

The Main Reason You're Not Closing

By David C. Miller

There was a fisherman who desired to catch a certain fish. This fish is worth a lot in the marketplace, so it was the ideal fish for this fisherman to catch.

The fisherman went out and started fishing the way he always had when fishing for any other fish—using the same techniques, gear and bait.

He returned at the end of the day unsuccessful. He tried again, day after day, with the same result.

So he thought, "I'd better do some research about how to become more skilled at catching this type of fish." He found out the ideal bait to use to attract the rare fish. He also discovered that a different rod and a specific casting technique were preferred when trying to catch this fish.

So with renewed confidence—certain he was going to hit the jackpot—he went out again. And at the end of the day, to his amazement and utter disappointment, he left the fishing pond with no catch to show. Determined, the fisherman tried again day after day, with the same result.

Then one day as the dejected fisherman began walking home after failing again, he passed an old man who said to the fisherman, "Looks like a rough day. What are you fishin' for?" The fisherman told the old man about the rare fish he desired to catch.

The old man replied, "You're not going to find that fish in the pond you've been fishin' in. There's no fish of that type in there. If you want to catch the fish you're after, you need to go to the lake across the way."

The moral of the story: **Make sure you're fishing in the right pond.**

When I work with consultants and business owners who are frustrated by little return on their selling efforts, the question that they ask is, "What am I doing wrong? How come no one wants what I'm offering?" Usually the first place they will look is themselves. There must be something they can do with their approach, their techniques, their message, etc. These are all possibilities, but there's another reason that will make more of a difference than all of the other reasons put together.

The question that rarely gets asked is, "Am I fishing in the right pond?" When you approach everyone with your product or service, most won't want it, because they don't have a need for it. It's like trying to get people who just finished a seven-course meal to buy a steak dinner. They're just not hungry.

Instead why not focus on people "who haven't had a meal in days?" These people will gladly purchase saltine crackers from you, because they're starving for what you have to offer!

It's all about clearly identifying who your ideal prospects are. First, identify the key problems they're experiencing in areas where you can help them. Next, find out how to get in front of them (e.g., industry meetings, trade journals, etc.) so you can show them how you can help them. Would you rather speak often to unqualified prospects, who most likely have no interest in what you have to offer, or would you

rather be in front of a roomful of hungry target prospects who are ready to buy before you even open your mouth?

Take note of where you're fishing. Fishing in the right pond is the one strategy that will skyrocket your business more than anything else. Just ask the fisherman, who came home the next day with two dozen rare fish—enough to make himself very wealthy.

David C. Miller FSA, MSCC is a professional business coach who works with actuaries, consultants and executives who desire to attract more clients and be more influential in their organizations. He conducts seminars and one-on-one coaching in business development, influence, leadership, team building and communication effectiveness. He can be reached at dave@BusinessGrowthNow.com or 215-968-2483.