



Consumerism is in several ways a feature of many of our lives, that is the need and want to buy certain things which we deem to be either necessary for our daily survival or niceties to have. Whether we realise it or not, society- through ever increasingly clever marketing, the market places in general being more accessible to the masses through the internet and transport advances, mass communication, and readily available consumer data, - is being drip-fed a cocktail of information to enforce a want and need for certain goods and services. Many of us happily go along and purchase the latest gadgets or that pair of shoes or item of clothing we really must have, without taking into consideration how we are conducting ourselves when it comes to buying these goods, or selling for that matter.

As a buyer by profession within the Public Sector I am governed by many rules and regulations on how to purchase goods or services. The EU alone has a raft of rules & regulations as does the UK Government, let alone those imposed by individual organisations, but where does that leave us as individuals? And importantly as Muslims who have already been prescribed with a perfect set of rules as conveyed by Prophet Muhammad *sallallahu ^alayhi wasallam*. For example one of the rules of buying and selling in Islam is the need for a verbal statement between the buyer and seller.

I started learning the religious knowledge a number of years ago and the first thing I learned was that each Muslim must learn a specific amount of knowledge. This knowledge encompasses the basics of belief, how to purify oneself and how to perform the obligations. Amongst this knowledge are the rules pertaining to buying and selling. Past Muslim traders, equipped with these Islamic teachings, undertook their dealings with honesty, transparency and generosity. Witnessing the etiquettes and dealings of past Muslim traders impressed the inhabitants of lands such as Indonesia and Malaysia to such a degree that the masses accepted Islam. How different a world we would live in if Muslim traders and consumers learnt and applied the religious rules of trade in their everyday lives?