

“Versatilist II”*

by George Hayward

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Versatilist.... a good new added description of the professional committed Manufacturers’ Representative-today!

“A Versatilist is someone who can be a specialist for a particular discipline, while at the same time be able to change to another role with the same ease.”*

In our world as full channel Manufacturer’s Representatives, consider:

A generalist, as a distributor who, “have broad scope and shallow skills, enabling them to respond or act reasonably quickly....”

A specialist, as a manufacturers’ factory rep who, “generally have deep skills and a narrow scope, giving them expertise...”

A versatilist, as a Manufacturer’s Representative, “in contrast, apply depth of skill to a progressively widening scope of situations and experiences, gaining new competencies, building relationships and assuming new roles.”

In a full distribution channel these needs are provided by all three service providers. This is an endless journey of economic value added perceived by the end user, performed by each unselfishly and interdependently.

“Those Swiss Army Knives are versatilists”-Joe Santana, Siemen Business Services.

Personally, I have been in all three occupations. A manufacturer’ factory rep for fine year first, then a distributor salesman for three and now a Manufacturer’s Representative currently for almost thirty years. As a factory rep I became unchallenged – too narrow of focus. Then, during my time in distributor sales I was terrible – order taking of too many products – there too, I quickly became disenchanted. Now a Manufacturer’s Representative or “Versatilist”, in control of my own destiny, I became and continue to be challenged enough to keep my passion for this great profession. This profession isn’t for everyone. Some are better, generalists. Others, specialists. Me, “VERSATILIST.”

Think about it

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*The term, “Versatilist” was first coined in an article from Gartner Inc Technology Consultant & Research Group, mentioned in “The World is Flat”, by Thomas Friedman.