

The Great Psychology behind the Marketing Scene

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ABSTRACT: Zoon Politikon may be considered the main byname of human beings. It is ought to the similarities between each individual and animal, regarding involuntary instincts. The fundamental reason for our top placement as humans, in nature, is given by ability to think and promptly react according to it. Considering that, should we take advantage of others’ involuntary instincts when it comes about marketing? As the concept of marketing is a truly complex matter, we could minimize the stress of understanding it by arranging it like a family tree. All we have to do is to exchange our relatives from it with fundamental principles of marketing and psychology and place them from bottom to top, former representing the most important aspects and latter, the least. But what if we want to “cut this tree” as a metaphor for selling a product to a customer while taking advantage of his involuntary instincts? Let’s find out in the following.

KEYWORDS: psychology, marketing, selling products, exploit

Introduction

The marketing scene is a “cold war” from its’ beginnings till present. All the important decisions are made subconsciously both by the buyer and seller and the crucial part when selling a product is the negotiation phase.

During it, the seller must connect with the buyers’ mind and find the best approach in order to convince him to take the “right decision”. In this case scenario, you might be wondering which decision out of one million a potential buyer may have, is the right one. The right one for you is the right one for him either, simple as that.

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First of all, if we want to have great results in our field, no matter which one is it, we must stabilize a good relationship with the ones around us and understand their needs.

The more closely we are connected to the people we love, the happier we feel and the more personal satisfaction we have in our lives. Most people rate moments of connection and shared enjoyment with their loved ones as their most important life experiences (Sharry 2018). These being said, under a quick analysis we can find out that the first step into seeing beyond the human interface is to find peace into the others, especially the loved ones. In this manner we may get to a better understanding of how emotions really work. Scientists have found that certain kinds of thoughts often lead to certain emotions. For example, when someone thinks, “I am in danger”, that person would probably feel fear (Smith, Alkozei and Killgore 2017).

So, how can we take advantage of this in a negotiation? By taking lead of our thoughts and consistently thinking that we are in control. Surprisingly, the point is not to make the one in front of you to think the same thing but the other way around. As long as the buyer feels safe and being the master of negotiation, the ace of spades is in your hands. Do you remember what I have mentioned about the connection between people and the loved ones? This is your first target when physically meeting the buyer, as a seller. It is a must to be in control of the environment where the conversation takes place, the suit you put on, the body language, the words you use, all of these in order to make the other individual feel safe, familiar and the most important being respected which also provides a feeling of attachment. By accomplishing this part, you enter in the diplomacy zone of the so called “cold war” of marketing, from then on, it is on you to use the necessary skills you have learned to make the conversation flow.

Also, an important thing in this preliminary stage is to apply the U.E motto: “United in diversity”. This is how you as the head of negotiation should act. Do not jump straight to the main point, mostly talking about the price. First draw a fine circle around the conversation and try to understand the other persons’ passions, needs and way of seeing life. Being united in diversity in a conversation means to present your own ideas but be prepared to engage with others’ opinions, to be tolerant and to stay “united” with the discussion not only for the sake of it but for a better comprehension of what the other individuals experience on a daily basis. In this manner you might find some “black swans” (Chris Voss, *Never Split the Difference: Negotiating as If Your Life Depended on It*, 2016). As Voss is calling them, a black swan is like a black thought of which you, either the other person you are negotiating with is or is not aware of it, something that does not permit the conversation to flow and to eventually come to a favourable conclusion. Such obstructions might be given by: 1. The inability of the other person to take a decision because of not being in control i.e. they have a boss who is not happy about the product that you are selling and he does not want it. 2. A unfortunate family event that occurred and ought to it, the buyer is not allowed to think clearly. 3. Something that even he is not aware of.

If you are confronting a person who is struggling in the third example, here are certain ways of finding out precious information about the person you are talking with. Voss is classifying them as:

Mirroring

Which is one of the simplest yet effective techniques in any negotiator’s repertoire. Through simple repetition, this technique demonstrates how you can gather vital information in a negotiation and put your counterpart at ease while making him confront his own thoughts. More than this, whenever an unexpected question might pop out, by using this approach you can make the other individual respond to his own question.

Labelling

Learn how you can use labels, verbal observations of feelings to neutralize negative emotions in a negotiation or reinforce positive ones to create a better deal.

Bending Reality

A negotiation can succeed or fail depending on how you frame your case. Do not hesitate to “bend the reality” in order to achieve the desired answer. But be careful and remember what product you are selling and under no circumstances lie about it. You can use words in your favor by analyzing the products’ strong and weak points (Voss 2020).

Those been said, we can jump straight to the next point which is knowing your product. No one is crazy enough to sit at the negotiation table without knowing the best of what he is selling and if he is, probably is far away from being right. After the quick analysis of the buyer you have just made, it really is crucial to “shot the arrow” and start talking about what you are selling.

Keep in mind! Putting first the advantages of it is not always the best idea! “Most people think the most important word in a negotiation is «yes»”. In fact, the opposite is true (Voss 2020)”. While some people are obsessed with receiving a yes as their first answer, Voss recommends to start from bottom to top and I cannot agree more. I.e.: when you do not receive the awaited response from a person, especially a strong and irrefutable “no”, are not you more interested in the conversation? Do not you get more engaged in it to find out why you have just got refused? If so, now you might understand this tactic. In the most essential cases, being refused at first is the best answer you can get because of the interest the other individual will manifest in order to keep his idea strong in front of you.

Now, it is your time to present the strong points of your product. A new battle between you two is going to begin. This time, you have a great advantage, the others’ interest. Also, now it is the right moment to take “proper care” of the individual’s involuntary instincts in order to sell your product at the desired price by using:

1. Fear

Emotional response to dangerous circumstances is called fear and it appears when there are certain chances to get injured or killed. This harm is not just limited to physical damage but to a mental one as well and we are going to focus on the second type of fear. What is more frightening than losing a good deal? Even if some buyers know that they have achieved the impossible in terms of price when throwing a low anchor in a negotiation, some of them might continue to get the best out of it. Luckily, during this phase constant fear appears and it is up to you to negotiate a better deal, as a seller. Those being said, the lowest price is not always the best. If it is more convenient to you, instead of selling a product for fifty more dollars, you can ask for an extra service instead which will usually cost way more. At the end of the day, when you draw the line, it is more likely to see what a great deal you have just made.

2. Anxiety

Anxiety is similar to fear and can overwhelm a person to the point where he becomes easily confused and has difficulty thinking. Once this happens, it becomes more and more difficult for him to make good judgments and sound decisions. Usually, unless the ones at the negotiation desk are afraid of each other, anxiety will not appear. In an unlikely case it might, it will be visible and there is one way of using this in your preference: rise the price, make the other one think he will for sure lose a great opportunity.

3. Anger and Frustration

Frustration arises when a person is continually thwarted in his attempts to reach a goal, in our case a fair price. To achieve this goal, the person must complete some tasks with minimal resources in terms of knowledge when it comes to understand where the deal might go. More than that, every mistake is magnified in terms of its importance. Thus, sooner or later, the buyer will have to cope with frustration when a few of their plans run into trouble. One outgrowth of this frustration is anger. There are many events during the negotiation that can frustrate or anger a person. Frustration and anger encourage impulsive reactions and poorly thought-out decisions. Because of this gap, the buyer will want more and more to get your product without realising a potential money loss.

4. Loneliness

Humans are social animals. This means we, as human beings, enjoy the company of others. In marketing, loneliness can be associated with a one to one negotiation session. Some people, new in the domain, might feel uncomfortable while doing this and it might be a pity of you (as a seller) to take too much advantage of such situation. The best is to remain professional but be aware of every opportunity.

5. Guilt

The circumstances leading to sensation of guilt may vary. This usually appears after the negotiation in both seller/buyer camps. Self-questions such as “Should I have lowered/rose the price?”, “Maybe I should have been more aggressive/passive in that negotiation”, “It might have been better to set a lower/higher anchor”. Excluding the fact that after a classic shake of hands, the deal is going to remain unchanged, in certain situations (usually unofficial ones) things could be changed for the better. As a matter of fact, if one individual is feeling guilty of what he had done in a negotiation, but the other does not, taking advantage of his emotions may lead to an extra service which as I mentioned earlier, it can be more effective for you and less expensive in the eyes of the other (Seeker 2020).

Conclusion

In the end, marketing really is a war, a cold one. Not only because as I mentioned in the introduction that the important decisions are made subconsciously both by the buyer and seller or because there is a confrontation of interests without any casualties, it is because, in my opinion, when it comes to marketing mind is everything. When it comes to management, mind is everything. When it comes to human to human interactions, mind is everything... even when it comes to a simpler action such as walking, mind is everything. It is on us to gather the power to sustain this favorable war in order to maintain the global economy thru the concept of marketing and to understand and accept the fact that marketing is more than selling a product, it is a way of thinking and sometimes a vicious path of necessary psychological games that must be completed in order to achieve the desired result.

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