

## 9 positioning strategies for those involved in the "sale of advice"

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With the challenges and changes that are presently happening in the sale of advice profession now is a good time to analyse your positioning strategy.

- How do you position yourself in a competitive and changing market?
- What positioning technique(s) will you use to identify your offer(s)?
- How will potential clients be drawn to you with positioning in advertising, marketing and their perceptions of how they see you?

Be aware of how you position yourself, rather than let people's perceptions be part of the positioning phenomena from their perspective. The perception of what you actually do and your positioning requirements should not be at odds!

The following are some positioning types that will help you to develop your marketing ideas to attract more clients and perhaps sharpen your focus on this critical issue of positioning your business in a positive and helpful light for you, your clients and potential clients.

### By product definition

Certain products have staked a position in the market. Where do people's perceptions of your product offerings place you?

Is your service definition about:

strategic advice	estate planning	mortgages
insurance	superannuation accumulation	investments
property	superannuation consolidation	shares
ongoing consultation	relief from complexity	
transactions		

Or is it about what those products can do for people? Consider whether people buying these products and what those products will do for them. Not everyone wants to buy insurance, but every widow(er) will tell you of the benefits of having insurance.

## By quality of excellence

- Much is made of service and the quality attached to it.
- Is your service offer truly excellent?
- By whose and what standards will it be judged?
- Will it be by your standards, the public standards or by the client's expectations?
- What sets you apart from your competition on personally delivered excellence and expertise?

Just because you say you will give excellent service may not be the experience your customers have had with your service offer. Your perception of excellence and the customers can be diametrically opposite, with disastrous consequences for your business.

Consider the value of testimonials and endorsements of how you have helped people to reinforce your offer.

## By price

At some time we all have to compete on price in any market. But the answer the customer wants is ***“If I pay the price will I get value for the money I spend or the time I invest?”***

Do your customers get value for money? How can you rationalise the price/value equation with customers? If you let price be the determining factor in positioning then you will find it hard to get people to consider other value items you can provide. Price should not be the sole arbiter of value. It is what clients and customers get for the price that determines their definition of value.

## By end user type

Industry super funds utilise this in their “no commissions/higher returns” marketing. Industry super funds market the idea that they are for their members, not advisers or fund managers. These funds have built a powerful positioning case. They build a strong community feeling within their constituency that services their ideological aim.

## By competitive definition

What does your business actually do for people? One of the interesting ideas for competitive definition in the sale of advice is to give the customer the idea that you “relieve complexity”. It is not what you know that counts, but how simple and easy

you can make it for people to firstly understand what you propose to do and secondly to help people implement your advice.

### **By conceptual pull**

Many businesses have built enviable positions by talking about and marketing the idea of conceptual pull rather than product push. This means talking about and marketing the idea of concepts. Concepts can be things like 'comfortable retirement', 'debt redemption' 'gearing', 'estate creation, equalization or preservation', 'wealth creation' or 'cash preservation'.

The main thing is this conceptual pull takes the emphasis away from product push and focuses on benefits you provide for the client now and in the future.

### **By emotional influence**

Positioning your business as a confidant, source of support in tough or unsure times relies on the power of emotive involvement by you with customers. A large insurer used to have a motto that said (in Latin) "a sure friend in uncertain times". That was a most effective motto that their agents (in those days) sold on.

### **By specific use**

The positioning power of this idea is that you pick out a certain saying or motto for your business. It can be something like "Giving simple advice to complex problems" or "Consolidating your super". Then you encourage people to contact you and talk to you about this specific topic rather than product push.

### **By the HELP factor**

Many people equate their value of the relationship with the help they receive. So it is critically important to tell people that you are helping them. If you don't tell them, they may not realise it.

Learn to include the word **HELP** in your presentations, correspondence and online communications. It has a powerful psychological impact on users of your services, expertise and experience.

**Activity: Based on the 9 positioning strategies explained above ,which ones should you:**

- a) improve?
- b) adopt?
- c) review?
- d) stop using?

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