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Marketing The Real You

By C.J. Hayden

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I often wonder how the practice began of pretending to be someone else in order to market your business. You know what I'm talking about -- it's the marketing face, the selling voice, that you often put on in order to attend a networking event or make a sales call. Who taught you to do that?

I have a suspicion where we learn this behavior. Most of us spend a lifetime observing showroom salespeople, product spokespersons in the media, and hucksters on street corners. What we see demonstrated there is artificial enthusiasm, manipulative use of language, feigned interest, and in some cases outright deception.

Sounds awful, doesn't it? So why copy any part of this distasteful way of selling?

Psychologist Abraham Maslow said, "If all you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail." Perhaps we believe this is the only way we can sell because it's the only way we know. I'm not accusing anyone of consciously deceiving prospective clients. What I'm suggesting is that what we do unconsciously and automatically is to behave nauthentially around them.

Intuitively, many of us feel as if something is wrong with this way of operating. When we have to sell ourselves, we find it unpleasant, disagreeable, even repulsive. But what if all those negative feelings were simply because we hate the artificiality and manipulation we think must be a part of selling?

Imagine what it would be like to go to a business networking event as yourself. No facade, no pretension, just plain you. When someone asks your reason for coming, you tell them the truth. You don't have to claim you wanted to hear the speaker (if you didn't). You can come right out and say, "I'm hoping to make some contacts that will lead to business for me."

You wouldn't have to invent reasons to start a conversation. You can walk up to someone who looks interesting and say, "Hi, I haven't met you yet." If you're shy around strangers, you can tell the first

person you meet, "I'm sort of a wallflower and feel awkward at events like this. Could you introduce me to some folks?"

Now imagine placing a follow-up call to a prospect where you are completely honest. You could say, "I have some days open on my calendar soon and I'm wondering if this would be a good time for that project we've been discussing." Or, "We haven't talked in a while and I'd like to find out if you're still planning to start the new training program this year."

I see so many professionals and consultants struggle with trying to find an "excuse" to call a prospect. You don't need some manufactured excuse. You know the reason you're calling. Most of the time THEY know the reason you're calling. Just say what it is.

Let's extend this same principle to making a cold call. Instead of stumbling around awkwardly trying to make a polished — but unnatural — sales approach, imagine yourself saying, "I'm not much of a

salesperson, but I'm really good at what I do. Can we have a conversation about what you need and see if I'm the right person for the job?"

If you've been working from a cold-calling script that makes you flush and get a tight throat every time you read it, throw it out. Come up with one really good opening line that feels authentic and gets directly to the point. Then decide how you will answer — honestly — some of the typical questions prospects ask you. My bet is that your calls will immediately get easier.

In fact, the more you become honest, direct, and authentic in all of your marketing, the more appealing selling will be to you, the more effortless it will become, and the more success you will ultimately achieve. Because most business results from building relationships, and how can you develop a relationship with someone when you never reveal who you really are?

C.J. Hayden is the author of *Get Clients NOW!* Since 1992, C.J. has been teaching business owners and salespeople to make more money with less effort. She is a Master Certified Coach and leads workshops internationally. Read more of her articles at

Marketing Magic: De-Bunking the Myth!

By Carl Brown

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Any one who has ever been to a magic show knows that magic is all tricks, not reality. It is simple entertainment with no lasting value.

Marketers however, new and old alike, are infatuated with the idea that there are magic tricks to make marketing campaigns

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work. This is the problem, magicians get paid before the show starts, marketers get paid when it's over. The marketers job is to change some ones thinking and persuade them to have a certain point of view. The magicians job is to trick your senses into believing something occurred. You can not create customers by tricking them and then asking for money. You create customers by offering real solutions to problems that the customer will understand and then asking them to buy the solution. If you do the latter you will also create customers who market for you. If you operate as a magician you will create enemies who tell everyone not to do business with you because your delivery is not what it seems.

Don't subscribe to the myth. Real marketing requires honesty, not magic tricks.

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