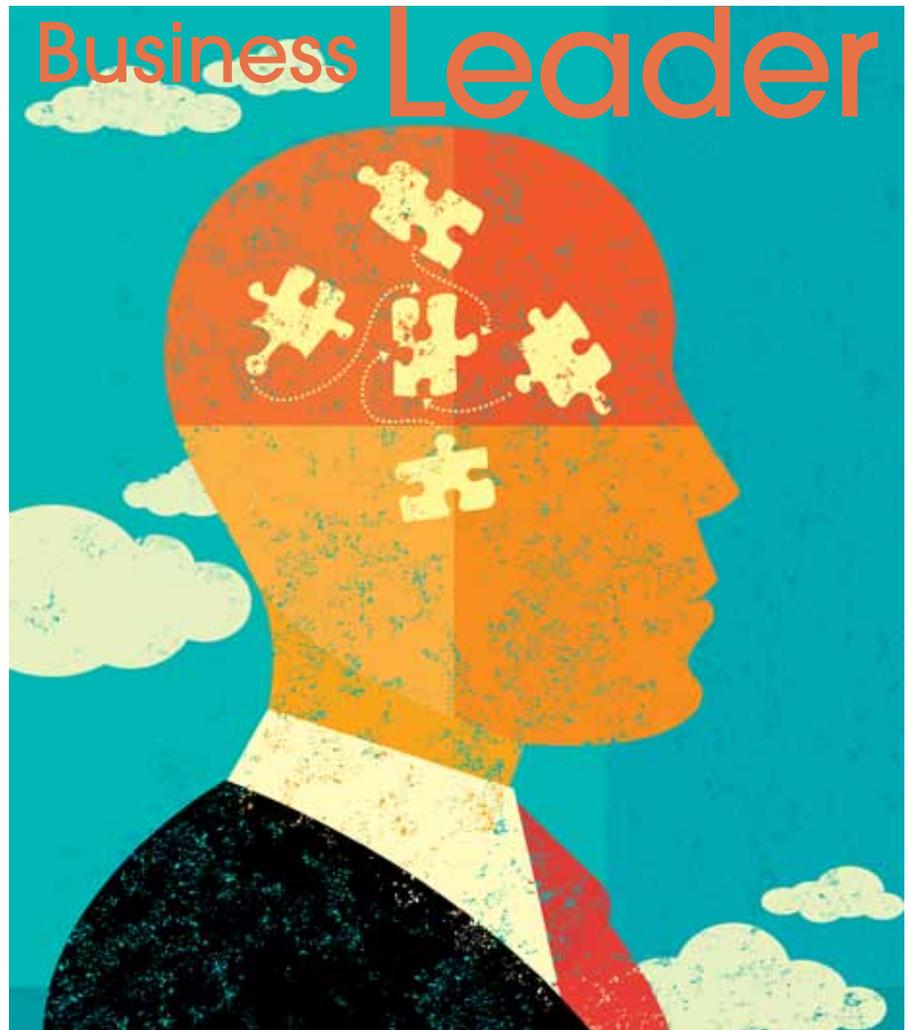


How to Become a Conscious Business Leader

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Conscious Marketing is not about corporate social responsibility or philanthropy. It's about building something so fundamentally good and compelling into the heart of your business, your products and services that people simply want to join your tribe and tell everyone about you... so how can you become a conscious leader?



Conscious Marketing is about ensuring your marketing activities are aligned with your higher purpose – the WHY behind what you do. It's about pricing and packaging your offering with deep regard for your customer and their needs while taking care of and engaging all of your stakeholders.

It's about taking a 'cause leadership' approach and bringing your profession along with you in a spirit of collaboration rather than competition.

Conscious Marketing is also about promoting your offering with honesty, transparency and congruency and with messages of hope and humanity...

Ultimately, when you do this, your business will become sustainable and profitable because your product or service and your

message will make the world a better place... It's all about profiting on purpose.

So how do you change your business and your leadership style to become a conscious leader?

Let me demonstrate within the context of optometry. The case study I have created here demonstrates how an optometry practice owner could turn his or her practice around within a few months, just by changing the focus. Let's position this optometry practice in a small town recently devastated by flood. We will name the practice owner Narelle...

Having had to close her practice due to the flood, Narelle recognises the opportunity to re-open with a new brand and positioning.

She wants to send a strong message to members of the community to let them

know that despite the turmoil of the preceding months, her practice is here to stay, prepared to help, and that she and her staff have the interests of the community and their eye health at the very core of their hearts.

Following recent changes to Medicare rebates, she also believes it's the right time to begin charging a fee for service (for customers other than pensioners, low-income health care cardholders, full time students and children) that will ensure she can continue to offer the highest level of service and expertise in the long-term.

PUTTING PURPOSE AT HEART

In line with the Cycle of Conscious Marketing process, the first thing Narelle needs to do is conduct an audit of her current marketing program then build a new marketing plan that's embedded

with processes and measurement systems. Once she's done this, her plan needs to be executed and her team educated to ensure an ongoing return on investment.

In developing her plan and determining her communication strategy, Narelle needs to realise and constantly remind herself – and her team – of her deepest purpose for being in business as an optometrist: to help customers maximise their vision, and in doing so, collectively contribute to the health and welfare of the community.

The planning stage of Narelle's process will help her shape the level of service and product she wants to offer. Additionally it will help to define her communications strategy, which needs to become patient focused as opposed to being all about her previous practice success.

In thinking through her service offering, Narelle will gain the confidence to change her pricing model so that she can begin to charge a fee that truly reflects her service and expertise. She might also look for new opportunities to build patient loyalty and in doing so, improve the standard of community eye health, while also making her practice more sustainable. This might include, for example, a monthly fee for contact lens patients that will encourage them to come in more regularly for checks, fitting enquiries and contact lens supply.

Creating a new fee schedule of any kind is a delicate matter, especially when patients are used to being bulk-billed for vision testing. This makes it more important than ever to ensure all communications demonstrate that Narelle's practice team passionately cares about the health and welfare of patients. It also makes it essential that fees are clearly communicated – patients need to feel they can drop in anytime for advice instead of being scared to do so because they are unclear of what they will be charged. They need to see their optometrist as an expert, trusted partner in their health care. Additionally, Narelle's team needs to be clear on the reasons for these new fee schedules and aware of the benefits the new fees will bring to both the patients and practice. They need to be ready to communicate and discuss these changes with patients in a confident, positive manner.

Everything we do, regardless of the business we are in, is about educating our patients or clients and offering them the best advice to help them be healthy, happy and successful... And the good news is, you don't need to wait for a flood, fire or earthquake to close your practice before implementing change... it's absolutely possible for you to transform your practice overnight with a conscious approach to marketing. 

Conscious Marketing

Purpose-driven

All marketing and communications are underpinned by your deepest purpose and must really engage hearts and minds.

Customer-centric

All marketing and communications focus on what really matters to your customer and how you truly make a difference to their lives.

Value-driven

The product or service offered delivers real outcomes for clients and is valued accordingly.

Services are priced with fixed fees and income is earned because of results achieved.

Stakeholder Advantageous

Your company and your marketing actively promotes the health and wellbeing of every stakeholder in your stakeholder eco-system.

Creating a community around your business is a primary motivator in your marketing.

Collaborative

Marketing that is designed to improve the reputation of your industry. You believe there is enough to go around for all reputable companies and you have a genuine interest in helping everyone succeed.

Positive Message

Your marketing is authentic and spreads love and joy and leaves people feeling warm-hearted and affectionate towards your brand, even if they don't buy from you. You don't do the hard sell, you tell people how you help and invite them to join you.

Narrow Media

You use a limited number of mediums to get your message out very well and frequently to target your niche market rather than spreading your promotions across as many medium as possible (up to six maximum).

Simplicity

All products and services are packaged simply with the customer in mind and all communications are clear and simple. A 'less is more' approach is taken at all times.

Respectful

Your marketing and communications respect the lives of your customers and are not intrusive, disruptive or annoying.

Honest

Your marketing is ethical, truthful, transparent and congruent and promises a product, service or experience that you absolutely know you can deliver.

Intelligent

Your marketing assumes your potential customers are conscious, thoughtful and adept at making sound decisions without the need for the hard-sell.

Unconscious Marketing

Profit-driven

All marketing and communications focus on selling as much product to as many people as possible for as much money as possible

Company-centric

Marketing that talks all about how many awards you've won and how brilliant you are rather than how you really can help your customers.

Price-driven

The pricing strategy is all about undercutting the competition. Services are sold at hourly rates and the time taken to complete a project, rather than on value offered.

Stakeholder Detrimental

Your marketing is incongruous and promotes your great corporate citizenship to customers while other stakeholders are screwed in the process.

Competitive

Marketing that attacks the competition rather than focusing on what is good and right about their own offering.

Negative Message

Your marketing message is predicated on fear to make people feel unworthy, unloved or unsuccessful if they don't buy your product. Your message has a negative impact on humanity in general and you take a hard sell approach

Broad Media

You use every medium possible from TV to twitter to interrupt your client and to get your message out to as many people as possible. You pollute the atmosphere with your message at every opportunity.

Complexity

Products and services offered are confusing and designed to create loyalty through inertia e.g. Telco's with phone packages and pricing models that are complex while also binding.

Disrespectful

Your promotional attempts focus on disrupting people at any opportunity. Eg Charity workers on commission who accost passers-by on the street

Dishonest

Your marketing promises something that you know you can't deliver. Eg Insurance companies that advertise outstanding service and can't deliver at the coalface

Unintelligent

Your marketing talks down to the customer and assumes they have an IQ of five and zero SQ or EQ (Spiritual or Emotional Quotient); e.g. most commercial radio station ads

Carolyn Tate is a marketer with a passion to reinvent capitalism, business and marketing so that it makes a positive contribution to humanity and the planet. She is the Victorian Leader for Conscious Capitalism, the founder of The Slow School of Business and her company is a Certified B Corporation. She loves to write, speak, educate and build conscious business communities that are both purpose-driven and prosperous. Carolyn has written four books, her most recent one being Conscious Marketing, which was launched in April 2015 and available at <http://carolyntate.co/off-the-shelf/>

