

Should You Talk to Men and Women Differently About Your Product?

You probably chat with both men and women just about every day, right? But are they hearing you in exactly the same way? And when it comes to the selling of your products or services, would it pay to speak to them differently? That's what marketing experts, like author Martha Barletta, believe. Owing to the way we're made up, the way we're raised, men and women can process information very differently. For example: "Consistent with men's inclination to simplify and strip away extraneous detail, they believe in starting with the main point and supplying specific detail only if the listener asks for it," Barletta observed in her bestseller, *Marketing to Women*. To women, the details are the good part: what he said, why she answered as she did, and what was the significance of that event. Women want the full story. There's probably more truth in Barletta's observations than we care to admit. And if your product specifically targets men or women, and you're out there doing TV or talk radio interviews, it's a good idea to pay attention to how you talk to them. Consider, for example, a "Report Talk Versus Rapport Talk". Along the lines of the above "outline versus detail-rich" way of speaking I mentioned, women place great value, according to Barletta, in personalizing conversation. Men apparently don't. "When male and female students in a communications class were asked to bring in an audiotape of a really good conversation, one young man brought in a lunch conversation with a fellow classmate that included lots of animated discussion of a project they were working on together. The women students were puzzled because there wasn't a personal word on the whole tape. You call that a conversation?" Barletta labeled the way men speak "report talk," while women use "rapport talk." Use This in Your Next Interview. Assuming that's actually the case, how could you use this in media interviews or even your marketing? Well, if you're targeting women, you might try telling more stories of how people respond to your product or service or how a person's life was improved by it. You might also tell your own story, particularly if it was challenging, moving or heartwarming. Conversely, if you're targeting men, you might focus on the "nuts and bolts" of your product. How things work, why they work and their future usage, things like that. And what if you're speaking to both men and women? Just blend the two approaches. Personalize your information and give out the nuts and bolts in your own particular style.

About the Author

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