

*Entelechy's Newsletter for Trainers, Managers, HR Professionals and Others  
Responsible for the Performance of Others*

---

---

IN THIS ISSUE:

Differentiate Yourself – Part I  
Teams and Productivity  
And Now for a Little Humor  
Mailing and Privacy Information

---

---

---

---

DIFFERENTIATE YOURSELF – PART I

---

---

In the last newsletter, I illustrated how Entelechy often turns business away because we don't have what the client needs – although we possibly could create what they need. The fact is, we turn business away (or, more specifically, help them find solutions better than Entelechy's) because this client-centered-at-the-risk-of-losing-business philosophy helps differentiate Entelechy (and create more and better sales!).

In today's world, differentiation is key to success and survival. Quality products and services and low prices are merely tickets to get into the show. To play in today's game – and to win today's customer – you must differentiate yourself.

The American Heritage Dictionary defines the word differentiate as: "To constitute or perceive a distinction; to make or become different, distinct, or specialized; to become unlike or dissimilar."

Differentiation involves distinguishing you, your company, and your company's products and services from other people and companies in the marketplace. It is how you convince your customer that you are different from your competitors. Not simply different, but superior in terms that are meaningful and significant to customers. A company that can effectively differentiate itself in its marketplace will be more successful.

Differentiation happens at two levels, yet many people don't recognize the difference. Differentiation happens at the global – or macro – level through marketing. Think about cars for a moment and the marketing campaigns that each automobile takes in marketing – differentiating – its automobiles. And they are largely successful. Volvo = safety. Honda = efficiency and style. BMW = sporty and classy. Ford = tough and rugged. When you first start looking for a car, you rely on macro differentiation to help you make sweeping, general choices.

Macro-differentiators are often found in product/service marketing brochures, press releases, positioning pieces, brochures, and sales tools. The effective macro-differentiators typically follow the format of feature --> function --> advantage.

However, macro differentiation – where companies tend to spend most of their marketing money and where unsuccessful sales professionals tend to spend most of their time – don't make the sale. Micro-differentiation makes a person buy.

In sales, micro-differentiation is king. Effective sales professionals are able to isolate the problem or opportunity and the associated value of their solution. They extend the feature, function, and advantage statements to include benefits. A true benefit – not an advantage – shows how a product or service meets an explicit need as expressed by the customer. Benefits – in this definition – are very strongly related to success in all sizes of sales.

Continuing our car-buying example, a successful car salesman will try to identify those issues that are most important to you and emphasize the model's features that address **THOSE AND ONLY THOSE** issues. Let's say that I walk into auto dealer to purchase a car for my teen-age daughter. Most sales people will try to help me identify general criteria such as budget, primary use, etc. to help begin the search process.

The unsuccessful sales person will take me to a sporty red Nissan and point out the quickness and maneuverability of the car – features widely known about the Nissan.

The successful sales person will ask me more questions about my concerns and issues. “How long has your daughter been driving?” “What's your feeling about safety?” “What's your feeling about reliability?” “What's your feeling about the car's look?” And so on.

Once identified, the successful sales person will accentuate the features of the car **THAT RELATE DIRECTLY AND ONLY** to my expressed needs. The successful sales person

will NOT emphasize the powerful stereo unless I had identified it as a need/want. Why? Because I will consider the stereo a frill that I'm paying extra money for; features that don't directly link to my needs and wants actually detract from my willingness to buy.

Whether you're selling cars, computers, long-term care service, training, consulting services, or ANYTHING, recognize the important distinction between marketing (macro-differentiation) and selling (micro-differentiation). While marketing will get you in the customer's mind, only differentiation that addresses the customer's articulated needs will land the sale.

In the next issue, we'll explore how to use micro-differentiation (true benefits) to close sales even in today's tough economy.

(This information comes from *Planning for Success*, a module in Entelechy's High Performance Sales program. You can purchase and immediately download customizable source files to create your own customized sales training program at <http://unlockit.com/HPS.htm>. Differentiate yourself!)

=====

## TEAMS AND PRODUCTIVITY

=====

Teams – like individuals – are judged on their results. Too often, however, companies and individuals have the misguided notion that teams are created to help improve morale or to motivate people. While these are often byproducts of high performing teams, companies that use teams to increase morale or to motivate often end up with a demoralized and discouraged staff.

The key to high performing teams is task: there must be a purposeful, achievable task to which people can commit their energy and time. What do we call a group of people without a well-defined, purposeful task? The polite term is committee.

Most of us have worked on projects where the task was ill defined. What was the result? Probably frustration and anxiety. Certainly not productivity.

Likewise, tasks that are not clearly linked to something purposeful quickly become drudgery.

As leaders of teams, you have the capability of helping team members define tasks that are linked to the team goals and vision. Here are tips to help you do it correctly:

- Define the project's purpose (what are the results intended to accomplish?).
- Define the project's deliverables (what tangible things will we produce?).
- Break down the work to be done (what subtasks must be completed?).
- Plan the timeline (what needs to be done when?).
- Look for potential breakdowns (what could go wrong) and opportunities (what could go better than anticipated?).
- Plan the resources (what do we need to get this done?).
- Identify dependencies (what could derail the work?) and contingencies.
- Assign accountability (one person only).
- Identify who needs to be involved and/or informed.
- Build the team.

High Performance Teams focus on a purposeful, achievable task. They achieve results. High Performance Teams live on the edge!

(This information comes from Entelechy's archives; for more information on High Performing Teams, write me at [ttraut@unlockit.com](mailto:ttraut@unlockit.com).)

=====

## AND NOW FOR A LITTLE HUMOR

=====

The Washington Post publishes a yearly contest in which readers are asked to supply alternate meanings for various existing words.

The following were some of this year's winning entries:

1. Coffee (n.), a person who is coughed upon.
  2. Flabbergasted (adj.), appalled over how much weight you have gained.
  3. Abdicate (v.), to give up all hope of ever having a flat stomach.
  4. Esplanade (v.), to attempt an explanation while drunk.
  5. Negligent (adj.), describes a condition in which you absentmindedly answer the door in your nightgown.
  6. Lymph (v.), to walk with a lisp.
  7. Gargoyle (n.), an olive-flavored mouthwash.
  8. Flatulence (n.) the emergency vehicle that picks you up after you are run over by a steamroller.
  9. Balderdash (n.), a rapidly receding hairline.
  10. Circumvent (n.), the opening in the front of boxer shorts.
  11. Pokemon (n), A Jamaican proctologist.
- =====



## MAILING AND PRIVACY INFORMATION

=====

If you would like to automatically receive this free newsletter please sign up by clicking <http://unlockit.com/thekey.htm> and register your email address. Entelechy will not sell, rent, or otherwise provide anyone else your membership information for any reason. Period.

If you decide at a later time that you would like to be removed from our mailing list simply click on <http://unlockit.com/optout.htm> to be removed immediately from our mailing database. (If you have trouble with the opt out link, please send an email to me directly at [ttraut@unlockit.com](mailto:ttraut@unlockit.com) and I'll personally remove your name.)

Send this email to your friends and colleagues who may be involved in training and the performance of others and could benefit from FREE performance tips, tools, and techniques.

Terence Traut, President of Entelechy "unlocking potential"

[ttraut@unlockit.com](mailto:ttraut@unlockit.com)

phone: 603-424-1237

fax: 603-424-6361

<http://www.unlockit.com/>