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Will Reed's Guerrilla Marketing GENIUS

"Wake up your brain, learn how to earn!"

An individual without information cannot take responsibility; an individual who is given information cannot help but take responsibility.

Jan Carlzon
CEO,
Scandinavian
Airlines



The best leaders, almost without exception and at every level, are master users of stories and symbols.

Tom Peters

Training your staff in marketing

Your customers know how much you care. It shows in every contact they have with your staff, and this is often how a company is judged. Marketing is everyone's business, but it doesn't come naturally. Traditional approaches to training focus on job skills, and often ignore the element of marketing.

6 Alternatives to traditional training

1. *Invest in staff training.* Many companies pay lip service to the importance of staff training. The employees themselves will tell you that training is not given much importance in practice.

On the job training is the traditional approach, but in its worst form apprenticeship simply reinforces the status quo.

Most employees are preoccupied with doing their job. Train your staff in marketing. Let them know it is a priority.

2. *Teach with stories.* Traditional training tends to focus on skills and behaviors. While this is important, it is more likely to stick if employees have a sense of the meaning, mission, and values behind your marketing. Stories can convey this effectively by making marketing relevant.

You do this by speaking honestly from experience, and by speaking to the needs and concerns of the listener. Story telling is the art of being credible in an incredulous world.

3. *Get everyone involved in marketing.* Marketing is not something you do, but rather what actually happens at the point of customer contact. The best efforts of the people working in marketing can easily be undermined by front line staff people who are more concerned about getting through the day than serving the customer.

People who answer the phone or have direct contact with customers in any way should have some training with a marketing focus. At the front line this training may be more focused on active listening, problem solving, how to handle complaints or manage stress.

4. *The designated Guerrilla.* One of the challenges of running a business is knowing exactly what you've got to do, but not having enough time to do it. The problem is magnified in marketing, because it is so easy to postpone without apparently suffering any damage.

In other words, much of marketing falls into the category of important but not urgent. Hence it tends to get left undone,

Business has only two functions—marketing and innovation.

Peter F. Drucker



In the case of good books, the point is not how many of them you can get through, but rather how many can get through to you.

Mortimer J. Adler



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or get put on the back burner. If you recognize the importance of marketing, but don't have time to attend to it yourself, you should appoint a designated Guerrilla.

Marketing can only succeed if time and energy are devoted to it regularly. You may do it yourself, train a person from within your company, or work with a marketing coach, but this person must have the expertise, interest, desire, and time to mastermind the process.

5. *One-page book reviews.* If two heads are better than one, then books have an exponential power to expand your knowledge and experience. The best marketing minds in the world have condensed their wisdom in the form of books, seminars, and information products, and the Internet makes this available at a fraction of the cost of hiring consultants, trainers, or speakers.

The problem, and your opportunity, is that few people will take the time to read, digest, and act on this knowledge. A good way to enhance your marketing training is to produce and distribute one-page book reviews of good books on marketing. Mind Map or summary, whatever form it takes, keep it on one page.

People will appreciate the convenience of a one-page book review, and whether or

not they read the book they will be influenced by its ideas.

6. *Walk your talk.* People watch what you do more than listen to what you say. The best way to train your staff in good marketing skills is to develop and demonstrate these skills yourself. It is also easier to train people when you have already gone through the process yourself.

You will know you have made an impact when people want to get involved or start imitating what you do.

Resources

An excellent book on the art of storytelling for business is *The Story Factor*, by Annette Simmons. For more information on this book and the power of stories, visit the website at <http://www.groupprocessconsulting.com/>.

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