

Using CASCADE to get your Message Across

What are you selling?

We're all selling something.

You might be in real estate or insurance, selling property or products to members of the public. Or you might be working in a government department, or an office, trying to sell your idea to your team, the board or the CEO. Or maybe you're self-employed and trying to sell your latest process to an important client.

Either way, we are all in the business of selling our ideas, our products, our services - ourselves. The question is: how can we do it more effectively? How can we get through to the people who we want to "buy" our message?

Using words to sell pictures

The problem with trying to sell our products or ideas to someone is that our "buyer" already has a picture in their head of how their world works, and we are trying to use *words* to dislodge that *picture*.

So to do that, we have to use those words more effectively.

Using the CASCADE principle

CASCADE has nothing to do with water - or Tasmanian beer! It's just a way of remembering what to do. Take out the vowels and you are left with C-S-C-D: the 4 steps to clearer communication.

Clarity - Confusion is death! Be very clear about what you are saying. Just because you understand it doesn't mean they will. Use simple words. Short sentences. Small steps. Be clear.

Structure - Use a structure of some sort to give the other person a "picture". It might be a triangle, with an idea on each corner; a circle of 4 essential steps; or a list of "5 things to look for when buying a new TV". Don't just *use* the words - *structure* them.

Certainty - In an age of uncertainty, people look for certainty. They want to know what, why and how. Tell them what is certain and what is not. Be definite, not wishy-washy.

Direction - People want to know how to proceed. So tell them: what should they do now? What needs to happen next? Who is responsible? Give a clear direction for action.

Please note: I've used CASCADE to put together this edition's message! Clarity of idea, a 4-step Structure, Certainty of what to do, and now a Direction to take to be more effective - over to you!