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## Book Reviews

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## Marketing Warfare Bottom-Up Marketing

Reviewed by Esther L. Hyman, CPA, Seattle, WA

In the 70s, Al Ries and Jack Trout, as top officers of Trout & Ries, Inc., a New York advertising and marketing agency, became well known for coining the word "positioning." It became a buzzword in advertising circles as a result of their 1981 book called *Positioning: The Battle for Your Mind*. Positioning stressed that to beat the competition in the overcrowded marketplace, one had to create a "position" in the prospect's mind that considers not only a company's strengths and weaknesses, but those of the competition as well.

The recent trend is to view the business world as a highly competitive battleground and, therefore, employ military terminology and tactics to beat the competition. *Marketing Warfare* takes the principles of positioning and fully clothes them in military garb. The mind, not the market, is the battleground whose terrain is tricky and difficult to understand. Asserting that "free enterprise is marketing warfare," Ries and Trout use as their main source of inspiration Karl von Clausewitz, a Prussian general and philosopher of war. Von Clausewitz wrote an 1832 book that outlined "immutable strategies and tactics behind all successful wars that apply no matter how the weapons may change."

Since a dozen companies may all be serving the same customer's wants, the authors feel a shift needs to be made: from a customer-orientation with its "needs and wants" marketing theory to a competitor-orientation. Companies will have to learn how to attack and to flank their competition, how to defend their positions, and how and when to wage guerilla warfare. The authors make clear that "the study of warfare is not just a study of how to win; equally as important is how not to lose."

The authors examine contemporary Fortune 500 companies in four major marketing wars: the cola war, beer war, burger war and computer war. Many of these same companies are used as illustrations in *Bottom-Up Marketing*, which results in some repetition.

*Bottom-Up Marketing* integrates the communication tactics of *Positioning* and the marketing strategies of *Marketing Warfare* into a "bottom-up" approach. This approach requires that the tactics of a marketing approach dictate the strategies, not vice versa. The authors oppose long-term strategic plans, mission statements, and

Written by Al Ries & Jack Trout, McGraw-Hill, 1986

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business goals because these appraisals emphasize where one wants to be in the years ahead. This emphasis can cause two "top-down" cardinal sins: (1) the refusal to accept failure and/or (2) the reluctance to exploit success. Instead, emphasis must be from the specific to the general and from the current term to the long term.

Ries and Trout feel that traditional top-down thinking causes managers to chase existing markets instead of opportunities and to be internally oriented instead of externally. This further results in top management's disconnection with the marketplace, which the authors feel is the biggest marketing problem facing big business today.

If accountants have struggled with marketing before reading this book, they are still left struggling. They may know more of Coca-Cola's tactics vs. Pepsi's but will have to make the conceptual leap to connect the tactics of these competitors to the particular concerns of their financial world. The only close reference to accounting is in *Bottom-Up Marketing*. The authors point out that when one goes down to the "front lines of the financial services" and listens to customers, one does not "hear customers say, 'Let's go down to the Savings and Loan, dear, and get some financial services.' Customers don't generalize; they specify. They talk in terms of mortgages, stocks, car insurance, annuities, and home equity loans. Yet companies trying to sell these customers are doing just the opposite and promote themselves as suppliers of a full range of financial services. In military analogy we call this 'attacking on a wide front.' And it almost never works."

One also has to buy into the warfare mindset as a valid analogy to make the application successful. Obviously, this analogy has its limitations. One does not wage warfare all the time; one may eventually run out of "victims" – and allies. There is war and peace.

*Marketing Warfare:*

Pages: 216

Cost: \$17.95

*Bottom-Up Marketing:*

Pages: 226

Cost: \$19.95



## Working Up a Storm

By Jeanne M. Plas, Ph.D. & Kathleen V. Hoover-Dempsey, Ph.D.  
W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., New York  
Reviewed by Chris Fugate, CPA, Stone Mountain, GA

In *Working Up A Storm*, Plas and Hoover-Dempsey provide an analysis of "how people can make emotions work for them rather than against them." The authors define a specific emotion, present its pros and cons, give actual workplace examples of its application, and then show strategies for change in emotional style. The emotions they examine are anger, anxiety, joy, and the various emotions that elicit tears.

The authors first examine anger in the workplace. They give a history of the cultural views of anger, its sources, expressions, and responses. By giving anecdotes from true work experiences, they provide relevant examples of types of people and the way they deal with anger. Some of the types they examine are:

- Slow Burners
- Cool Customers
- Deflectors
- Keepers
- Tinderboxes
- Straight Shooters
- Displacers
- Withdrawers

Next, tears and weeping are explored. The authors look at why and how people cry. Once again, they use actual happenings to characterize different styles of crying. Anxiety is considered in the same manner.

Then, the authors deal with what they term the upside of emotions at work: expressing appreciation, joy, respect, and caring. They look at the different methods of expressing these emotions by considering what really happens at work.

After exploring emotions in the workplace, Plas and Hoover-Dempsey then give step-by-step strategies to change those emotional styles an individual may not be happy with. Many of the suggested strategies can:

- (1) Afford opportunities for changing "cognitive tapes," the customary remarks made during the personal observations and evaluations people engage in every day;
- (2) Call for image rehearsal, a technique that allows an individual to visualize new, positive, productive responses to old situations, and/or;
- (3) Involve conscious commitment to change.

The authors emphasize that emotions can be healthy, desirable elements in the workplace. They can focus a person's energy, point to difficulties, strengthen co-worker interaction, perform, in fact, a myriad of tasks that can enhance the quality of the workplace. As Plas and

Hoover-Dempsey write, "... results at work - the failures and successes - are dependent upon personal styles of experiencing, expressing, and receiving emotions. Changing styles that are ineffective can transform the energy trapped in 'working up a storm' into exciting opportunities rather than uncomfortable scenes and wasted time. Effort devoted to understanding one's own emotional styles and those of co-workers can pay off - in increased personal satisfaction and greater corporate output." For anyone who has ever been unhappy, uncomfortable, or unsatisfied with their emotional styles at work, the benefits of such self-evaluation can be invaluable.

Pages: 299 Cost: \$19.95

