

## Praxis and Realtors

By Doug Johnson / [www.cyclopraxis.com](http://www.cyclopraxis.com) / Version 7.4 / June 1, 2006

Praxis is a Greek word meaning “habitual or established practice”. Translated to one’s business routine, it implies the way one naturally does their job. There are many ways to describe praxis; adjectives such as creative, driven, sympathetic, excellent problem solver, organized, efficient, and decisive are all examples. Unfortunately, these adjectives are relative and imprecise. Tests have been derived which measure behavior and personality – key elements of praxis. Myers-Briggs, and Enneagram are two very popular evaluations yielding 16 and 9 “types” respectively. Much effort has gone into mapping Myers-Briggs, Enneagram, and other personality test results to professions and functions such as: marketing, sales, manufacturing, finance, doctors, lawyers, teachers, contractors, police, etc. The matches can only approximate these professions and functions as they come with many variations in dimensions such as need for following processes, helpfulness with customers, sense of urgency, risk aversion, inventiveness, and dozens of others – all elements of praxis. As a result we see many situations where describing a specific job as simply marketing, sales, contractor, or even nursing could attract someone with the right background but with a very inappropriate praxis.

CycloPraxis is the mapping of worker praxis to the lifecycle stage representing the maturity of any given business unit. For the purposes of cyclopraxis the lifecycle stages are defined as authoring [startup], building [early growth], capitalizing [late growth and maturity], diversifying [really authoring/building a new business unit], and extending [decline]. Authors, builders, capitalizers and captains, and extenders best staff these lifecycle stages. Various elements of the praxis of each have been well researched. Authors are responsible for undeterred championing of the initial idea. Builders are personally credited with necessary and important first accomplishments. Capitalizers seek maximum returns by carefully adhering to processes and being mindful of boundaries. Extenders keep both accumulated wisdom alive and key customers supported for as long as possible. Diversifiers and Captains play special roles. Each group has a natural way of working [praxis] that happens to align with the needs of the business as the business moves from lifecycle stage to stage. For more information, see the companion article “Cyclopraxis in the Business World” available at [www.cyclopraxis.com](http://www.cyclopraxis.com).

CycloPraxis can be extremely beneficial for staffing and people management when the business unit under consideration is for profit and will likely follow the traditional lifecycle evolution – author, builder, capitalizer/captain, and extender apply easily. CycloPraxis can be more difficult to apply when the business organization under consideration requires a special praxis for success in the steady state maturity stage. Such might be the case with Doctors, Nurses, Realtors, Teachers, and Public Servants. Typically the maturity stage is staffed with capitalizers and managed by captains. However for some business types, this would be suboptimal -- consider that it is more desirable for a family doctor to be caring about patients [extending praxis] than trying to maximize efficiency and profits [capitalizer praxis]. We call these special praxis situations in the maturity phase OptiPraxis. Fortunately, the OptiPraxis types match nicely to the CycloPraxis types allowing for a single set of descriptors and providing for continued simplicity in the overall model.

It is also important to establish that even the businesses that a need special OptiPraxis during the mature/capitalizing lifecycle stage will have had the need for Authors and Builders in the early stages

[stages which may have occurred generations ago]. And looking the other direction in time, someday these paradigms will fade; and the final workers will be extending in their praxis.

The realty industry is made up of a large number of local sales offices. Many are franchises of national names. Of course to start a new real estate business, some amount of authoring and building must occur. Once underway and mature, conventional cyclopraxis theory would suggest that these local offices are in a stable midlife stage and are therefore staffed predominantly by capitalizers. This is not always the case. The predominant realtor praxis may be extender. And there are many situations where builders are effective.

Capitalizer realtors set goals for their sales achievement and work professionally to realize those goals. They work efficiently and quickly. The capitalizer realtor knows the selling, closing, and transfer process inside out. They utilize the systems in place to their advantage. They realize the highest value of closings and as a consequence are the best paid. The capitalizers rise to positions of leadership [becoming captains in the process] within their firms. They can become impatient with those who are less efficient with time.

Those who choose the real estate sales profession and have builder praxis are unfulfilled by the processes and the repetition involved in residential real estate. In their quest for personal accomplishment the builder realtor gravitates to development projects and commercial real estate deals. The appeal of development projects and/or commercial real estate is often the opportunity for creative solutions, need for multitasking and driving personality, frequency of challenging problems, minimal existing structure, little repetition, and opportunity for personal contribution. Self-satisfaction from this nature of work may often overshadow the monetary gain from closing the sale or project. Extending and capitalizing praxes do not find this balance of work and intangible reward to be very satisfying.

Extender realtors are naturally tempered to provide the guidance and assistance required by the infrequent home purchaser. A home purchase is a big emotional event for many families and care and support from the sales agent can be an important ingredient of the overall experience. The capitalizing realtor [unless trained in the human psychology of large purchases] does not possess the skills or the temperament to assist the buyer in this manner. And so extenders make excellent realtors because their praxis is sought by the people involved in the transaction.

While taking great care for the buyers and sellers, the extender realtor is much less concerned with productivity, following the process, schedules, and deadlines. As a consequence, their productivity – and often their pay -- is lower than that of their capitalizer counterparts. The capitalizer realtor notices this and at a minimum is frustrated when doing a transaction with someone with lower productivity. At the extreme, the capitalizer sees the extender realtor as lazy. On the other hand, the extender realtor sees the capitalizer realtor as always in a hurry chasing commissions at the expense of client well being.

An interesting sidebar is that the profession of a realtor is one of the few sales positions where the extender praxis is favored over building and capitalizing praxes. In other industries, it is very common to goal sales personnel with a quota. For builders, the quota may be based on new company capture. For capitalizers, the quota may be the more traditional sales volume measured in dollars.

Personnel who do not reach their goals are placed on probation and ultimately dismissed. The extender praxis dislikes such quotas and where possible will look for a sales position where quota measures are of minimal interest.

See “Author, Builder, Capitalizer, & Extender CycloPraxis Work Preferences” at [www.cyclopraxis.com](http://www.cyclopraxis.com) for more discussion of the sales function during various lifecycle stages of a business unit.