

CAN MARKETING EDUCATORS MARKET VALUES TO THEIR OWN CLIENTS?

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ABSTRACT

Loneragan's process model of human knowing can be adapted by marketing educators to inculcate values, ethical behavior, and social responsibility. The adaptation described in this paper tailors academic programs to student needs as determined by process-model level and students' susceptibility to personal value change.

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Marketing educators have become increasingly concerned with enhancing the personal value systems of students as they impact on marketing ethics and social responsibility. This concern is reflected by the American Marketing Association in its "Code of Ethics" which states: "As a member of the American Marketing Association, I recognize the significance of my professional conduct and my responsibility to society and to the other members of my profession: . . . 3. By striving to improve marketing knowledge and practice in order to better serve society. . . 5. By pledging to use the highest professional standards in my work and in competitive activity. . . (Boone and Kurtz 1983, p. 514)."

The concern and response of other marketing educators is also strongly documented in marketing literature. For example, Kotler (1984, p. 29) calls for marketers to "balance three considerations in setting their marketing policies, namely, company profits, consumer want satisfaction and society interests." Pride and Ferrell (1983, p. 491) point out: "The changing values of society have placed more pressure on marketers to act responsibly and ethically." Almost all other authors of marketing texts make similar statements.

More to the point, marketers in the early 1960's began to shift emphasis to the consumer. Kennedy proclaimed the consumer's four-pronged Magna Carta: (1) the right to safety, (2) the right to be informed, (3) the right to choose, and (4) the right to be heard (Weiss 1968). Yet there are only a handful of marketing models in terms of how the individual consumer develops freedom to make decisions. Could it be that marketing educators need to be self reflective on our own freedom with our students before we can be sensitive to the development of freedom in the consumer? Our attempt will be to raise this consciousness.

The purpose of this paper is to describe a conceptual approach to value education. Marketing educators might find the approach useful to inculcate positive personal values in a wide range of students, and through that consciousness develop a sensitivity to freedom in consumers. First the paper briefly describes Lonergan's (1973) model of human knowing which forms an adaptation basis for

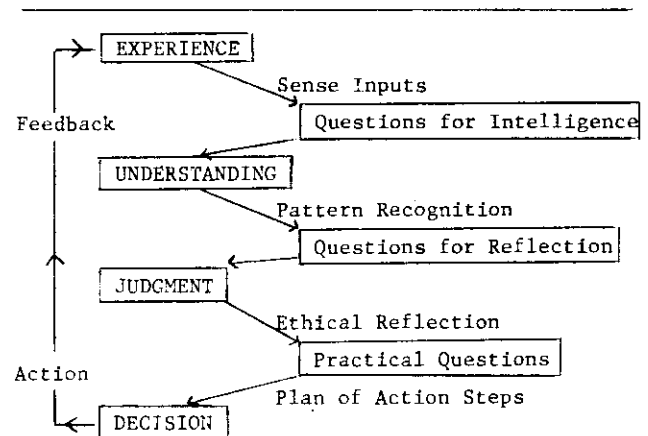
marketing educators. Next, the authors suggest one version of an adaptation which tailors academic programs to student needs as determined by process-model level and students' susceptibility to personal value change. Finally, implications for marketing educators are suggested.

LONERGAN'S PROCESS MODEL OF HUMAN KNOWING

Loneragan (1973) described human knowing as a process made up of several levels of activities which occur within a definite, recurring structure. The activities are experience, understanding, judgment, and decision. They are linked by questions and a feedback loop which completes the process model as depicted in Table 1. Each of the model's elements is explained below.

TABLE 1

THE PROCESS OF HUMAN KNOWING^a



^aLonergan 1973

Experience

This is the level of data, of presentations, and perceptions that are "given" to our senses and consciousness. Experience is prior to all questions; in other words, experience is the ground out of which questions emerge. Here the key skill is to use ones senses, to really see and hear and taste.

Understanding

An identification between knower (subject) and known (object) occurs at this level. Questions for intelligence emerge, insights occur, concepts are formulated, and definitions are fashioned. Understanding is not an automatic occurrence; sometimes it happens only with great difficulty

and effort. The frequency, depth and accuracy of human insight depends partially on native endowment, development of good intellectual habits, the willingness to question, the absence of bias, and the accuracy with which problems are presented. Here the key skill is pattern recognition. What does it mean? When will it repeat?

Judgment

The knowledge which a person has is incomplete until a judgment is made. During judgment, reflection occurs and the conditions for judging whether something is true or false are met. It should be noted that if reflective questions are brushed aside or dealt with too hastily, one may stumble into making a rash or false judgment. Good judgment does not occur automatically; it must be developed and fostered. Here the key skills are to determine, is it good or bad? Is it right or wrong?

Decision

Human knowing does not occur in a vacuum but in a world where concrete choices must be made. Knowing is a process that has a particular orientation; it is heading toward a decision. Not all human behavior is the product of rational decision. Some behavior is involuntary, much is habitual, and too often results not from intelligence and reasonableness but from stupidity and prejudice. While humans are capable of questioning intelligently and making wise decisions, they are not bound to do so. Here the outcome is action.

Linking Questions

The process of human knowledge moves toward completion as a result of the confrontation between the unknown and the desire to know. Indicators of this desire are the questions that form the links between experiences, understanding, judgment, and decision.

Feedback

Consequences of our decisions are fed back into our experience and stored until the human knowing process is repeated. This feedback occurs with the actions of the individual being perceived through sense experience by themselves and others, starting the process over again.

AN ADAPTED MODEL FOR MARKETING EDUCATORS

Table 2 illustrates an adaptation of Lonergan's model which can be used by marketing educators. The adapted model tailors academic programs to student needs as determined by process-model level and students' susceptibility to personal value change. The model's elements are explained below.

Undergraduate Education

Undergraduate students have a strong need to belong - not to be overpowered. They desire their own individuality but also seek to belong in an adult world. Their personal value systems are most susceptible to change at the experiential level. Learning experiences, such as exposure to live cases, are particularly appropriate. At the

TABLE 2

SUSCEPTIBILITY TO PERSONAL VALUE CHANGES

PROCESS LEVEL	EDUCATIONAL CLASSIFICATION			
	UNDER-GRADUATE	GRADUATE	PROFES-SIONAL	ALUMNI
Experience	Most Sus-ceptible using (a)	Common	Routine	Complex
Under-standing	Some Sus-ceptibil-ity	Most Sus-ceptible using (b)	Common	Complex
Judgment	No Expe-rience	Still A Question	Most Sus-ceptible using (c)	Life Judgment
Decision	Possibly Suscep-tible On Personal Level	Low Expe-rience	A Ques-tion	Most Sus-ceptible using (d)

(a) live cases
co-op education
team work
on-site studies

(b) M.I.S. systems
complex D.S.S.
pattern recognition
of markets and
products

(c) total organizational
cases
live C.E.O. inter-
action
social audit

(d) international pro-
grams
economic models
joint international
conferences

Source: Adapted version from Lonergan 1973

understanding level, undergraduates have some susceptibility to personal value changes. Marketing educators and other adults involved in business should convey a reflective acknowledgment of their experiences and the relevance of these experiences to the individual and organization. Undergraduates generally have no experience at the judgment level and are concerned with whether they can be an important part of a business organization. Programs designed to give students experience in judgment, such as cooperative work and study, individual marketing research projects, and team projects should be stressed. Students at the decision level are generally susceptible to value changes on a personal level only. On the one hand, they have an independent need to do the "right" things. At the same time, they possess an overwhelming need to be part of an organization. When their personal values are not congruent with the values and ethical norms of key organizations, a strong divisive tension arises. Creative experiences such as exposure to decision makers in action, and organizations for young executives chaired by marketing faculty, can help round out undergraduate program offerings.

Graduate Education

Experience is common for graduate students who examine human knowledge in a sophisticated manner. Their personal values are most susceptible to

change at the understanding level. They evaluate information in terms of its accuracy, whether or not it fits normal curves, and its implications in terms of future decision making. During the judgment phase graduate students attempt to comprehend information not touched directly by the senses and beyond individual perception. For example, they cannot go out and meet all General Motors' customers; yet they can get a sense of the corporation's operations and processes through information gathering and review. The students must gain the ability to act as a team during the decision phase. Value orientation here is in conflict with the need to specialize. There is a tendency to ignore any attempt to understand what implications these decisions have on the values of customers or the values of organizational decision makers.

Graduate education programs which significantly influence personal value development must include the contrast to those involving corporate social responsibility, social economic decisions, economic models, statement analysis, and interactive computer projects. The contrast is between individual choice and the complex model of choices made by collective action. Value education is skill development of change in complex social milieus.

Professional Education

Within professional education the knowledge that we are trying to inculcate is the central focus of an organization, the sense of unity and wholeness that occurs at the top management level. What is the experience that top management has of being in control and understanding the pulse of a large organization? Here sense experience is corporate sense experience. This is the processed data of Management Information Systems and Decision Support Systems compiled into "inputs" for the organization. Yet many CEO's cannot articulate this facet of their function. They cannot see the big picture. During understanding, top executives are trying to gain skills of pattern recognition of the organization's effect in terms of its involvement with the world at large. In the judgment phase an executive grapples with the fact that the organization as an entity is acting in such a way that it is real; that it has feedback from information systems that are connected to it. It is here that professionals are most susceptible to personal value changes. The decision level is critical for the organization. In value education, we find that the executives have a need to lead but not feel they are manipulating. Also necessary is an understanding that their success does not require that others fail. The initial issue is an ability to learn perceptions of organizational climate.

Professional education programs contributing to value enhancement include interaction with key decision makers in the community, reflective review of large scale decisions, reflection on social economic policy, and team interaction with other key decision makers.

Alumni Education

The alumni experiential level is the realization that organizations are citizens in a wider dimension - an international dimension. The under-

standing level involves insight concerning how we as a nation are effecting international economic trends and processes of the world. The judgment is that alumni can have a real effect on society's values worldwide. It is during the decision level that alumni are most susceptible to value changes. Each member needs to be reunited to a sense of personal commitment and values. But values have to grow. Whether they are on the corporate or individual level, they are not set once and for all.

Programs appropriate for alumni education are those involving a global perspective such as international alumni meetings, joint programs with other educational institutions, and "big picture" seminars. These are pulse inputs to sustain and reinforce action.

IMPLICATIONS FOR MARKETING EDUCATORS

Lonergan's process model of human knowing can be utilized by marketing educators to inculcate values, ethical behavior, and social responsibility. The model views human knowing as a growth process consisting of four activity levels: experience, understanding, judgment, and decision. The four levels are linked by questions and a feedback loop which completes the process model. The stages of individual growth affect the time and method of greatest susceptibility to change.

The adaptation described in this paper tailors academic programs to student needs as determined by process-model level and students' susceptibility to personal value change. Undergraduate students desire their own individuality but also seek to belong in an adult world. Their personal value systems are most susceptible to change at the experiential level where they are influenced by such programs as live cases stressing general processes, team projects, and other forms of cooperative work. Graduate students, on the other hand, are most susceptible to personal value changes at the understanding level. They tend to evaluate information in terms of its accuracy and implications for future decision making. Programs linked with corporate social responsibility, social economic decisions, and live cases stressing process are particularly applicable to graduate students. Within professional education, the knowledge that we are trying to inculcate is the central focus of an organization. That is, the sense of unity and wholeness that occurs at the top management level. Professionals are most susceptible to personal value changes at the judgment level where they are grappling with the central focus of organizations, the sense of unity and wholeness that occurs at the top management level. Programs stressing interaction with key decision makers in the community, reflective review of large scale decisions, and team interaction with other key decision makers should be stressed during professional education. The final educational level of concern is alumni education. Alumni are most susceptible to personal value change at the decision level which extends to the global environment. Alumni have to be reunited to a sense of personal commitment and an ever expanding value system. Programs appropriate for alumni education are those involving a global perspective such as international alumni meetings, joint programs with other educational institutions, and "big picture" seminars.

Human knowing is a structured process which occurs within a definite, recurring structure and not in a disorganized or accidental fashion. Process models which match program offerings with student growth needs are important aids to marketing educators in their effort to promote positive personal value systems. Can marketing educators market values to their own clients? The answer is yes, if they understand when and how. By understanding stages of growth in student clients they will know when. By understanding the steps of value formation they will know how.

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