

MARKETING: A MUTUALLY-BENEFICIAL PROCESS

I don't care how much you know
until I know how much you care.

(Anonymous)

12.1 Consider Your View Of Marketing: Are You Carrying Some Baggage?

Perhaps the word “marketing” and the related word, “sales,” engenders negative reactions or connotations. Images of brash, high-pressure car salespeople or annoying telemarketers may come to mind. Brash and high-pressure are not part of this chapter’s marketing theme. High pressure does not work when marketing; persistence does.

Worse yet, marketing may suggest unscrupulous individuals. You may have a uninformed aversion to marketing based on general ethical grounds. Marketing may seem unsavory based on experiences outside your technical field because you perceive it requires misrepresentation, if not outright dishonesty. Dishonesty does not work when marketing; honesty does.

On contemplating the business, government, academic, or volunteer sectors, you, as an engineering student or young practitioner, may be repulsed by the thought of “wasting” your professional education by doing “sales” work or even being on the receiving end of any aspect of marketing.

To the extent you learn to view marketing as earning trust and meeting client, owner, and customer needs, which is the essence of this lecture’s approach, you may conclude that not only is marketing an ethical process, but also a satisfying and mutually-beneficial one.

The same hope applies to you, as an experienced practitioner, who has been heavily involved in technical work and now, by choice or assignment, you find yourself involved in your organization’s marketing efforts.

12.2 The Economic Motivation for Marketing Professional Services

Income for professional services firms emanates from essentially one source: clients, owners, and customers who need and are willing to pay for services. These businesses cannot levy tax or unilaterally charge a fee. At what rate does a consulting firm’s marketing program have to generate sales? The answer, of course, depends on many factors, but is heavily influenced by the size of the consulting firm in terms of total number of professional and other employees. How much should

a firm invest in marketing? That, too, is influenced partly by the size of the firm. I am intentionally referring to marketing expenditures as investments, not costs, to emphasize the need to carefully plan, use, and monitor these expenditures so that the return on the investment (ROI) can be determined.

Marketing, to the extent that it leads to contracts for consulting services, is essential for the financial health of a professional services business. And marketing is a major annual investment on the order of a professional service firm's pre-tax profit. Therefore, the marketing effort must be carefully managed, as must other aspects of the consulting business. Marketing should be a continuous, proactive process not a series of sporadic reactions when the firm "needs work."

While marketing is needed within all employment sectors, it is essential in the business sector. It provides the economic life blood. However, you may still be inclined, given your young age, to ask "So what has that got to do with me?" If you think marketing is that group of creative writers and graphics personnel and those individuals with out-going personalities over there on the other side of the building, than perhaps you just don't get it. As marketing consultant Henry Beckwith bluntly put it, "Marketing is not a department, it is your business."

12.3 Marketing and Selling: Different But Related

Kolter and Fox (1985) state that "Marketing is the effective management by an institution of its exchange relations with its various markets and publics." According to Cronk, in Smallowitz and Molyneux (1987), "Marketing is creating the climate that will bring in future business." W. Coxe says "Marketing is to selling as fishing is to catching" (Smallowitz and Molyneux 1987).

Use of the word "institution" in the first definition suggests breadth of organizations that should have a marketing program which, as indicated earlier, includes businesses, government entities, educational institutions, and volunteer organizations. The second definition suggests a major, long-term effort, as in, we cannot create a climate overnight. The third definition begins to draw a sharp distinction between "marketing" and "selling." It suggests that we may be able to diminish selling; at least put it on the "back burner."

"Marketing is to selling as fishing is to catching," which suggests a marked difference between marketing and selling, let's look further at that difference.

Selling must be part of, and the result of, something much bigger and that something is marketing. Marketing is all those things we do to set the stage for selling just as fishing is all those things we do to set the stage – set the hook – for catching. An individual or organization must undertake a range of activities under the general umbrella of marketing to achieve sales, just as one must carry out many activities under the general umbrella of fishing in order to actually catch fish.

In other words, if an individual or organization attempts to simply sell without seeing selling in the context of other activities, the individual or organization is not likely to be successful. Management expert Drucker said, “The aim of marketing is to make selling superfluous” (Kolter and Fox 1985). This definition, like the one about marketing and fishing, reinforces the idea that selling is only one part of marketing and suggests that if marketing is done well, sales will almost occur naturally. Incidentally, some professionals use the term business development instead of marketing. That’s fine, but you should see business development, like marketing, as being much bigger and more comprehensive than sales.

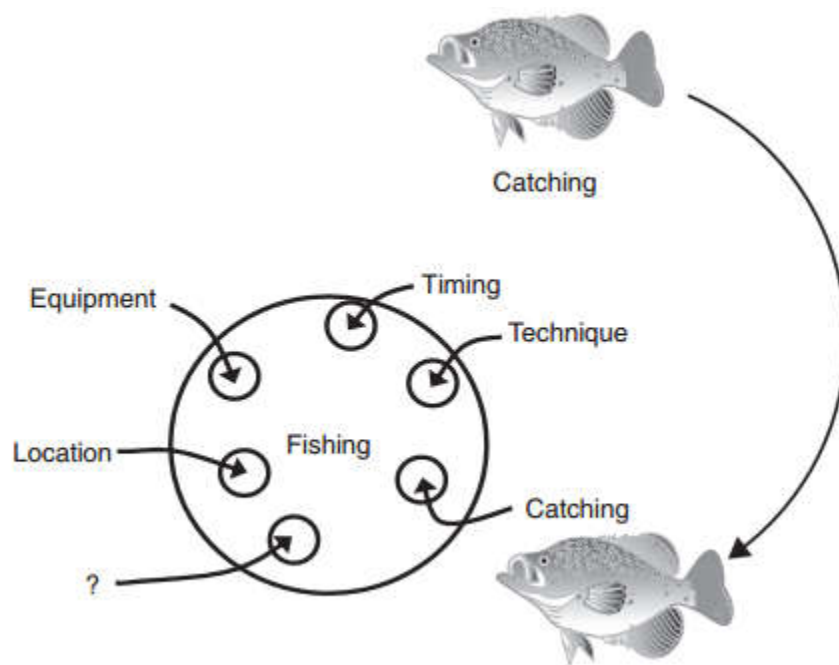


Figure 12.1 Catching is not the same as fishing.

An effective marketing program is like a tasty cake because its ingredients are carefully selected and combined. And while sales are the frosting on the cake, they are supported by the cake, the

cake's ingredients, and how they were combined (Galler, 2010). Get the cake's recipe right and then everything comes out right—including the frosting.

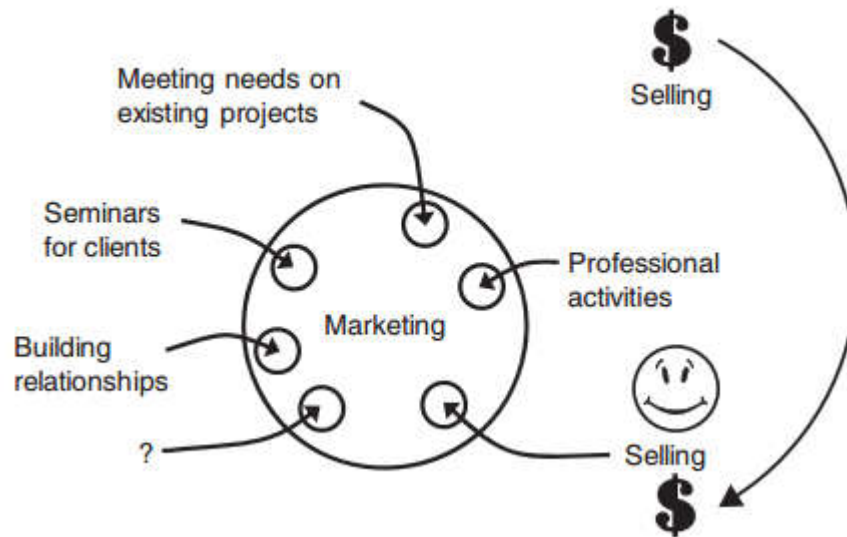


Figure 12.2 Selling is not the same as marketing.

12.4 A Simple, Powerful Marketing Model

The Model

Marketing—because it is people-intensive—is complex. Individuals and organizations need a model to guide their approach. Marketing often leads to major setbacks. Individuals and organizations need a model to keep everything in perspective.

Stephen Covey's in his book, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* Covey notes that the Greek philosophy, for what might now be called win/win interpersonal and inter-organizational relations, was based on ethos, pathos, and logos which are explained as follows:

- **Ethos:** Covey says “Ethos is your personal credibility, the faith people have in your integrity and competency. It’s the trust that you inspire.” Ethos is your ability to earn trust. “Contrary to what most people believe, trust is not some soft, illusive quality that you either have or don’t have,” according to motivational author Mac Anderson (2007), “rather trust is a pragmatic, tangible, actionable asset that you can create.” In the ethos step, we are

typically presented with a clean slate, a trust-neutral situation, that is, neither mistrust or trust. And we take it from there based on our words and actions.

- **Pathos:** Covey states that “Pathos is the empathic side—it’s the feeling. It means you are in alignment with the emotional thrust of another’s communication.” Pathos is your connection with others to the point where they will share their wants and needs and you will understand them.
- **Logos:** “Logos is the logic, the reasoning part of the presentation,” according to Covey. Logos means that you, as the offerer of professional services, and the client, owner, or customer in need of professional services, that is, the prospect, simply and openly take the logical action.

Covey emphasizes that these three elements of win/win interpersonal and inter-organizational relations must occur in the indicated order. That is, trust must be established first, then needs will be expressed and understood, and finally a logical follow-up occurs.

Applying the Model

The ethos-pathos-logos approach was originally presented almost 2000 years ago by Aristotle (Adler 1983). Nothing really new here—except the application to marketing. So, how does this become a marketing model? To begin to answer this question, refer to the sequence in the upper half of Figure 12.3. View ethos, pathos, and logos from your perspective as the offerer of professional services. Think about what you are trying to do as you meet and interact with a potential client, owner, or customer.

- Under ethos, you want to inspire or earn trust. So you practice principled behavior.
- For pathos, you seek alignment with the other person’s real wants and needs. So you ask questions and listen carefully and empathetically.
- Under logos, if there is a match between what he or she wants and/or needs and what you offer, you “sell.”

Now, while looking at the lower half of Figure 12.3, view ethos, pathos, and logos from the perspective of the prospect. What is he or she looking for? What does he or she want?

- Under ethos, he or she is watching you. Can you be trusted?

- For pathos, if you can be trusted, he or she wants to explain wants and need —wants you to understand those wants and needs.
- Under logos, if there is a match between what he or she wants and what you have to offer, the potential client, owner, or customer wants to “buy.”

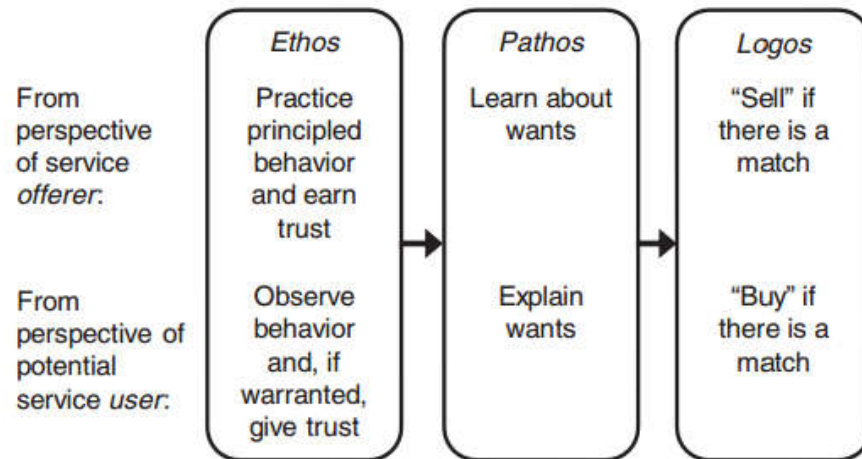


Figure 12.3 The ethos-pathos-logos steps in the marketing model may be viewed from the perspective of the service offerer and from the perspective of the potential service user.

Please appreciate that most prospects want, some desperately, to find service providers they can trust. They are increasingly faced with digging through voluminous data and information while seeking knowledge; weighing competing infrastructure needs; dealing with many vocal and varied stakeholders; satisfying demanding local, state, and federal regulations; and having too little money. Most clients, owners, and customers want a trusted advisor. Who do you want to deal with when involved in a major purchase like a condominium, a car, or a stock? Someone you can trust!

You might be thinking, this model may have potential. But, I am not comfortable with those 2000 year-old Greek words. Then describe and think about the model using six common words as follows:

- Ethos – Earn trust
- Pathos – Learn needs
- Logos – Close deal

contribute—ways you could use your education, experience, contacts, knowledge, skills, and positive attitude.

Do this, not just because it is part of your organization’s marketing plan, but because you want to be a contributing member of your community. While contributing to local professional and business organizations, you will have an excellent vantage point to see and hear about professional service opportunities for your organization. You, as a young or not so young, even novice marketer should get actively involved in one professional or one business organization.

Historic Note

John Dillinger, was a notorious American bank robber. As the story goes, they asked Dillinger why he robbed banks. His response: Because that’s where the money is! Similarly, local professional and business organizations are where the opportunities are for your business, government, academic, or volunteer organization. Dillinger went where the money was. You need to go where the service leads are.

As part of your personal marketing plan, determine how you can learn even more about your organization with emphasis on services offered. Consider climbing out of your silo, looking outside of your box, and adopting a broader view of your job.

Maybe you could walk over to the other side of your organization’s offices and find out what they are doing.

Think about volunteering to accompany senior members of your organization who are attending an evening meeting at which they will present a proposal for professional services to a prospect. Perhaps you could assist at that meeting and learn more about your organization and marketing on the way to, at, and on the way back from the meeting. You will gain valuable insight into a process that some view as a mystery.

As part of your personal marketing plan that is aligned with your employer’s marketing plan, begin to develop an “elevator speech,” a “one liner,” or a “tagline.” So what is an “elevator speech?” It briefly, accurately, and convincingly describes your services with emphasis on the benefits to those you serve. Why “elevator?” Because we sometimes meet someone on, or as we get into an elevator, and they may ask “so what do you do?” Plan to be ready with a meaningful answer. An elevator speech is an important part of your personal marketing plan. Your elevator speech, and hopefully the elevator speeches of others in your organization, should stress the value or benefit you all

provide. That is, focus less on what you “do” and more on how what you “do” might be valued by or benefit others. Keep your elevator speech short and simple. Create an elevator speech about your organization that communicates one or more essential benefits.

Learn the Marketing Language

Your technical specialty has its terminology, so does marketing. Some terms frequently used in the consulting engineering business, and adaptable beyond, are defined below where they are listed in the approximate order they would arise or occur in the marketing process. Some of the terms are also defined in the preceding chapter and are repeated here for your convenience.

Prospect: A qualified potential client, owner, or customer. That is, an organization or an individual in that organization that a professional services firm would like to serve based on the organization’s or the individual’s favorable profile as defined by characteristics such as the desire for assistance, reputation, stability, financial capacity, and willingness to communicate.

Lead: A prospect’s want or need that a professional services firm may be able to fill.

Request for Qualifications (RFQ): The formal request from a prospect to a professional services firm inviting the latter to provide its Statement of Qualifications.

Statement of Qualifications (SOQ): A document that presents the qualifications of a professional services firm emphasizing its experience on projects similar to that being considered by a client, owner, or customer. An SOQ typically does not address the manner in which the consultant, if selected, would approach the specific project. SOQs usually include basic information about the consulting firm such as its size; office location or locations; services offered; clients, owners, and customers served; references; experience with emphasis on projects similar to that about to be undertaken by organization receiving the SOQ; and resumes of selected professional staff which include descriptions of participation in relevant projects.

Request for Proposal (RFP): The formal request from a prospect to a professional services firm inviting the latter to submit a proposal to provide services. The RFP typically includes items such as a letter of explanation and invitation; a description of the project; an explanation of the required scope of services (e.g., feasibility study, preliminary engineering, preparation of plans and specifications, construction management, start up, education and training); a project schedule; and the due date for the proposal. The RFP may also include items such as a list of available related

reports, studies, and investigations; a description of data and information available from or known by the prospect; the name of a contact person; an indication of whether or not the proposers should provide an estimate of the cost of services; and a description of Youth Business Enterprise (YBE), Women's Business Enterprise (WBE), and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) requirements.

Proposal: A document prepared by a professional services firm, in response to an RFP, and hopefully with a clear understanding of the project requirements.

It describes what the firm will do, how they will do it, how long it will take, and, possibly, what it will cost. In a sense, the project is worked out "on paper" as part of the proposal preparation process.

Organization chart or "Org" chart: A diagram, often included in a consultant's proposal. It typically shows key members of the prospect's organization; key members of the professional services team, including any sub consultants; the roles of all individuals; and the manner in which they will interact.

Price-Based Selection (PBS): A client, owner, or customer selects a professional service firm solely or mostly on the basis of price (fees plus expenses).

Qualifications-based selection (QBS): A prospect, after evaluating and shortlisting firms based on their qualifications, selects the top-ranked firm for price negotiation based on a detailed project scope. If an agreement cannot be reached, which is uncommon, negotiations begin with the second most qualified firm and so on (Chinowsky and Kingsley 2009).

Two-envelope method: The process by which an organization requiring consulting services invites two or more professional service firms to submit proposals. Each firm is asked to provide their proposal in two envelopes. One envelope is to contain their proposal, without their cost. The other envelope should include the cost of the service, that is, estimated fee plus expenses. On receiving the envelope pairs from each interested consulting firm, the organization seeking a consultant ostensibly opens just the proposal envelopes, evaluates the firms based on the proposals, and prioritizes the firms. Then the second envelope for the top-ranked firm is opened and, if the cost is reasonable, the prospect and the firm negotiate. If they are not successful, then the client, owner, or customer opens the second envelope for the second ranked firm and so on.

Platinum Rule: This “rule” says do unto others as they would have done unto them. It contrasts with the traditional Golden Rule which is do unto others as we would have done unto us. The value of the Platinum Rule in marketing and in managing projects is that it focuses the service provider on those being served.

Schedule Marketing Tasks

So you have a personal marketing plan. Now you need to make it happen; your plan must be implemented. Notice that creating a marketing plan, the first of the dozen suggestions, is separate from this suggestion, acting on it. Your well-intentioned marketing efforts will compete with billable project work and/or other job responsibilities. Therefore, you need the self-discipline to schedule marketing tasks. Select your favorites such as calling a colleague, having lunch with a contact, attending a business or professional society meeting, writing an article, or volunteering to assist with a proposal. Schedule them and do them! How about, committing to doing one marketing task per day or two per week?

To aid you in being proactive, consider the following questions you might ask yourself or others to keep you tuned into marketing—to enable you to do some marketing every day:

What is the next potential project with this client, owner, or customer? Be sure to look and listen both within and outside of your specialty area. You don’t have to be an expert in a technical area to recognize a want or need and, therefore, a potential project. What other existing or potential clients, owners, or customers might be interested in the service we are providing to a particular client, owner, or customer?

Who else might value this service?

How might your organization leverage, re-package, or combine existing services to add value and meet evolving or new wants and needs of those you serve or want to serve?

How could your organization “move up the food chain,” that is, become more of a strategic advisor? The goal is to increasingly help those you serve decide what to do next and, of course, continue to help them do those things that you do well.

What current wants and needs will decline and what new wants and needs will replace them? Answering this question requires a “crystal ball”—it’s a tough one. Are you or your organization

on top of it? You better be—change is inevitable. Accordingly, in addition to finding out what those you serve want now or need now, you should ask them what they think they will want or need five years from now.

Find Common Ground

Starting a relationship with a stranger—a potential client, owner, or customer—a potential friend—requires finding some common ground. You need to “connect,” to develop rapport. This is not hard to do because each of us is connected, in some way, to any of us. You do not have to be an extrovert to “connect.”

Common, possible points of connection include education, family, sports, and travel. There are many more such as art, aspirations, the economy, boating, investing, music, philosophy, real estate, politics, and religion. Yes, I know, that some say we are “not supposed to discuss politics and religion.” However, certain people enjoy intelligent discussion of these topics. If you do, be open to finding others that share your preferences. Typically, these connections have nothing to do with engineering or whatever you do professionally. However, a little connection—a small piece of common ground—could become a part of the foundation of a relationship. Contemplate the following relevant advice, which is adapted from a statement by Howard Schultz the Starbucks founder: “We aren’t in the engineering business serving people. We are in the people business serving engineering.”

You may think you need to do something “big” to connect, to find or create common ground. Perhaps arrange 18 holes of golf or an evening with spouses or significant others at the theater. Instead, consider little connecting acts that are directly tailored to the specific preferences of the other person. Little things mean a lot when the little things indicate that you have listened to what the other person said, that is, you’re aware of some of their likes and dislikes and interests. Two actual examples:

- A consultant learns that a prospect enjoys early morning breakfast discussions. So does the consultant. They have been doing this for years and “take turns” paying. Note that both enjoy the early morning discussions—nothing superficial here.
- A consultant, who spends time in Kisumu, learns that a client, owner, or customer has an interest in Kisumu real estate. The consultant, while in Kisumu, visits realtors, the Chamber

of Commerce, and other sources to gather information about the area, in general, and real estate, in particular. The consultant “snail mails” or emails a large packet of material to the individual.

Neither of the above actions are “big ticket” items. Neither requires any compromise or sacrifice. The described actions are simply “little things” that “mean a lot.” Such little actions indicate that you listen, care, act, and connect and you value the relationship on a person-to-person basis and not just “as business.”

Earn Trust

No matter what else you do, or do not do, in the marketing arena, always place a premium on earning trust. Recall that “earn trust” is the first step in the three-step earn trust, learn needs, and close deal marketing model described earlier in this lecture. Earning trust is the foundation of the suggested model. First, the marketing process begins with earning trust. Second, trust is, to quote Mac Anderson again, “a pragmatic, tangible, actionable asset.” And, finally, earning trust takes by far the most time.

So how do we “earn trust?” We have many choices and some are simple and require little effort. In fact, big trust is earned mostly by lots of small acts. And you, the novice or new comer to marketing, can unilaterally do some of them. Consider these “earn trust” examples that you can practice:

- Determine the preferred communication mode of your current or potential clients, owners, or customers. Don’t assume your preferred mode is theirs.
- Share articles, emails, websites, books, and other materials with your contacts based on what you have learned about their interests.
- Compliment them on their achievements.
- Ask for their assistance because it reflects your knowledge of their competences and your confidence in them.
- Co-author and/or co-present articles and papers with existing and/or potential clients, owners, or customers.
- Admit mistakes, without excuses, and suggest remedial actions. “Admit your errors before someone else exaggerates them,” is the advice of physician Andrew Mason.

Pass tests. You will hit bumps and sometimes have accidents on the road to earning trust—view these as opportunities to demonstrate your honesty and integrity. Consider this scenario: You are earning the trust of a prospect. Finally, they have a project and ask if your organization can do it. You could cobble something together and probably complete the project. However, it is not one of your organization’s strong suits. What do you do? Take on the project? Or refer them to someone else because that would be in their best interest? What’s more important to you and your organization, a project or an evolving connection, a short-term financial gain or a long-term, mutually trustful relationship?

Ask-Ask-Ask: The Power of Questions

The most effective “marketers” habitually ask lots of questions. These successful professionals would tend to agree with management guru Peter Drucker who said: “My greatest strength as a consultant is to be ignorant and ask a few questions.” Ask questions to learn about a potential project. Also ask questions to learn more about the organization’s representative. It is one way you will find common ground. Each of your organization’s existing or potential clients, owners, and customers views you and your services in a unique manner. As explained by author and management consultant Tom Peters: “[Clients] perceive service in their own unique, idiosyncratic, emotional, irrational, end-of-the-day, and totally human terms.” And how can you determine any given client’s, owner’s, or customer’s “unique, idiosyncratic, emotional, irrational, and end-of-the-day” view? Ask, listen, and ask some more!

Front End the Asking

Front end your question asking, that is, concentrate your questioning in the early part of a potential relationship or project as illustrated in Figure 12.5.

The horizontal axis depicts marketing steps from prospect and lead identification through the contracting, that is, when a contract project begins. Again, the emphasis is on asking and listening, relative to telling, especially early on.

If you like to “tell,” wait until later. But, you may be thinking, I like to share my ideas. I want to show the prospect how much I know and how much our organization can do. Control yourself. You can do your telling later. Heed the advice of commentator Andy Rooney who said: “In a conversation, keep in mind that you’re more interested in what you have to say than anyone else.”

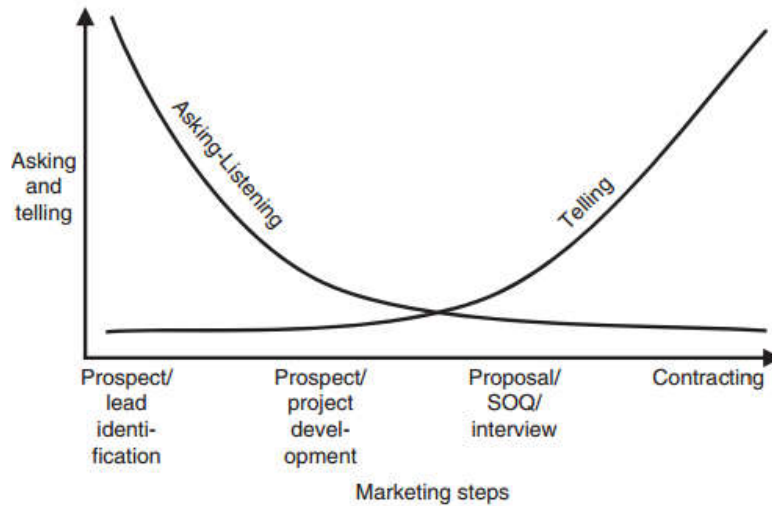


Figure 12.5 Front end the asking and listening.

Listening is hard, at least for some of us. Steven Berglas (2009), in an article titled “Learning the Art of Listening,” claims that entrepreneurs, in particular, have difficulty really listening. Reasons include:

- I’ve “been there, done that” and know what you want or need.
- I’m the smartest person in the room. Enough of your ideas on the problem and its solution.
- I’m a doer, not a thinker. Let’s get on with it.

If that describes you, slow down—slow way down!

The Power of Questions

Question asking is a powerful habit because it almost always provides the asker, and often the answerer, with many benefits. Having referred to “power,” please recognize that I am not advocating using questions to misrepresent, manipulate, or exert pressure. Instead, I believe that questions enable you to clearly define wants and needs so that you can ultimately fulfill them. With that in mind, consider five “powers” of questions (adapted from Leeds 2000):

- Questions create an obligation to respond: Remember, in class, when a teacher or professor asked you a question and then was silent? Most people’s natural inclination is to fill that silence with something and, therefore, we do our best to answer the question. Silence is uncomfortable when a question is asked. This is what I mean by saying that asking a

question creates an obligation to respond. I am not suggesting that we try to cause discomfort but am simply noting a natural tendency.

- Questions stimulate the thinking of both the asker and answerer: Preparing and asking questions causes you to think more deeply and broadly about the organization that may use your services. Similarly, their thinking is enhanced as they respond to your questions.
- Questions provide valuable data, information, and knowledge: Recognize that while your questions reveal your concern for the other party and reflect your expertise, those questions also provide you with the data, information, and knowledge needed to serve that prospect, if and when you get the opportunity.
- Questions put the asker “in the driver’s seat.” You can use questions to direct a conversation in a direction that could be potentially useful to you and the client, owner, or customer you hope to serve.
- Questions enable people to persuade themselves: Thoughtful questions and the thinking they stimulate tend to define issues and move all parties toward resolution. As they say, “a problem well defined is half solved.” More specifically, your questions can help you and the prospect ascertain values, discover and/or elaborate on issues, reveal wants, identify needs, define milestones, formulate conceptual options, and select a course of action.

Confronting Barriers to Asking Questions

Having considered the preceding case for asking lots of questions, you may be reluctant to do so. Your reluctance may be caused by three barriers. The first is a reluctance to question authority, that is, authority figures. Recognize that most of us are authorities, just on different things. The person you interact with, who represents a potential client, owner, or customer, is an authority on something or some things. Similarly, you as a professional, are an authority. By asking questions, you are not questioning the authority of the other person. Instead, you are reflecting yours.

The second barrier is fear of appearing uninformed or poorly prepared. Consider this scenario: Tomorrow morning you awake with a pain in your chest and are rushed to the emergency room at the local hospital. The emergency room doctor asks: “What’s wrong?” You answer, “chest pain,” and the doctor says, “we are immediately performing triple by-pass heart surgery.” The pain aside, how would you feel? Might you want the doctor to ask more questions as part of a careful diagnosis of your problem before deciding how to solve the problem? My point: Asking questions does not

indicate you are uninformed or poorly prepared. It should mean just the opposite, that is, because if you are well informed, you know what to ask. The type and number of questions you ask reveal your expertise.

The third barrier is concern with appearing rude. Someone said “I don’t care how much you know, until I know how much you care.” You demonstrate civility, good manners, and care by preparing and asking thoughtful, probing questions. Of course, the questions are asked in a polite, sensitive manner.

Assume question asking, as part of your marketing contribution, makes you uncomfortable, for one or more of the reasons described here or for other reasons. Then ask the other person or persons for permission. For example, you might say “may I ask you some questions about this topic?” I have yet to have anyone say no.

Mix Question Types and Drill Down

Mix closed and open-ended questions.

Talk to Strangers

When we were children, our parents probably advised us not to talk to strangers. However, we are no longer children, presumably can take care of ourselves, and, therefore, may be open to this marketing advice: Talk to strangers. In her book, *How to Work a Room*, consultant Susan Roane (1988) challenges readers to “work the world.” She urges us to adopt the philosophy that we are surrounded by opportunities to make contacts, ask questions, and learn. But we often have to take the initiative, whether we are at our place of work, doing personal errands in our community, sitting in an airport between flights, or attending a conference.

Will talking to strangers always provide useful information or a new contact? Roane says: “That’s not the point. The point is to extend yourself to people, be open to whatever comes your way, and have a good time in the process. One never knows . . . The rewards go to the risk-takers, those who are willing to put their egos on the line and reach out—to other people and to a richer and fuller life for themselves.” As hockey great Wayne Gretsky said, “You miss 100 percent of the shots you never take.”

Stress Benefits, Not Features

Recall the earlier discussion of elevator speeches where the emphasis was on the benefits of services. That idea extends well beyond elevator speeches. We engineers and other technical professionals tend to get wrapped up in the processes and tools we use. As important as processes and tools are, think of the other party, the prospect. Stress benefits, not features, outputs, not inputs, unless the person or persons you are communicating with explicitly expresses interest in features. Anticipate the “so what?” test.

Consider two examples:

- Feature: Our groundwater model includes both confined and unconfined aquifers. So what? So we can cost-effectively determine the impact of new wells on existing wells in highly-complex situations.
- Feature: We have 26 offices in five countries and we offer 11 specialty areas. So what? So we can deliver services locally while drawing expertise globally when needed.

Focus on Existing Clients, Owners, and Customers

While we need to continuously seek new organizations to serve, our emphasis should be on serving existing clients, owners, and customers. As a young professional, you are, as illustrated in Figure 12.6, which is based on an idea from Wahby (1993), often there—under that client tree—usually not alone, but nevertheless there.

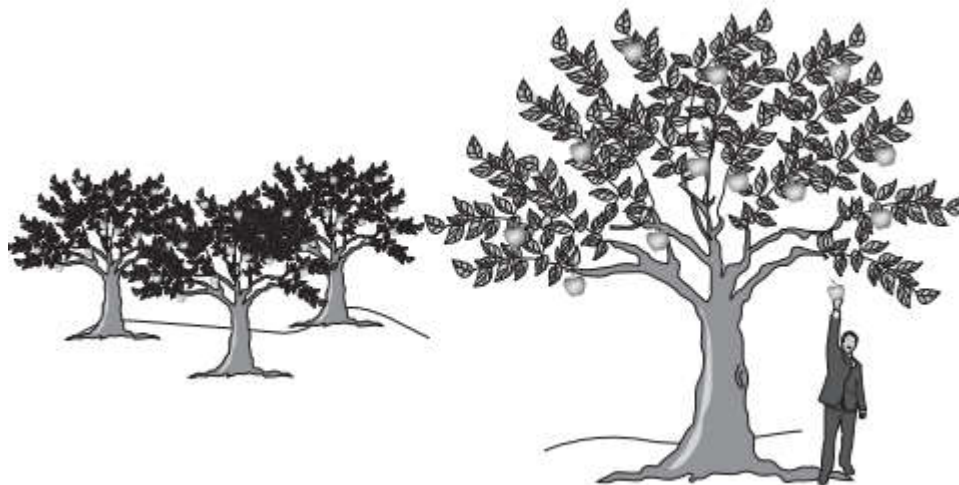


Figure 12.6 If a project is an apple, a client is an apple tree.

The apple is your project, the project you are working on. Take care of it. Every now and then look up. If you help your project team do quality work, that is, meet project requirements—deliverables, schedule, budget, and other expectations—you will earn the right to pick additional apples. There are other orchards and many other trees, as suggested by the grove on the left side of Figure 12.6. However, first take care of the tree right above your head.

Why do I suggest concentrating on existing clients, owners, and customers? Because the cost of earning and securing a new project with an existing client, owner, or customer is probably one-tenth the cost of obtaining the first project with a new client, owner, or customer. All the more reason to carefully care for those individual and organizations you are now serving. The relatively low cost of that care goes to the bottom line.

Another way of explaining the suggestion to focus on existing clients, owners, and customers is to emphasize what might be called “farmer” marketing—taking care of those you are already serving. That is, cultivating relationships, exploring new ways to nourish them, harvesting additional projects, and reaping referrals from current clients, owners, and customers to potential new ones. Clearly, we also need to invest some resources in developing new prospects. This is what might be called “hunter” marketing and it requires loving the thrill of the hunt (Hewlett-Packard 1995). Each organization should search for the optimum mix of farmer and hunter marketing with major emphasis on the former.

Help to Establish Multiple-Level Links

The reason for creating multiple links between your organization and the organizations you serve, as illustrated in Figure 12.7, is that you want to be well connected to them. The relationship between your and their organization should not be dependent on only one link. That is too fragile. Contact personnel in your or the client, owner, or customer organization may retire, take on different functions, or move on to new employers. Seek multiple links at two or more levels.

You, as a young practitioner, can help with this link-building process. For example, the top link in Figure 12.7 may be composed of your “boss,” on the left, and his/her counterpart, on the right. That could be you, on the bottom left of Figure 12.7, and your counterpart, on the lower right. With time, the two of you will move up together into decision-making positions. One or both of you are likely to “move up” in current and/or other organizations. Multiple-level links help you

and your organization become even more aware of the wants and needs of those you serve and of prospects and, as a result, enable your organization to secure new projects. Links also assist in executing projects.

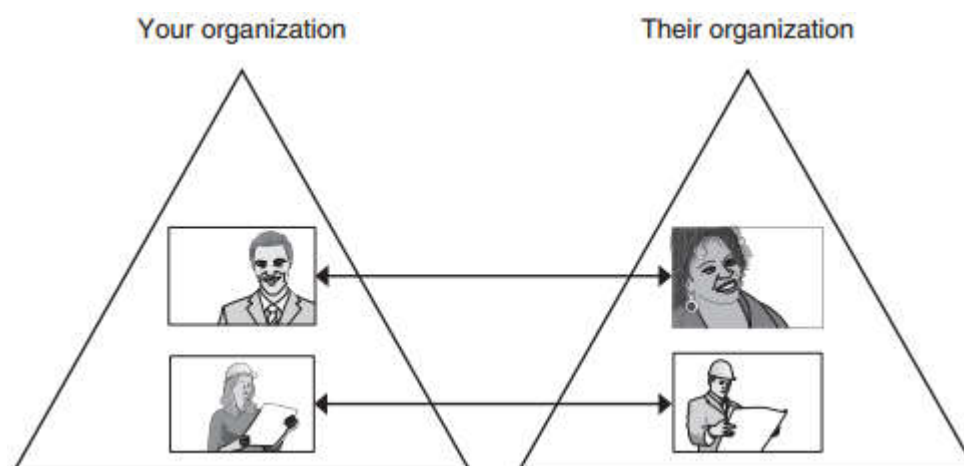


Figure 12.7 Help to create multiple links between your organization and those you serve or want to serve.

Proactively Establish the Next Step

Assume that you, in your marketing role, have applied some of the tools and techniques discussed here. Furthermore, you've "connected" with your counterpart at the prospect organization. He or she has told you about a want or need for a future project or you suspect there is a need that your prospect isn't yet aware of. Now what? Stay in the driver's seat—nail the follow-up! Don't leave him or her in control of future communication. Instead, be assertive and indicate what you are prepared to do next to be helpful. In other words, avoid the types of neutral or reactive comments shown in the left column of **Table 12.1**. Instead, proactively arrange follow-ups using statements like those in the right column. Another way of saying this is to recognize that polite persistence prevails (Galler 2011) and speak accordingly. Of course, if you sense or hear push back, then adjust your approach accordingly.

Table 14.1 Proactively establish the follow-up.

No	Yes
“Please call if the material interests you”	“I will call next week to get your response”
“Let me know if you want more information”	“Now that I know more about your needs, I will send you . . .”
“Hopefully we can get together again”	“Could we meet next Wednesday when I will be back in town?”

Selectively Share Data, Information, and Knowledge

Most of the preceding marketing tools and techniques, any or all of which you can use, result in acquiring data, information, and knowledge about existing and potential clients, owners, and customers and their current and future wants and needs. This is good! Now what? Habitually document what you learn as you learn it. That is, unless you have an extremely good memory, always write it down. Even if you do have an unusually-effective memory, the written word is easier to share. When meeting with someone, take skeleton notes. Ask permission, if that makes you feel more comfortable. I almost always do so, that is, habitually ask permission and take rough notes.

Immediately after that discussion, elaborate on—fill in—your skeleton notes. You might do this in your car in the parking lot, at a coffee shop on your way back to the office, or on the plane. Do it before you return to the office while the discussion is fresh in your mind. Furthermore, by the time you get back to the office, other activities and tasks will demand your attention.

Then leverage what you have learned and documented by selectively sharing it. Become known as a person who, as a matter of habit, carefully shares data, information, and knowledge about prospects and possible projects. Others will reciprocate. This “document and share” habit applies across the board. It should be practiced by seller-doers, client champions, and members of management. Share laterally, down, and up. When in doubt, share—subject, of course, to not sharing what was given in confidence. Why do I stress documenting and sharing? Because it works, even though it is often not done. For example, in 1998, O’Dell and Grayson published the book *If Only We Knew What We Know*. Their message: Most organizations, to their detriment, do a poor job of sharing data, information, and knowledge.

12.6 What Works and What Doesn't Work

You will observe individuals in the business, government, academic, and volunteer sectors, who are effective in the marketing arena—and some who aren't. Learn from all of them. Reflect on what you see and hear. Table 12.2 summarizes my “what works and what doesn't work” lessons learned.

Table 12.1 Experience reveals “what works” and “what doesn't work” in marketing.

What Works	What Doesn't Work
Listening—to earn trust and learn needs	Talking—about what we do
Building relationships	Pursuing projects
Asking questions	Pontificating
Researching, qualifying, and ranking prospects	Viewing all prospects as being the “same”
Active involvement in targeted professional/business organizations	Passive membership in randomly-selected professional/business organizations
Keeping current—technically and otherwise	Maintaining status quo
Getting leads and following up	Getting leads and expecting others to follow-up
“Face time”	Mass mailings
What you see is what you get	Bait and switch
Illustrating benefits	Pushing features
Multiple-level contacts with organizations that being served	Single-level contact
Written materials featuring white space, graphics, photographs, color, variety	Lots of words
Suggesting program and project approaches	Reacting to RFPs
Client, owner, and customer-oriented project descriptions, SOQs, proposals, and interviews	Consultant-oriented project descriptions, SOQs, proposals, and interviews
Tailoring to clients, owners, and customers	Boilerplating from files
Defining and meeting requirements	Talking “quality” and spewing slogans
Preparing project plans and sharing with those being served	“Winging it”
Delivering locally while drawing globally	Attempting to do it all locally
Admitting errors and fixing them	Blaming others
Asking clients, owners, and customers how they want to communicate	Using firm's preferred mode of communication
Delivering draft deliverables to clients, owners, and customers throughout the project	Dumping deliverables on clients, owners, and customers at the end of the project
Caring for existing clients, owners, and customers by performing on their projects	Neglecting existing clients, owners, and customers while “chasing” new ones
“Rifle”	“Shotgun”
Making promises and delivering	Breaking promises and offering excuses
Persistence	Instant success
Saying “thank you”	-

Final Word

Be open to the positive perspective on marketing presented in this chapter and, if you are able to do that, then proactively participate for your and your organization's benefit. Simply stated, marketing means mutually-beneficial exchanges of wants/needs and services or products.

Recognize that marketing is much more than selling and is costly and, therefore, should be a carefully managed process that involves analysis, planning, implementation, and control; it is not a collection of random actions started when "we need the work." Adopt a marketing model that works, perhaps the one described in this lecture. As part of your marketing efforts, select from and apply marketing tools and techniques like those described here.

The game of business is very much like the game of tennis.

Those who fail to master the basics of serving well, usually lose.

(Anonymous)