

with columnist Robert Ciccone



Relater, Expressive, Analyzer, Director

Which personality type are you? And which are your customers?

Why is it that one sales presentation works with one qualified prospect, and fails miserably with another, equally well-qualified? Why will a person buy in response to one type of sales copy, ad or promotion, but not to another?

Every business relies on sales and marketing to create and keep customers. In the process of selling, you will have to deal with different types of people with different personalities. How well you succeed will depend on how well you adapt your marketing and sales messages, approach and style to their differences.

Before getting into the subject, let's try a little quiz. True or false:

1. How you relate with your clients is just as important as the benefits of your products.
2. It's always a good idea to show your prospects how your product or service will boost their status, or get others to notice.
3. You can't go wrong by providing as much information as possible.
4. It's better to get to the point as early as possible.

How did you do? Well, those were trick questions, to which "true" or "false" is not ideal, because whether the statement is true or false depends on whom it is you're selling to – and that is the essence of selling to different personalities.

It comes down to the buying behaviour of your market: the different ways your prospects and customers approach and make buying decisions.

Behavioural scientists have categorized many different personality types and sub-types, but they all boil down into four different personalities: 1) Relaters; 2) Expressives; 3) Analyzers; and 4) Directors.

Relaters are easygoing; they don't like to be rushed. Their main concern is getting along with others and fostering teamwork. They tend to avoid confrontation and aggressive people. They respond best to pleasant, positive, low-key messages.

Expressives are outgoing and highly spontaneous. They talk fast and think faster. They are high achievers who love to wield influence. They crave respect and recognition; they want you to make them "look good." They respond to things that bring them status, prestige and admiration.

Analyzers are systematic. They follow rules strictly and are equally concerned with getting the job done and how it gets done. Analyzers prize accuracy and correctness, and hate making mistakes or not having the answers. They respond best to messages full of assurances, guarantees and precise answers.

Directors are fast and decisive. One of the first things they want to know is price. Directors are more interested in getting the job done than in building relationships or pleasing people. They love to be in control, and they want their investment in your product to give them results quickly. With the director, you want to be concise, to the point and conscious of the bottom line.

Each of those four personality types makes up about one-quarter of all your potential customers. Unfortunately, most businesses try to sell and market to everyone using just one style or approach. That means they are alienating, and could be missing out on, up to 75 percent of all the opportunities they create.

When considering the styles of your market and prospects, keep in mind that each person you deal with

has some of all four personality types in their psychological makeup. The best marketing and sales presentations will appeal to all four types, but will sell to the strongest orientation or dominant personality.

Marketing differently to different people isn't easy. It requires that you take the time to analyze and understand your prospects carefully before you begin marketing to them. That means asking the right questions, listening actively, and seeking clues to their dominant personality. You need to learn how to quickly identify the types and adjust your style and approach to speak to their specific wants and needs.

If you can do that, you'll market and sell to people the way they want to be sold to. You'll be maximizing every opportunity that comes your way – selling to more people, more effectively and more often.

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