

Tips for "Psychological Marketing"

Psychology is a deep and eternally revealing line of study. People are highly complex and often mysterious, so we all struggle to understand our fellow humans. Although the expectation is not that you will behave as a psychologist, there is great benefit in knowing not only what people do, but also why they do it. Here are a few basic psychological tidbits that can help you at the tax sites when you are engaging clients:

1. **People make decisions emotionally.** They decide based on a feeling, need, or emotion, not through a logical thought process. That's why intangible benefits are the keys to persuasion. When you're talking you should ask yourself, "What is the emotional hot button here?" Is it something beneficial for their children (back to school expenses/holiday shopping)? Does it advance a personal goal to save for a future need (car/education/home)?
2. **People justify decisions with facts.** Example: a man sees an advertisement with a photo of a sports car and instantly falls in love. However he can't bring himself to buy the car based on a feeling, so he reads the copy for technical details about the powerful engine, safety features, and low maintenance. He wants the car because it makes him feel good. But he buys it only when he can justify the purchase rationally. It's helpful for clients to have information they can read such as a brochure.
3. **People are egocentric.** The word "egocentric" means centered around the ego or self. We all see the world in terms of how it relates to us personally. So when interacting with clients - the unspoken question is "What's in it for me?"
4. **You can't force people to do anything.** When people open accounts, it's not because you wield some magical power over them. You can urge. You can push. You can entice. But ultimately, people do what they want to do. This means your job is to show how what you're offering meets the client's needs.
5. **People love to buy.** Some say people don't like to be "sold." Not true. People love to be sold. They love to discover wonderful new products and services. What people don't love is to be cheated or tricked. Therefore, it can be helpful to change your analogy of the marketing process. Instead of "selling" to people, try to "help" them. Be sure to point out the benefits associated with the service - **namely it is free and easy, and it's an opportunity to save for future needs!**
6. **People are naturally suspicious.** It's true that there's a sucker born every minute, but most people are moderately skeptical of any offer. They seek to avoid risk. You can never predict the level of suspicion any particular person has, so it's best to assure clients the service is free, it's safe, and we deal with credible partners.
7. **People are always looking for something.** Love. Wealth. Glory. Comfort. Safety. People are naturally dissatisfied and spend their lives searching for intangibles. At its simplest, encouraging clients to save is a matter of sharing with them how a particular product or service fulfills one or more of their needs.
8. **People buy "direct" because of convenience and exclusivity.** If people could easily find the services we offer at a nearby store, that's probably where many would go. So it's wise to emphasize the convenience and exclusivity of what we offer at the tax sites.
9. **Most people follow the crowd.** Most of us are imitators. We look to others for guidance, especially when we are uncertain about something. We ask, "What do others think about this? What do others feel? What do others do?" Then we act accordingly. So, don't be afraid to share positive experiences you had last year about opening accounts for clients. Something like - "Last year, a client told me she purchases saving bonds every year for her children to put money away for their education."