

Strategic Qualities: Leading to Glory in the World of Marketing

Anamitra Roy

** Freelance Writer and Management Professional, Salt Lake City, Kolkata, West Bengal, India.*

&

Dr. Aamarpali Puri

**Director, Concept Research Foundation, Kolkata, West Bengal, India.*

“Marketing is a total system of business activities designed to plan, price, promote and distribute want – satisfying products, services and ideas to target markets in order to achieve organizational objectives.”

William Stanton

Marketing is one of the most fascinating fields to pursue. It teaches you the sales techniques, brand development and promotion strategies, the methods to build distribution channels and the process of keeping the loyal customers pulled back. But there is a twist in the story. Anybody and everybody are not eligible to take up these teachings and develop a great career in this field. You need to develop some strategic qualities for taking up these lessons from the world of marketing. These strategic qualities are:

1) Development of a Sense of Imagination:

People in the world of marketing need to interact with different types of people ... it is almost like dealing with people from rags to riches. In order to be comfortable with so many types of people while interacting with them, one needs to be very flexible in mind. This flexibility cannot be developed in the absence of a sense of imagination.

Let me share a real life experience from my professional career. I started my professional life as an education marketer. In the beginning of my career when I used to sit in the counselor's desk, in order to have a feel of tackling different types of people, I came across some of the strangest questions that could ever have been framed. I remember once I met a prospective student. I told him about academic courses on software, hardware, financial accounting and multimedia. The student listened to me and then asked me which course would provide him with the best employment opportunities as he would like to get enrolled in that course only. Trust me, this guy was

not alone. I met prospective students in that desk who asked me which is the best course among these or which is the cheapest course as they would get enrolled following that criterion only. In order to deal with so many different types of people with different types of psychologies it is essential to develop a sense of imagination. This quality will help you to relate properly with the strangest of the people that you will meet. You will be able to step into their shoes. Then they will not appear that strange or unique or eccentric. You will be comfortable in your interactions with them. So develop a sense of imagination in order to achieve the heights of glory in the field of marketing.

“Imagination is more important than knowledge.”

Albert Einstein

2) **Ability to Make Sacrifices:**

It was long ago that I was going through the writings of Victor Kiam. In one of his writings Kiam wrote that on a day when it has snowed heavily, the customer was cut off from the world and was alone at home, he did not have anything to do; those are the best days to approach him and talk to him about your product. Kiam wrote, I remember, that the customer has probably not met anyone throughout the day. He will be the most receptive on those days.

I was thinking about this. The most important thought that struck me is the ability to make sacrifices. If a marketing person has to approach customers on these days, he has to earn the ability to make sacrifices. On such days, the marketing person could have also relaxed and stayed cut off from the world. But he can be a winner, he can manage to have a highly receptive customer if he gathers the energy to walk down the snow cladding streets, manages to shed off all his procrastination, take up the pains to come out of his house in that cold weather leaving the comfort of the fireplace in his living room. All these can be done if he is ready to sacrifice ... sacrifice all the comforts and smoothness of his life.

I have personally seen policemen performing their duties in the absolutely confused roads of Kolkata during Durga Puja and doctors happily attending patients on Diwali eve. I often used to ask myself what is the source of motivation for such people? I understood that it is not motivation that keeps such men going. It is the ability to make sacrifices.

In the world of marketing the customer is the ultimate sovereign. You never know when the customer will be ready to call you or listen to you. You have to be ever ready. You

need to be comfortable with the ability to make sacrifices, if that is the demand of the situation.

“Great achievement is usually born of great sacrifice and is never the result of selfishness.”

Napoleon Hill

3) Learn to Accept Defeats:

Every person you meet and talk about your product will not get converted into a positive customer. Some will be just listeners; some will show interest and then drift away and away from you. Probably only a small fraction will show genuine interest and out of that small fraction few can be and will be developed as customers. This is the law of life, the law of nature and of this universe. You will get back only a small portion of your sweats and hard work in the form of reward. Whatever may be the level of talent you cannot come out of this rule ... you cannot prove yourself to be an exception. So learning to accept defeats is crucial to your growth in this field. If you can accept your defeats you know there is always chance the next time. An ideal marketing person does not approach a customer with the expectation that a sales deal will be closed soon. He approaches with the expectation that he will spread some information about his product. He will develop a person who might just grow some interest about the product.

“Live your life not celebrating victories, but overcoming defeats.”

Che Guevara

4) Capacity to Upgrade ... Continuously:

Plato once said that nothing is constant in this universe except the process that is bringing change in everything. This is applicable to the field of marketing, too. Styles change, policies change, ways change, roads change, destinations change. Well, if that sounds alien then let me put things in the language of marketing ... customers change, mentalities change, tastes and preferences change, promotion strategies change, methods of reaching the product to the customers change, the ways of creation and retention of customers change. So how do you think you can cope with these changes? There is only one way. You have to upgrade yourself. You will have to go on educating yourself. You will have to carry on teaching yourself about the changes, the alterations, the developments, the recent trends. In the process you will come to know what works and what doesn't. And when you have acquired that knowledge, then you are upgrading

yourself. This is something that you will have to keep on doing because the change is constant, it is continuous and you need to cope with it.

When you stop upgrading yourself, you stop growing. Then you are decaying. Cavities have set in your life. We all have watched the Hollywood blockbuster “Jurassic Park” ... such huge and powerful species, the dinosaurs ... even they had to disappear because they could not upgrade with the changes around them.

Get ready to be comfortable with changes, to be at ease with changes and that can be done only if you are ready to upgrade yourself.

“You are a reflection of nature. You should always be upgrading, refining and improving.”

Steve Maraboli

5) Tenacity to Manage Targets:

I remember reading one of the writings of Napoleon Hill where he wrote that every day you should do at least one thing that scares you. It is like setting and achieving a target that I never thought that I could have achieved. This is considered as one of the oldest methods of increasing self-confidence. All great men become great by achieving great targets. Targets define you. Targets would set up the level of success or failure that you are going to have. That is why, it is extremely essential to set up targets properly. It is extremely essential to set up a target that would stretch you.

In the early nineties when Shah Rukh Khan decided to join Bollywood, he surprised many around him. In one of his interviews in the early part of his career he was asked by the interviewer the reason for fixing the target of joining Bollywood although he started as a small screen actor and there were a lot of popular, capable and competent stars ruling the film industry during that phase. Shah Rukh said that I would not compete with them. My target is to compete with myself and continuously improve. What a target that was? It defined him. It made him the Badshah of the Indian film industry. It is a target that separated a man from a superstar.

Achievement of targets can be done only by following a few disciplines every day ... day after day. It is not a miracle that can help you to reach your target. Once you reach a target, you are free, confident and brave to set up an even steeper target. Now that's for me what should be called target management.

“Nothing can add more power to your life than concentrating all your energies on a limited set of targets.”

Nido Qubein

6) **Power to Develop Products:**

All of us have heard of the popular saying that if Mohammed does now want to go to the mountain, then the mountain will come to meet Mohammed. As a child I heard of this saying from my Mom but never understood its meaning until I started to learn about marketing management.

It was in the beginning of my career when I was working as Operations Manager of an IT training institution that I met a gentleman in my office. He had come to gather information about the beginner’s course on IT. It was actually for his wife. The front office executive was absent on that day. So I was attending the front office. I told the gentleman about the beginner’s course. He was not satisfied. He asked me to customize the course to some extent. It was not clear to me. I requested him to speak specifically. He said that he felt that in order to improve on the smartness quotient of his wife he wanted his wife to get familiar with facebook, twitter and other social networking sites. So he wanted the instructor to teach his wife about opening accounts in these social networking sites and getting comfortable with the operations there in. This was not included in the syllabus. The gentleman was keen on getting the course customized so that it served his purpose of increasing the smartness quotient of his wife. I realized in just a second that if I was not ready to customize the course then I would have to lose on the business. I said yes and got ready to develop the product as per the requirements of the customer.

This is one of the most fundamental aspects of having a rocking career in the field of marketing. The product has to be designed as per the demands of the customers. You should be able to understand the tastes and preferences of the customers and develop/present the product accordingly.

“Life is too short to build something nobody wants.”

Ash Maurya

All that has been written here can be understood, realized and learnt by even the most ordinary of the human beings ever born on this earth. But still, I took up the pain to pen down these. I

had taken ten years to learn these. After going through this writing if you can learn these in half an hour then that would just not save time for yourself but also for the entire human race. I would consider that I have been able to contribute to the development of the human civilization, add some glory to it ...

“The greater the difficulty the more glory in surmounting it. Skillful pilots gain their reputation from storms and tempests.”

Epictetus

The text "The End." is displayed in a large, bold, sans-serif font. Each letter is a different color: 'T' is pink, 'h' is red, 'e' is orange, 'E' is green, 'n' is teal, and 'd.' is blue. The letters have a slight 3D effect with a shadow cast to the right.