



## How Would Yogi Berra Market Senior Housing?

By Paul Flowers, President, [Circa 46](#), a Senior Housing Forum partner

The late, great Yogi Berra once said: “If you don't know where you're going, you might end up some place else.”

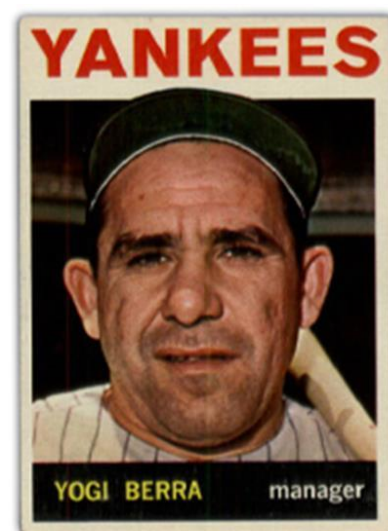
When it comes to marketing senior housing, maybe Yogi was on to something.

One of the bigger mistakes community marketing directors make is that they focus on advertising tactics, without considering their objectives and strategies first. In fact, a lot of marketers really don't understand the difference between objectives, strategies, and tactics.

### What's the Difference?

Here's a brief primer:

- An objective is something you want to accomplish. For example, if you wanted to go to Hawaii, your objective – or goal – is getting to Hawaii.
- A strategy has to do with how you are going to achieve that goal. In our Hawaii illustration, your strategy might be to fly there. Or it might be to sail there on an ocean liner. Or maybe paddle a canoe to Oahu.
- A tactic describes the specific means by which you will execute your strategy. If your strategy is to “fly” to Hawaii, your tactics would relate to which airline you are going to fly, what dates you plan to go, where in Hawaii you plan to stay, and so on.



Back to Yogi's point; before you worry about clever ads or promotions for your community, you need to determine what your endgame is. That is, what do you want your marketing efforts to accomplish? Do you want to make prospective residents aware of your community? Or do you want to position your community as a leader in some specific aspect of care? Diverse objectives may require diverse ways to achieve those objectives.

## **“90% of the Game Is Half Mental” – Yogi**

Once you have clearly defined what marketing objective you want to achieve, the next step in logic is to determine in general terms how you might best go about achieving the objective. This would be your strategy.

When developing your strategies, consider these questions:

- Who are you trying to reach? Prospective residents? Their caregivers? Current residents? Other influencers?
- What do you want that particular audience to do? Visit your community? Secure a place on your waiting list? Request some sort of helpful information that you are uniquely capable of providing?
- What is the biggest objection you must overcome in order to get your target to do what you want them to do?
- What is the best way to reach that target audience? Direct mail? Telephone? Email? Newspaper?
- What are your competitors saying or doing that might impact how you conduct your marketing activities? (Yogi would say: “You can observe a lot by just watching.”)

Answering these questions will give you the basis for determining what you need to do to best achieve your objective or goal.

## **Then the Tactics**

After you have clearly defined your objective (what you want to accomplish) and have determined how you might go about achieving that objective (your strategy), then you are in a position to create tactics that execute your strategy. This is what you will ultimately present to your audience, such as the theme of the event you plan to conduct; the copy you write for an advertisement; and so on.

The key is this: you should examine the tactics you develop to make sure that they reflect and reinforce your foundational marketing strategy. This framework will ensure that every marketing tactic you create builds on everything else you do. Over time, these combined activities will build on each other and their effectiveness will be multiplied far beyond the fragmented impacts of individual marketing activities.

Because, as Yogi said, “It ain’t over till it’s over...”



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