

High Pressure vs. Dignity Depends on How You Use the Three Cons

By Trey Ryder

Lawyers often ask me to explain how selling-based marketing differs from education-based marketing. I point out the standard differences about giving prospects what they want, information and advice -- and removing what they don't want, a sales pitch.

But the fine points of education-based marketing go much deeper.

You and I, as consumers, want people to respect the fact that we have a brain -- and that we can make our own decisions without someone else (the salesperson) telling us what to do. This important point clearly defines how the respected authority and consultant (you) differ from the pushy salesperson (nearly everyone else).

The difference is in the three cons: Convince. Conclude. Control.

The salesperson tries to "convince" you that you need what he's selling by controlling your decision. (We refer to this as sales pressure.) On the other hand, the authority offers facts and advice that allow you to "conclude" that you need what he offers -- and that you need it right now. He never tries to control your decision.

Here are two typical examples:

#1: Salesperson: *"This service will save you time and money. Sign here and I'll finish the paperwork in two minutes."* (He tells you what will happen and tells you what to do.)

Authority: *"From the facts I have provided, I think you'll agree that you'll save considerable time and money by choosing option A over option B".* (The authority respects the person's ability to listen to the information, draw his own conclusions, and make his own decisions.)

#2: Salesperson: *"You must sign up for this service now. Otherwise, I can't be held responsible".*

Authority: *"From the case history I've just presented, I hope you see how important it is that you act now, without delay".*

ADVICE: When you talk with prospects, make sure you provide facts, case histories, information and advice that allow prospects to conclude they need what you offer -- and soon. The moment you turn the tables and tell them what they need, they see you as a salesperson. This undermines your credibility and you lose their respect.

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Trey Ryder is a law-firm consultant who specializes in education-based marketing for attorneys. He offers lawyers three free articles by e-mail: 13 Marketing Misconceptions that Cost Lawyers a Fortune, 11 Brochure Mistakes Lawyers Make, and 7 Secrets of Dignified Marketing. Send your name and e-mail address to trey@treyryder.com and ask for his e-mail packet of articles.