



International Association of Facilitators  
**The Art and Mastery of Facilitation – Worlds of Change**  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada  
April 27 – 30, 2000



## World of Professional Discipline

### MARKETING WITH SPIRIT©: CLOSING THE DEAL: FROM MARKETING TO SALES

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### **The Story**

In the 1950's and 60's, one of the themes that rang through my childhood and growing up years came from my father, an entrepreneur. His motto was, "never trust a salesman". Once old enough to work, I remember having a strong curiosity about salespeople. They seemed to have a great deal of fun working and many were interesting conversationalists. They were out of the office much of the time, went to nice restaurants and some of them traveled. They also seemed to be treated well by management and made more money than a lot of the people in the organization. I wanted to be like "them", except I would be a salesperson who would operate from a base of integrity. So began my journey.

With more than two decades passed, while working as a vice president, director of marketing for a radio station I co-created, I woke up with a dream in the middle of the night. My partner, the president of the station, and I were Bonnie and Clyde. We were hiding behind a big



rock shooting people as they walked by. In reality, our start-up radio station became successful very quickly because we were hard working, fast talking, sharp salesmen from a big city now in a small town. Our sales tactics worked. We were “knocking them dead”.

The following morning I resigned from the station and began the next leg of my marketing and sales journey. My initial intent was to explore the differences between being aggressive and being assertive. This process led into an adventure of discovery. I discovered what a salesperson really contributes to the world of commerce: that of information, service and support. Following that awareness came the process of how to put language around the individual characteristics of the product or service being sold. Those words needed to be the very words that the customer would use to describe their particular needs. It is this process that will be addressed within the workshop.

## **The Theory**

### Awareness

Starting with the recognition and acceptance of “we get what we give”, and “ what goes around, comes around”, when we take this premise into the arena of marketing and sales, the sale is the end result of the marketing efforts. We then recognize that the quantity and quality of our sales are only as strong as the quality of our marketing activities.

As the business developer and the product deliverer, we must do the necessary homework to produce the reality of our vision, to attain our sales goals. Our homework needs to be addressed from the standpoint of the gifts we bring to the selling environment and the challenges we need to work through to increase our gifts. It is the result of these characteristics that become what we are left with when trying to develop a contract. To take the situation one step further, at the point of trying to close the sale, we will have the components of a client relationship that is rooted in our initial interactions germinated from our marketing endeavors. It

then becomes clear that we must take a closer look at exactly how we position our product or services and maintain the consistency of our activities.

### Marketing Prerequisites

Recognizing that the selling process is the external function of the internal marketing process, process-oriented business developers usually increase their chances of achieving and exceeding their sales goals by taking a self-inventory. This inner awareness produces a greater level of clarity, confidence, centeredness and comfort going into the selling environment. Two major components will be explored within this body of work: Marketing Belief System and Marketable Uniqueness™.

- Marketing Belief System

As with any belief system a person carries, our Marketing Belief System is both a conscious and unconscious thought process brought to the arena of cultivating and developing client relationships. The attitudes we hold around myths of the salesperson can be unconscious blocks for producing consciously identified goals. The values we place around the selling process contribute to our end result. As we bring our unconscious information to the surface, we are then able to recognize the attitudes we carry in our marketing and selling practice.

By working with heightened self awareness we are able to create options that can produce opportunities to work through obstacles, choose new desired behavior and begin to develop new habits that will provide whatever it is we envision for ourselves. When tapping into our inner belief system we can discover our own answers to produce desired outcomes, even if marketing and selling are not our expertise. The inner process of awareness provides many answers to our own questions.

Our beliefs, attitudes and values are given voice to when writing marketing materials, straight through to the closing of a sale. They also become evident in the ongoing development



of a business relationship. As clarity increases and self-confidence becomes stronger, we start to feel more of a centeredness about ourselves and our work. Our sense of comfort in the selling arena deepens as we increase the consistency of our successful activities.

- Marketable Uniqueness™

Once we identify our products or services we bring to the marketplace we need to create clear vocabulary around what separates us from others selling the same type of goods or programs. What is unique about you facilitating a meeting, or building a team, or reorganizing the functions of a department that your supposed “competitors” do not bring to the arena? The question to address then becomes: Why buy me rather than another facilitator, consultant, or trainer?

In the quest to discover our individuality, our uniqueness, and put language around these characteristics, it becomes useful to first recognize the quality of what is competition. Does competition really exist? Is there enough business in the marketplace for the individual practitioner to thrive? And if so, how?

It is helpful to first look at the activities of commerce and how they have evolved around the fear based myth of scarcity of resources in the world. This myth has been the driving factor of cultures for many, many centuries. The scarcity myth has enhanced the profession of marketing to an extreme. It is useful to notice that the world of marketing and sales has been placing organizations against each other using the same labels to describe similar product or service characteristics. After all, organizations with the same kind of product or service do rival each other for the same dollar being spent. Or is there a process that connects a buyer to the “right” seller . . . a “coincidence” that the appropriate client gets to work with the “best” vendor? So before the labeling of what is being sold, there needs to be an awareness of synchronicity. C. G. Jung described “synchronicity” as: “An Acausal Connecting Principle”; that is, “a meaningful coincidence of two or more events, where something other than the probability of chance is involved.”

Along with the awareness of synchronicity some people find it helpful to work with the attitude of abundance; that there is abundance in the world and the synchronistic process will connect buyers and sellers appropriately. Others prefer to operate from an attitude of sufficiency; that there is sufficiency in the world and buyer and seller will come together in an appropriate manner. Whatever your sense of the marketplace, it is best addressed from the clear viewpoint of what you have to offer and then match it to those who are in need of it and or will benefit from it.

### **The Practice**

With our new self awareness around marketing and selling, we then need to address the practical step-by-step process of creating new contracts. The four prime elements to be addressed are: Market Research, Networking Activities, The Qualifying Process, and Marketing Action Plan.

#### **• Market Research**

When developing our client base it is best to know what we want, the various combinations of what kind of organizations that may benefit from our work, and with whom to create conversations. Marketing research takes us into a two step process of identifying our Target Market Alternatives, to clarify our direction in our Target Market Research. Once we are clear as to what we bring to the arena, have a sense of who may benefit from our products and/or services we are then prepared to go out to develop personal introductions to those whom we have identified on our Target List.

#### **• Networking Process**

It is not unusual for us to underestimate our networking scope. We know so many more people than we may realize. By identifying the depth and breadth of our existing network of



influence we are then able to strengthen our relationships due to our cultivated marketing conversation. We need to be clear what we want and have a comfort in asking for it.

#### • Qualifying Process

All steps of the qualifying process need to be addressed. Tools need to be developed from techniques and methods of the four main steps for developing a sale:

1. Conversation Contexting
2. Discovering Appropriateness
3. Overcoming Objections
4. Receiving Commitment

The Qualifying Map™ is a useful tool for conversational development to determine the scope of the prospect's needs, the true decision maker, budget availability as it relates to an allotted time frame, and how to receive commitment to facilitate the sale in a “natural” flow. In addition, it is essential to be prepared to work through all anticipated obstacles that may evolve.

#### • Marketing Action Plan

With information clear at hand, marketing and selling tools developed for utilization, we are then able to map out actions for immediate implementation that will be the supporting guide to produce our envisioned success.

### **The Beginning**

Through many years of practice in the selling environment, knowing many successes and some less than seemingly successful, they have all been experiences of learning. It is these experiences that will be shared within the scope of our work. The awareness of what worked and what might be done differently next time will be explored. It is sharing the fun and the play of how to serve another and be trusted in producing a “three way win”: your customer, their customers and you. The journey of discovering facets of marketing and sales continues.

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