

6 Marketing Techniques to Apply to Training - How eLearning Professionals Get What They Want (Sep 15)

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In this article I would like to share with you some simple marketing techniques that can be applied to the training field to get your learner do what you want them to do.



Marketing Techniques to Apply to Training

With a little imagination and creativity you can persuade anyone to do anything. Let's apply some simple [marketing](#) techniques to training:

1. Give Them What THEY Want.

An essential advice is to give people what they want or a solution to their problem. In training it's easy; if you set proper objectives and you know exactly who the trainees are, you are half way there. Create a training that aims to **their** needs and abilities while being relevant and fun.

2. The Power of Words.

We may not be aware of it, but the words we utter daily may have different interpretations, even if you think that they mean the same thing. For example, would you rather have someone tell you that you are

“slim” or would you like to hear you are “thin”? Being slim has a slightly positive effect, because it is positively attributed to health and fitness.

Rather than tell a learner “you have failed”, just mention that they have “not yet achieved success”. Get the picture? Always try to speak words in the most positive manner you can think of.

On the same note, never use negative feedback trying to motivate people. Experiences arising from discouragement and condemnation will have a negative effect on the recipient. You should inspire, encourage, and motivate them instead. Tell them they have the capacity to achieve great things, if they would only put a little more effort; rather than telling them they failed because they didn't try hard enough. Can you see the difference? Words are very powerful indeed. Use them responsibly for the benefit of all.

3. Ask For More.

A proven technique to get what you want is called “asking for more”. Kids master this technique like pros. Here's how it works: When kids simply want to go to a movie, they ask their parents to go to a sleep-over party with the guys. When their parents are reluctant to approve, their children just ask “Could we just go to a movie then?”. The kids get what they want, while the parents feel that the pressure has been taken off them and are happy to oblige.

How to Apply It to Training?

Inform your learners that they need to get the course done within a week with, say, 90% success rate. Then offer a deal that if they get the course done within 3 days, they can get away with a 70% success rate. In this case you are aiming at course completion rather than the results. You can change the offer to aim at results rather than time to complete the task. Either way, the learner feels they have a choice and that they are getting a good deal.

4. The Law of Expectation.

Ever heard of the expression “You get what you expect”?

- **Use Parkinson's Law.**
If the task requires 3 months to finish, tell your learners it has to be done within 3 weeks. The magic in this is that the work will be completed in a span of time based on a person's expectation of how much time is required to do it. Parkinson's Law states “work expands so as to fill the time available for its completion”. If they cannot do it in that span of time, tell them that if they can produce excellent results, they will be given a 2 week extension. This way you will have given them the impression that they are given a lot of time (since you've added 2 weeks to the original 3 week deadline), even when the task can take up to 3 months to finish.
- **Be specific.**
Another great tip to maximize the power of expectation is to be as specific as possible. You can say “I know you're a fast learner who can complete this task within a week” instead of “I know you to be fast and efficient, so complete this task ASAP”.
- **The placebo effect.**
There have been cases where the law of expectation has produced miraculous results. Take the case of some cancer patients who were given vitamin pills with no healing capabilities. They were told that these pills contain cancer-busting ingredients that can effectively heal their sickness quickly. They believed and “expected” to be cured, and so that's what happened.
The power of the subconscious mind is truly extraordinary. They say that people act or behave according to how you treat them. When we assign a person certain positive qualities or attributes, that person will allow us to believe that what we said is true. So if you treat, let's say, an average student as a genius, and tell him that his performance exhibits that of a highly intellectual person, he will allow us to believe it and indeed act like a very smart person.

5. The Storytelling Tactic.

“Want to hear a story?” Oftentimes when you hear this question, you suddenly pay attention to the person who is going to tell the story. Everybody loves stories! For this reason, storytelling has become one of the most powerful methods to engage people.

When you tell a story, you lower your learners’ resistance, make complicated things easier to understand, and perk up their emotions. You are able to escape temporarily from the real world and enter another dimension.

When they're in storyland, their minds are more open to accept concepts and ideas. Storytelling can touch hearts, change moods and alter emotions. The readers will feel as if they're involved in the story, and they would be curious about what happen next. They won't feel as they are learning something their boss or organization forces them to attend.

6. The Anchoring Tactic.

Imagine the power of having others do whatever you want them to do without them being consciously aware of it. When you hear the word “oranges”, your mind processes the image, your mouth may begin to water, and you may even remember the times when you and your special someone were enjoying and eating the oranges together.

Another example could be a song or a tune you heard during a special moment while being with your loved one on a tropical island. A year later, you're listening to the radio. You hear the same song and suddenly remember the place, emotions, smells, tastes. You can feel the sensation all over again. You recollect the sentimental mood because of that same music.

This influence is known as “anchoring”. An anchor is a compelling and influential connection of something seen, heard, touched, smelled, or tasted via a specific memory or representation. You associate something experienced in the past with a state correlating to the present.

How to use an anchor in training?

Whenever a learner is about to make an important decision, a specific sound or gesture will pop up. After a couple of times, you’ve programmed him to be ready for the challenge. It may work best if you have a series of training with the same theme. Positive feedback and praises would then motivate the learners to do their very best and look forward for the next anchor to show up; hence, engagement.