

by Jay Conrad Levinson

Whether you know it or not you're marketing yourself every day. And to lots of people! You're marketing yourself in a quest to make a sale, warm up a relationship, get a job, get connected, get something you deserve. You're always sending messages about yourself.

Guerrillas control the messages that they send. It's all about intention. Guerrillas live intentionally. Non-guerrillas send unintentional messages, even if those messages sabotage their overall goals in life. They want to close a sale for a consulting contract, but their inability to make eye contact or the mumbled message they leave on an answering machine turns off the prospect.

Guerrillas send no unintentional messages

Unintentional messages erect an insurmountable barrier. Your job: be sure there is no barrier. There are really two people within you -- your accidental self and your intentional self. Most people are able to conduct about 95 percent of their lives by intent. But that's not enough.

It's the other 5 percent that can get you in trouble -- or in clover. I'm not talking phoniness here. The idea is for you to be who you are and not who you aren't -- to be aware of what you're doing, aware of whether or not your actions communicate ideas that will help you get what you deserve.

Who do you market to without even realizing it?

Employees. Customers. Prospects. Teachers. Parents. Children. Bosses. Prospective employers. Mates. Prospective mates. Friends. Sellers. Landlords. Neighbors. Professionals. Members of the community. The police. Service people. Family. Bankers. These people can help you or stop you from getting what you deserve. You can influence them with how you market yourself.

The three big questions to answer

To market yourself properly, answer these three questions:

- 1. Who are you now?** If friends described you, what would they say? Be honest rather than complimentary.
- 2. What do you want out of life?** Be specific.
- 3. How will you know when you've reached your goals?**

If you can't answer these questions, you're doomed to accidental marketing, spending your life reacting instead of responding, the odds against you reaching your goals.

How do you send messages and market yourself right now?

With your appearance, to be sure. You also market with your eye contact and body language,

your habits, your speech patterns. You market yourself in print with your letters, email, website, notes, faxes, brochures and other printed material. You also market yourself with your attitude -- bigtime. You market yourself with your ethics.

How people judge you

Again, you may not be aware of it, but people are constantly judging and assessing you by noticing many things about you. You must be sure the messages of your marketing don't fight your dreams. What are people using to base their opinions, to make their decisions about you?

- Clothing / Hair / Weight / Height
- Jewelry / Facial hair / Makeup / Business card
- Laugh / Glasses / Title / Neatness
- Smell / Teeth / Smile / What you carry
- Eye contact / Gait / Posture / Tone of voice
- Handwriting / Spelling / Hat / Thoughtfulness
- Car / Office / Home / Nervous habits
- Handshake / Stationery / Availability / Writing ability
- Phone use / Enthusiasm / Energy level / Comfort online

You're fully aware of your intentional marketing and possibly even invest time, energy and imagination into it, not to mention money.

But you may be undermining that investment if you're not paying attention to things that matter to others even more than what you say: keeping promises, punctuality, honesty, demeanor, respect, gratitude, sincerity, feedback, initiative, reliability. They also notice passion -- or the absence of it. They notice how well you listen to them.

What do now

Now that you know these things, what should you do? Although Ben Franklin himself said that three of the hardest things in the world are diamonds, steel and knowing yourself, here's a three-step plan to get you started on the road to self-awareness and self-marketing acumen:

1. Write a positioning statement about yourself. Identify just who you are and the positive things that stand out most about you.

2. Identify your goals. Put into writing the three things you'd most like to achieve during the next three months, three years and then ten years.

3. State your measuring stick. Write the details of how you will know when you've achieved your goals. Be brief and specific.

To guerrilla market yourself, simply be aware of and in control of the messages you send. Do

that and your goals will be a lot easier to attain.