

Which Marketer Are You? I Am Number Four (No, not the film).

Anyone who is in business is automatically in Sales, Marketing and Customer Relations. If you're not into all these three, you aren't really in business. Sales and Marketing are closely related. You could call Marketing the Strategy and Sales the Tactics. I'm going to lump them together here and attempt to describe four types of Sales and Marketing approaches, which are:

1. Fishing.
2. Hunting.
3. Farming.
4. Trading.

1. Fishing.

The sort of fishing most sales and marketing people do is fishing with a rod, or, more specifically, fishing with a hook. I have been told time and time again to make my offerings sweeter, to use good bait, to use lures that will attract people to my hook. Of course, having good bait and good lures isn't enough. You have to know the characteristics of the type of fish you want, the time of day or night to fish for it and the weather and sea conditions when it's best for you to land a catch. Well, I don't know about you, but I don't appreciate being hooked if I'm a customer or a client. So I tend not to use this sort of sales and marketing tactic. Trapping is also quite similar to fishing.

2. Hunting.

If you hunt, you need to similarly know the characteristics of the game you are after. You need to use the appropriate weapons to bring down different types of prey. If you are after large prey, you need to use cartridges of larger calibre or use bigger arrows or bigger spears. If you are after smaller game, then using large cartridges would make no sense, as they would blow apart what you're really after. Hunting requires patience and skill. If you get what you're after, you then need to dress it and carry it back to where you can either store or cook it. Again, I don't relish the thought of being hunted, so I tend not to use this approach either. Both fishing and hunting manifest themselves quite readily in the form of the inappropriate kind of "prospecting", alluring advertising and quite a bit of what is called "direct marketing."

3. Farming.

This is what an increasing number of people tend to think of when they think of sales and marketing. Farming is non-threatening and brings pictures of bountifulness for everyone, including the farmer. However, in real life, farmers tend to become exploited and taken for granted by everyone else. I used to think that this was the sort of sales and marketing that I do. Is this your style? Well, I've gone a step further.

4. Trading.

A logical extension to the concept of farming is trading. Trading assumes that two parties involved in a transaction are producing entities, and that each is producing

something that the other needs or wants. There is a fair exchange of value, and the value of that exchange is impressed upon both parties in the transaction. Both parties actively look out for what makes the other successful and contribute to that success in the full knowledge that it contributes to their own success as well. One other aspect of a trader is that he is constantly on the lookout for great value and constantly brings in goods and services that he himself may not be producing, but which he is able to procure, offering them up for trade as well.

So, if you ask me what sales and marketing style I adopt, I would say I am Number Four – a trader. Aspects of each style do overlap, of course, but since words are important in influencing our thoughts and actions, I choose to be a trader. What about you?