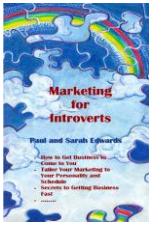


MARKETING FOR INTROVERTS*

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So, you hate to sell. Well, you are not alone. Truth be told, introverted or not, most people hate the prospect of having to sell. Selling conjures up fantasies of rejections or memories of pushy sales people that make you want to run away screaming.

As a result lots of people rule out the possibility of becoming self-employed or starting their own business because we all know that means having to get business.

But you may be as surprised to learn as we were that does not have to mean you have to become of those glad-handing extroverts that come to mind when you think "salesperson." In interviews with thousands of successfully self-employed individuals, we learned that being an extrovert who loves to sell is not a prerequisite for being your own boss.

Quite the contrary. Some of the successful people we have met were so shy, soft-spoken and introverted that we could hardly hear them over the telephone. In fact, we learned that many introverts prefer self-employment and are happiest as their own boss.

So what gives? How can this be? What we discovered is that those who are most successfully self-employed have found ways to market themselves that feel natural, comfortable and enjoyable to them, even if they hate to sell.

This book opens the doors to using your personality - wherever you fall in the introversion-extroversion - continuum - to tailor an approach to attracting business suitable to you. We call this approach Tailor-Made marketing because it enables you to capitalize on your natural abilities. These abilities are things you've been doing since kindergarten - walking, talking, showing and telling.

In other words, this book will not try to turn you into a salesperson. We believe that marketing is different from selling. Marketing is about getting business to come to you while selling is about persuading someone to buy from you. So let's begin with a premise captured by this quote:

You have to be talked about to get work. - Georgia O'Keeffe

Marilyn Miller, an organizational development consultant, took a call of particular interest

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as she took the phone messages off her answering machine. The city of Malibu was planning to hire a California organizational development (OD) consultant and they wanted to talk with her. As she promptly returned the call, she learned that city council members had wanted to identify a variety of consultants, ask for proposals, and then select someone to work with them on a long-term team-building program. But, they told her, in seeking out the names of possible consultants, every person they spoke with advised that the consultant they needed was Marilyn Miller. So, now all they wanted to know was when she could come in to work out the details of a contract so they could start working together.

Isn't this the kind of message we'd all like to find waiting on our voice mail, in our e-mail, or our mailbox? Well, this is the kind of contact you can expect once you're in demand and sought after. But how did this happen? How was it that every person the council members talked with recommended Marilyn Miller? It didn't happen for the reasons you might think.

It isn't luck. When you hear about someone getting an opportunity like this, it's easy to think, "Boy, is she ever lucky." And, yes, sometimes people are in the right place at just the right time, so it looks as though luck tapped them on the shoulder and propelled them to a level of success unattainable by all the rest of us who aren't so blessed. But if you look a little deeper at such serendipity, usually you'll discover that, as the saying goes, "Luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity."

Luck alone is far too fickle to rely on as a source of steady income. While business may fall into your lap once in a while, no one can count on it to happen week after week, month after month, and year after year. And it wasn't chance that caused the city council to contact Miller. She often gets business in this way.

It isn't being the very best. If it wasn't luck, then, you may be tempted to think Marilyn must be one of the best OD consultants around. She must be so good that no one else can hold a candle to her. But no, while Marilyn is good at what she does, so are many other people the council could have called.

You've undoubtedly noticed yourself that the most successful individuals aren't necessarily the very best at what they do. Usually successful people do a good job for their clients, but not necessarily the best possible job. In fact, you may even have had the experience of knowing you're as good, or maybe better, than someone else who gets business you would love to have.

It's not money. If it's not luck or superior abilities, then it must be money. Miller must have spent big bucks on costly advertising and promotions. But, no, actually Marilyn spends very little money on marketing. While money can buy the chance to get your name out, it rarely convinces others that you're the best person to work with. In fact, we've found that having lots of money to spend on getting business can be a surefire way to lose a lot of money fast. The most expensive ad campaign won't get people to send a steady stream of business your way until you've proven to them that they should.

It's not bargain basement prices. Oh, then, you may be tempted to think Miller offers the

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lowest price in town. That's why she gets business so easily. But, no. She charges a substantial, but fair, fee for her services. When you're self-employed, charging bargain basement prices may keep you busy, or even too busy, but it won't bring you the income you need or the loyal following that will keep you in business. To make a decent living, you'll eventually have to raise your prices and when you do, your bargain basement customers will flee to the lowest bidder.

So how did Marilyn get this business? She got it the same way market researcher Eleanor Duggan got a steady flow of business coming to her after leaving her job. Within the first year on her own, Duggan was working to her full capacity. She did it the same way instructional designer Mike Greer got business coming to him. After leaving his job, Greer tripled his income working only five hours a day. He did this the same way a San Francisco man we met on a radio talk show got his new business plan writing service under way in only three months. Within three months, this weapons-designer-turned-business-plan-writer was making more money than he had from his salary as an engineer. And he already had several people working for him.

These individuals were able to get plenty of business coming to them because they'd each become *well known* to those who should know them as someone who understands and can address the needs and problems of the clients they serve. In other words, they have developed a *reputation*: a favorable, recognized standing as people who can serve their particular clients. What they do, whom they do it for, and when they're the best choice is clear to those who need to use their product or service, or those who are sources of referrals and recommendations. They've achieved top-of-the-mind status so that they have tapped into the best possible source of steady, ongoing business: *word of mouth*.

TAPPING INTO THE #1 BEST SOURCE OF STEADY, ONGOING BUSINESS

Have you ever had this experience? Someone you'd like to do business with tells you, "I sure wish we'd known about you sooner. We would have loved to work with you. Maybe next time." Unfortunately, most of us have had more than one experience like this because it's virtually impossible to anticipate the precise moment when a potential client or customer you've never met will be ready to do business with you. But when that moment comes, they'll do business with whoever's in the right place at the right time. So how do you make sure you're the one who's there when that magic moment arrives?

That's top-of-the-mind, word-of-mouth marketing. And that's what this section is about. It's about how you can lay the foundation for building a business-generating reputation for yourself, even if you're just starting out in your business. It's about how to position yourself to

be in demand by the people who need to know about you. It's about how to develop a plan for making sure people know who you are, what you do, and why they should work with you.

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Your Goal: Stand Out from the Crowd and Distinguish Yourself

You need find a way to stand out from the crowd and distinguish yourself. You need to become so well known in the right circles that when someone needs what you have to offer, your name will either immediately come to mind or be the first one mentioned whenever they turn to others to find what they need.

Are You Ready?

If you want to get business to come to you instead of having to spend your time drumming it up, chances are you're eager to get top-of-the-mind, word-of-mouth marketing working for you. But are you ready to do what you'll need to do to get it? To find out, complete this checklist and then read through chapters 4. You may be surprised to find you're not as ready as you think. You may realize why you don't yet have all the business you can enjoy. And, you'll also know what you can do right now to get going.

- 1. Have you decided on the **one** thing you want to become well known for?
- Or are you straddling the fence, still offering a variety of things to get by or until you see what takes off?
- 2. Are you willing to commit 100 percent of your *available* time, energy, and money to developing this **one** thing?
- Or are you dividing your available time among various ideas or possibilities?
- 3. Do you have your own niche, your own specialty, that capitalizes on your unique combination of interests, skills, talents, experience, background, and contacts?
- Or are you doing pretty much what others in your field are doing?
- 4. Can you demonstrate why you're the best choice for your clients or customers?
- Or are you hoping people will believe in and want to do business with you?
- 5. Do you have a plan for how you'll become known to the people who need to know about you? Will your plan keep you on the top of these people's minds?
- Or are your efforts at marketing catch-as-catch-can?
- 6. Are you able to follow your plan consistently and frequently enough to actually have the impact you're seeking?
- Or do your marketing efforts slip through the cracks due to lack of time or because you really don't like doing them?

Unless you're already exceptionally well positioned, getting business coming to you will take some time. How long will depend on how ready you are. You may be ready to take off right now. Or you could find that you have several months of work to do before you'll be in a position to be in demand and sought after. Taking the time you need to get in position to be in demand will be worth the investment. If you rush into trying to get business without positioning yourself solidly, you'll just have to go back later and get in a better position. So why not start now?

But What If You Desperately Need Business Right Now?

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If you need business right now, you may be feeling somewhat anxious about the prospect of needing to take preparatory steps before you'll be ready to get business coming to you. This concern is the single most common reason people bypass the steps they need to take and then wonder why they can't get the level of business they need and want. Trying to get business from a position of desperation is a tremendous challenge and too often leads to less than desirable decisions. You've undoubtedly met people yourself who seem so hungry for business that you feel sorry for them. Chances are, though, you're not particularly interested in doing business with them.

Instead, you may wonder why they don't have plenty of business if they're any good at what they do. You may be concerned that they'll go under or take a job instead of completing their work with you. You may worry they won't be around to provide customer support or to stand behind their product or service. Chances are you'd prefer to do business with people who have ample business, because it suggests they must be doing something right.

So, if you need business right now, you owe it to yourself to do something to get some business fast so you won't be feeling, sounding, and looking desperate. Here are some emergency stopgap measures you can take to generate enough income, time, and energy to stay afloat while you take the steps you need to get a more reliable, steady stream of business coming to you.

Five Ways to Get Stopgap Business Fast

1. Turn your ex-employer into your client. Your former employer already knows your capability and has a proven need for it. Often you can negotiate to do on a part-time or contractual basis what you did on a full-time salary. Or perhaps you can negotiate a contract to train your replacement. This can be a viable strategy even if you are going into an entirely different type of business.

2. Subcontract or do overload. Your competitors can be an excellent source of business. Our surveys show that successful businesses get as much as 25 percent of their business from their competition. So, offer to do work they can't take or don't want to do.

3. Work as a temporary employee in a field related to what you'll be doing in your business. Working for a temporary agency can provide valuable experience and excellent contacts. At the same time, it provides a flexible source of immediate income while you're building your business.

4. Make an offer they can't refuse. Some income beats no income. So identify people who need your skills and make them a "special" offer that's so tempting they simply can't say no. Be sure they know this is a "special" price, not what you regularly charge, and be sure you can at least cover all your costs, including some value for your time. Also ask them to serve as a reference for you in the future.

5. Volunteer. Some work beats no work, and work tends to beget more work. There's nothing worse for your morale than having your skills lie dormant. Valued volunteer efforts can

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turn into paying efforts. Many volunteers find their experience leads to paying contracts or orders. At the very least, volunteer efforts can be a source of experience, contacts, and references that you can leverage into other business you might not otherwise know about or be able to get.

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