) has to say, giving them playback to let them know you not only understand what they told you, but that you have been influenced by what they said.

Reciprocal Empathy: Projecting an empathetic personality triggers positive emotional responses in people's minds that give them confidence that you will deliver on the emotional contract. That confidence will be even stronger when you give them reasons for feeling empathetically toward you and your organization.

Reciprocal Vulnerability: Purveyors of products and services often want consumers to lower their defences and admit vulnerability, but are unwilling to reciprocate. This results in weak relationships at best. Professional Consultants should project a personality that demonstrates their willingness to inject vulnerability into their relationships with clients. One way of doing this is to say something about the private side of your life in marketing literature and to share something of a personal nature in conversations with prospects and clients.

Important points to remember in choosing a Seminar Event Facility: The seminar venue warrants careful attention because you choose the venue and so it becomes part of a person's first impression of you. Make sure that ambient lighting is adequate for those who may have dimming eyesight. Be sure that you can darken the area around the projection screen while leaving lights at higher levels so people in the audience can see well enough to take notes. If you

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need to use a microphone, use a lavalier mike so you can move around instead of being moored to a lectern. Having home made cookies, freshly ground coffee, nice music and flowers can create a receptive environment. Sensuous sounds, sites, smells and tastes charm the right brain, where first impressions initially take form and where sales resistance rises and falls.

How to make a great impression on the telephone: The way your business comes across on the telephone is a simple yet powerful marketing tool – one that too many business owners ignore. You should have a standard phone greeting that everyone uses and that is polite and warm. Remember, seniors respond well to emotional cues. How you and your staff handle telephone calls makes a lasting impression and seniors are particularly sensitive to negative impressions. Make it a policy to return your client calls within a specific and reasonable time frame. If the senior is out when you return the call, speak slowly and in a low voice with no background noise when you leave them a voice message. State your name and phone number clearly and repeat information at least once. But don't assume that leaving a message is good enough – it's not. Take the initiative to call your client back until you finally connect. Polite persistence will be remembered. It also pays to keep your voice animated and enthusiastic (unless inappropriate) whether talking to a client, prospect or stranger since the person on the other end of the phone can't see you, their entire impression of you will come from your voice alone.

Success Tips for your Print Media: Doing a mailing once a quarter or twice a year can be a beneficial routine. If you are planning to send out prospecting letters, keep the following simple guidelines in mind. (Courtesy of David Garfinkel, President of Overnight Marketing and one of the most respected copywriters in the United States).

Make your letters personal. Don't send out a stiff, formal, business like letter – instead, write your letter as if you are having a conversation with your prospect. Make sure the letter, when read aloud, comes across like spoken language, not like a business contract.

Focus on the wants and needs of the reader. Make sure you tie at least one of your main points to at least one of the concerns that seniors have expressed. If you can make an emotional connection with your prospects, you'll have a much better shot at getting their attention.

Make your letter easy to read. Know how to use the secret of eye appeal – focus on these three things: **type, short paragraphs, and variety.** Use sans serif typefaces like Arial, and keep the point size fairly large, at least 12 point. Ensure that there's a lot of white space on the page – don't crowd the lines or the margins. Use black ink on white or yellow paper. Keep your paragraphs to about four lines each. Add variety by bolding, underlining, and indenting whole paragraphs to emphasize key words and points for the skim-reader – but avoid heavy use of italics, which are more difficult to read. Then, before you send your letter out, have a customer or qualified prospect take a look to see if the letter is confusing or difficult to read. For some very practical tips on designing for people with impaired vision, visit [http://www.lighthouse.org/print leg.htm](http://www.lighthouse.org/print_leg.htm)

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Be clear. Make sure that your letter is the clearest, simplest expression of what you have to say, and that it uses the fewest possible number of words. Check for acronyms or industry jargon your reader might not be familiar with.

Say “Thank You”. Part of building a solid relationship with your prospects and clients (and suppliers and family and friends too, for that matter) is to send out lots of mail. Here are some suggestions of things you can send out to people you know – you’ll be regarded as a very thoughtful person (if done with sincerity):

- Thank you notes for orders, referrals, or continued business
- Short notes about positive meetings or phone calls
- A newspaper or magazine article about a customer’s business
- Articles or information about a customer’s competition
- An announcement of your new product or service, or staff member and don’t forget to focus on the benefits to the client or prospect
- A newsletter from your company that includes beneficial tips and information for your customers
- A notice of a meeting or a seminar of interest
- Hot leads for your clients or prospects for their business

Finally, a few tips on correspondence to prospects and customers:

- Get to the point in the first sentence, and limit letters to one page
- Use personal, handwritten notes when possible
- Use a postscript (P.S.)” it’s always read!

Basic Tips for Senior-Friendly Websites: If you intend to serve senior clients you’ll want to ensure that your web site is designed with the older viewers in mind. Take a look at sites that serve the market you are going after and see what they are doing. Start with a simple, brief, one page Web Site – just your basic information – and expand from there. Unlike books or brochures, Web Sites are fluid creations that can be changed daily. Take advantage of this. Questions to ask yourself when creating your Web site:

- What’s the goal of this Website; why am I creating it? (to provide brochure-type information, gather email addresses, showcase my services?)
- What are the specific actions you want visitors to take when they are on your site?
- What kind of content will you provide on your site?
- How frequently will you update it?
- Can you get a stream of content from another site, such as real estate or financial information from an affiliated company?
- What are the questions you get asked most frequently by prospects? Create a FAQ area (frequently asked questions) with answers to these questions. It can include a map and directions to your office, information on your upcoming events, your background, etc.

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A problem with some web designers is that they emphasize making a site look good rather than making it work effectively for a variety of users. People with physical, visual, hearing, or cognitive and neurological disabilities may encounter a number of accessibility problems on web sites. Here are some basic tips to make your site senior-friendly:

- Aim for adequate contrast – black text on white background works best
- Use graphics sparingly and minimize the amount of text graphics. Create most of the text as HTML, because HTML text can be readily enlarged through the viewers' web browser controls.
- Put captions on your graphics and tables – many people with sight impairment use speech synthesizer software that reads the web site aloud.
- Make sure that your navigation is clear, with fairly large text. Keep the navigation consistent throughout the site.

Why are referrals considered the 'gold standard' of marketing?

It is common knowledge that the best new business comes through a friend or current customer. This is truer today than ever before. A recent study (Elkin, 2004) reported that 93 percent of respondents valued word-of-mouth referrals. Given the massive amounts of advertising messages we're hit with each day, it's no wonder that direct, personal referrals are the de facto way to cut through the clutter and noise of competing advertisers. Encourage referrals from existing clients and respected friends. Do an exceptional job for your clients and they will be happy to refer others to you – if you only ask!

Here are 25 suggestions (from Jay Conrad Levinson) for things YOU can do to become known as an Expert on Senior Issues in Your Community: Select 10 that you can and will do and keep track of your progress.

1. Write an article for a publication
2. Teach a class
3. Offer to help a friend in your area of expertise
4. Do free consultations
5. Publish an e-newsletter
6. Print a newsletter
7. Recommend your friends', clients', and colleagues' products and services
8. Market their products and services with yours
9. Bring them in on a project you are doing
10. Provide free community help
11. Put information, surveys, tips, and articles on your website
12. Sponsor a charitable event
13. Recommend great books
14. Link your website to other sites
15. Provide referrals
16. Do a radio or TV spot
17. Offer to be a free resource for a prospect any time
18. Send relevant articles to prospects and customers
19. Donate time to a relevant association

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20. Work a booth at a trade show
21. Connect people in all areas of your life
22. Do a free seminar on a popular topic
23. Send a yearly industry review to customers and colleagues
24. Mentor someone
25. Share information beyond your career expertise, such as travel knowledge, hobbies, etc.

Describe How Business Alliances can take YOUR Business to a new level of Success:

If your business is humming, your profits are expanding, and you are busy signing new clients every week, odds are that you have a strong and well-tended network of clients, prospects, and peers. You are probably very visible and active in your community, well known and respected by many people. If your business is languishing, if you find yourself spending much of your work week sitting in your quiet office with an empty inbox and silent phones – well, probably you don't have much of a network.

If you have been sceptical of the whole concept of networking – if the thought of rubbing shoulders with total strangers waving business cards leaves you cold – take heart. There are several fun, enjoyable and simple things you can do to form business friendships and alliances that can make your business soar.

Business alliances differ from traditional Networking. Many professionals hear the work *networking* and cringe. In the 1990's, networking events popped up faster than dot-com companies. Business professionals were taught how to work a room – you'd arrive at a meeting with a bulging pocket of business cards and spend a frantic hour or two handing out your business card to total strangers – and taking their cards and stuffing them into a different pocket. Then you'd get back to your office, empty out your stack of network cards...and wonder who the heck those people were! Don't waste your time doing this sort of thing. Nobody likes predatory networkers – and nobody helps them. Instead, find people that you like, that you admire, and that you have things in common with – then shower them with goodness. This may not sound like a business activity, but it's true that if you go out of your way to help people, they will like and remember you – and it MAY lead them to refer others to you.

What is Fusion Marketing?

In guerrilla marketing, this alliance approach is called *fusion marketing*. It is seen everywhere. You're watching TV and seeing a commercial for McDonald's, which you realize soon is for Coca-Cola, but which eventually becomes an advertisement for the latest Disney movie. When you engage in fusion marketing, you are increasing how often you get the word out about yourself as well as the reach of your marketing. But you are sharing the cost with others, so you are gaining a lot and losing little. As big as fusion marketing is on television and in the other major media, it is most apparent with small business that need the extra mileage from their marketing. Your targets/alliance members should always be individuals with the same prospects as you with the same high standards of integrity, ethics and professionalism.

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Identify other professionals YOU would like to have in your PROFESSIONAL Senior Alliance and list the next steps you will take to create a powerful referral Alliance.

It is all about cooperation instead of competition. The first step in forming business alliances is to find some compatible professionals who also serve the boomer and senior market. Since most people are not comfortable teaming up with direct competitors, focus your efforts on connecting with those professionals who provide a service that is complementary to yours. Think in terms of the whole life of your target market, not simply on the areas that you serve. PROFESSIONAL's in North America are already starting to form successful alliances by connecting with other experts from a number of the following professions:

- Attorneys
- Accountants, bookkeepers, and CGA's
- Nursing and home health care providers
- Realtors and property managers
- Remodelling experts
- Home chefs
- Medical practitioners
- Physical therapists
- Psychologists
- Grief counsellors
- Support groups
- Adult day care centres
- Senior and community centres
- Senior fitness programs
- Elderhostel locations
- Golf and country clubs
- Investment clubs
- Service clubs, like Kiwanis, Knights of Columbus, Rotary
- Non-profit Associations, like the Arthritis Society, Heart & Stroke Foundation, Canadian Cancer Society, Alzheimer's Society, etc.
- Travel agents
- Home-cleaning services
- Local chambers of commerce
- Local business networks
- Churches and other religious or spiritual groups
- Financial planners
- Insurance professionals
- Area agencies on aging
- Gerontologists, geriatricians, and other experts on aging

