

Selling with Learning Styles

A local furniture store had the following ad on the radio station in January “Come in to see our bedroom sets. You’ll love how they look, you’ll love how they feel and you’ll wonder if they are really authentic”. This company had an ad writer that knows about learning styles!

We all have way of special ways of learning and special ways of remembering. When someone says to you “Do you remember when we went out for lunch in December?” you may automatically cast your eyes up to the left and say “oh yes, that was the day you were wearing that gorgeous green dress” or you may cast your eye up to the right and say “oh yes, and I want to take you to a new restaurant that just opened up so you can see the their fancy décor. Imagine how wonderful it will be.” In people’s eyes you can “catch a glimpse” of how they access their memories and how they imagine things will be.

In people’s vocabulary we can hear how they communicate – “Beyond a shadow of a doubt, that was the best food I’ve tasted” (visual) or “It’s as clear as a bell to me that menu was the most tasty food for me” (auditory) or “I can really get in touch with the style of presentation at that restaurant” (kinesthetic) or “The list of ingredients was so complicated in that meal” (analytical). When we want to sell something to someone we will be most effective if we understand their learning style. They will quickly relate to the “sales pitch” if we “speak their language”. As the communication progresses, you will get feedback from your customer. Be aware of it. People either move *toward* or *away* from the buying process. When we are “in their zone” they move *toward*, when we are in another zone they move *away*, and may even be annoyed by the whole process.

In preparing ads for the newspaper or for newsletters we need to consider learning styles. Ads that are cluttered can turn away visual people. Ads that use images that bring up auditory sounds (waves washing or music playing) will appeal to the auditory person. Analytical ads that show actual financial percentages or statistics of how long the company has been in business will appeal to the analytical person. Advertising is expensive so it is important to scrutinize how we present our company and ourselves. Take a look in the newspaper and consider why ads appeal to you (or not). Invite some of your colleagues over to critique ads in the paper and, then to critique ads for each others’ companies.

When we are “selling” our products or our services of course we are also selling ourselves. One of the ways we do this is through our business card. Take out your business card and some business cards that you have collected from colleagues. What appeals to you about these cards? Does the card have visual appeal – this could be important if you are a clothing designer or a web designer. Does the card have analytical appeal – this is important if you are in financial management. Be brutally honest about how your card “speaks” – the person who designed your card may not have the same learning style as you or may not understand how important learning styles are.

When your deal closes quickly, it is probably because it “makes sense” to your customer – in their learning style. You may want to continue on “selling” when the customer has already “closed the deal”. Step back and congratulate yourself. You have done such a great job of presenting that “it worked”. Now, accept the “close” as an accomplishment.

Speaking of accomplishments (auditory), we see (visual) how our colleagues enjoy business lunches. Why not invite a few business associates out for lunch and, with a good sense of humor (kinesthetic) have everyone get out their latest ad campaign and their business card. Have fun reviewing (analytical) them – and best of all, imagine what it will be like the next time you get together and what changes everyone will have made!!

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