



Let the World Know

Differentiating Your Message

Do you wonder why, when you have this great product or service, prospects seem interested but never act? Have you ever thought how inundated those prospects are with messages from your competitors that sound just like yours? And if all the messages sound much the same, and similar to what their current provider says as well, why *would* they make a change? There's no compelling factor moving them forward in the sales cycle. It's easier to stay right where they are, with their current provider. That's the commoditized market in which we do business today.

What are you to do? You may be in an arena where you have just a few, or thousands, of competitors. It doesn't matter. You have to differentiate yourself from the competition to win in your arena. And a perfect place to do that in the sales process is in your messaging.

Let's start by defining messaging. It's not just written words in your marketing materials and proposals. Messaging is also what you say. Messaging happens any time a prospect sees or hears something about your company, product, or service whether in an advertisement, a brochure, a proposal, or a sales call.

So how do you go about differentiating your message? First, think about what differentiates you from your competition. Don't say, "nothing." Think hard and think beyond the traditional product and service features. Perhaps you can handle larger orders than your competitor; perhaps your servicing team has much more tenure and expertise than your competition; perhaps you can customize your offering much more easily and inexpensively than your competition. The key is to identify all those things that make you different from the rest of the pack.

Then message accordingly. Remember, your differentiated message is strongest when it addresses something about which your prospect really cares or something about which you can make them care. And your differentiated messaging should permeate all of your avenues for communication, whether written or verbal. That doesn't just happen. It takes commitment and follow-through. But by differentiating your message, you will:

- * Set yourself apart from your competition.
- * Guide your prospects through the sales process.
- * Prompt not only prospect interest, but action.

Do you want to have a "me too" message or a message that truly stands out from the crowd? Investing in creating a differentiated message helps ensure you are seen not as a commodity, but as a true partner that can help your prospects succeed.