

Ferry's Bookkeeping, Etc. LLC

Checklist of What to Watch for in Aggressive Marketing

Red Flags

Here are some red flags that the marketing effort directed at you could become overly aggressive.

___ **Higher Priced Industries.** Scams are most common in the real estate, stock market, investment, money management, health care, estate planning, personal growth, and business development industries.

___ **Free Anything.** Is the item part of a lure to make you more vulnerable to high sales tactics, such as going to an event or signing a document?

___ **Getting You in Their Environment.** While some free educational sessions may be worthwhile to attend, often such sessions simply make you more vulnerable.

___ **Becoming Your Friend.** We tend to do business with people we like.

___ **Getting You to Sign.** Once you sign a legal document, it may be all over for you. Therefore never sign anything without reading it thoroughly and understanding it clearly. In scams the document commits you to buy a product or service, or to prevent you from buying the product or service from anyone else.

___ **Emotional Appeals.** All marketers use some form of emotional appeal, but scammers go for the jugular. Unfair appeals include those to patriotism, wish fulfillment, awe of others who are successful, creating a sense of "us" against "them"; playing on a sense of high mindfulness with inspirational quotes, or working on your self-doubt about being afraid to take risks.

___ **Urgency.** If you only have ten minutes to save hundreds but spend thousands, slow down and think.

___ **Exclusivity.** Scammers want you to think they're the only ones on the planet who can solve your problem, make you rich, or cure your ills.

___ **Bargain Pricing.** To make you think their \$3,000 product is such a bargain, aggressive marketers will force the comparison by comparing the item to something irrelevant like a car or a MBA degree that costs \$35,000.

___ **Enthusiasm of Others.** Once one person (often a plant) rushes to the sign-up table, we can feel like we're going to miss out. It's important not follow blindly.

Remember, often the best protection against a scam is to become educated about them and to approach marketing offers with skeptical, rational thinking.