Don’t try the same trick over and over

Here’s a tip: if something does not work the first 50 times, don’t do it again. Seriously. Stop. Re-evalauate. Don’t waste your efforts.

Sure, practice makes perfect, if you are headed to Carnegie Hall. With marketing, practice (repetition) can lead to annoyance and disconnect.

Last November, I started collecting all the marketing mail that relates to FIOS, Verizon’s fiber-optic service. To date, I have received nearly five pounds of direct mail and many robo-calls (although I finally got them to stop the robo-calls). Here’s the clincher though: I have not signed up for FIOS. Verizon keeps sending me the same marketing pieces, over and over and over and over. Most egregious is the one that is marked: Important Information About Your Verizon Service. Really, how many times do you think I am going to fall for this? Once, maybe twice, but not dozens.

I am not sure what Verizon’s strategy is here, but in my case, they are wasting tons of money and not to mention, killing many trees (yeah, I know you want me to switch to paperless billing, but I bet if you just cut out excessive direct mail you would save a ton).

My other example is from a online listing service I used to pay for. It changed, without informing me, and suddenly, I was getting no inquiries or even visits to my website from it. I stopped paying for the premium service. I tried to inform them why. No feedback form or even email address was available. And the guy who runs the service sends me emails at least twice a week asking me to sign up again. The same exact email, twice a week. I am not exaggerating. Again, why would

you continue to do something again and again if you are getting no results from it? Do you think I missed the email the first 25 times?

In any case, marketing communications is about strategy and tactics. You use certain tactics to implement your overall strategy. The thing is, you have many tactics at your disposal and you should fine tune your tactics so that you are achieving the result you want. If a tactic does not seem to work, shelve it. Put it away.

Your adaptability will help set you apart. Trust me on this. Don’t waste your resources with tired tactics that don’t work.