

JimCLASS August 10, 2011

SPECIAL REPORT

Peak Performance Perspectives

Do you have a “Winning Perspective”?

Ever seen a close up of a fly’s eye? I mean a real close up. You know how you can’t really tell what it is because you are too close to it? Real close up a fly’s eye can look like a high tech piece of art or a piece of technology. Pull away from the close up and in perspective to the rest of the fly, you can immediately see that it’s a fly eye. I saw a real close up recently of a piece of walnut and it looked just like a human brain. But, it was still a walnut.

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I love these pictures. The contrast from what you think is and what really is startles the mind. You get to thinking that you should have known what it was originally but then realize that you did what you could given the perspective you had at the time.

Perspective is Perception

I believe a lot of life and business is like this too. Taking on new challenges without the benefit of the right perspective can be overwhelming. We are too close to the action to understand the matter correctly. We can’t see the forest for the trees because we are in the forest and all there are is trees around us.

This problem is particularly interesting to me because I suffered from a lack of perspective when I was an agent. I perceived everything I had to do - make calls to strangers, prospect and ask for referrals and new business for what they seemed to be, on the face of it.

I didn’t see walnuts, I saw brains.

It kept me in the small money for a long time. But over time (a long time unfortunately), I was finally able to put that work into perspective with the job at hand. I appreciated that these jobs were necessary if I wanted to be in business. This new perspective helped me lead one of Canada’s largest insurance agencies and build my own consulting business. It can help you too.

Perspective is an amazing advantage for performance. It’s what reduces our stress levels over time on troubling events when we realize that in the big picture the issue isn’t so severe. Our previous experience gives us a new way of looking at events and challenges that can make them easier to understand and deal with.

“Peak Performance Perspectives” is my new book and a new approach to peak performance. I believe that if you have the right perspective, you can much more easily do what you have to do to be successful. And, if you get that perspective earlier, you can achieve greater success earlier.

Even if you have been in business for a long time you might need this new perspective. I suspect many of us have forced ourselves to do what needs to be done just through the strength of our own personalities. That is an amazing accomplishment.

And, it is the perfect launching pad for even greater success when you have a better perspective. That’s what I want to do today with you as it relates to the hardest job we have - prospecting.

Research over the history of the industry has always pegged Prospecting as the hardest part of the business. How could this be though? We have very bright, talented and energetic people who all of a sudden become lazy or chicken? I don’t think so. I think it’s a lack of a Winning Perspective.

Today, I want to give you a winning perspective on prospecting by showing you how prospecting is so similar to fishing. Just common every day fishing. I believe when you see this you will be re-energized as a prospector and do better, faster.



The “Prospecting as Fishing” Parable

***“Give a man a prospect; he has business for a day.
Teach him how to prospect and he has business
forever.”***

New Prospecting Proverb

Do you like fishing? Even if you don’t, you don’t have to have a lot of familiarity with fishing to understand this story. It relates directly to prospecting and gives us a good insight into its nature. I believe it can change your perspective on prospecting so your perception of it changes for the better.

When I say “fishing”, I mean the “catching” of fish with a lure, line and rod. Angling is actual term but everyone follows the idea of fishing. If you’ve ever been fishing or even seen any, you’ll recognize this story.

The more things change, the more they remain the same

For more than 100 years, the biggest challenge in the business has been the same. The problem? Prospecting. Current research tells us that advisors are having a more

difficult time than ever finding people to talk to. Finding good prospects continues to be “Problem 1” for most advisors.

There are many reasons why prospecting problems continues to plague advisors. Chief among them I believe is we don’t look at prospecting accurately. It’s the reason I wrote “Peak Performance Perspectives”. I want to change the perspective advisors have about prospecting so that they can make prospecting a bigger part of their daily business and significantly improve their performance in all aspects of business.

This “Prospecting as Fishing” parable gives us all the opportunity to change how we look at prospecting and rewire our thinking about it. If we rewire our thinking I believe we can reduce the fear associated with it. Less fear means more prospecting. More prospecting means more business. More business means good things for advisors and consumers alike.

So, let’s take a look at how fishing and prospecting are alike so you can change your perspective on prospecting and see it for what it really is - the lifeblood of your (and any) business.

Some obvious truths about Fishing and Prospecting:

1. If you want to eat fish, someone has to go fishing. You are the best candidate. *Prospecting is the same. You do your own best prospecting.*
2. If you want to eat fish every day, you really have to fish every day or else you will surely run out of fish. *Regular prospecting keeps the hopper full.*
3. Fish don’t generally jump into the boat, so you have to follow a set fishing process every time you want some. *OK, some prospects just pop up but mostly you have to work a system to find them.*
4. Worrying about not having any fish will not help you catch any. *Worrying without working is the worst. It’s better to do some prospecting of any kind or quality than not to do any at all.*
5. Just knowing a lot about fish and even about fishing without actually doing any fishing will not put any fish in your pan or in your freezer. *Education does not attract prospects. Only prospecting attracts prospects.*
6. Fish tend to hang around in groups of the same fish. If you find one, you find more. *Prospecting in nests focuses your effort and resources. It pays off handsomely.*
7. Sometimes even the lousiest fisherman catches a big fish. Anyone can get lucky a few times. But it’s better to eat small fish than no fish at all. *The*

worst thing about getting lucky is that you can believe you had something to do with it. "If you work with the masses you'll live with the classes." said John Savage. Stick with a system that you know will put prospects in range.

8. It takes different bait to catch different fish. Your bait has to match the fish you want to catch. *You have to know what your prospects want to hear if you want to attract their attention. Then, you have to present it with passion if you want them to "bite".*
9. Using the wrong bait for the fish you want will not usually catch you the wrong fish. It catches no fish. *If your "story" is wrong for the people you are talking to, the right people won't show up. You'll have no results.*
10. It doesn't matter if you think you have wonderful bait, if the fish don't like it, you won't catch any. You need different bait. *The prospect is in charge of what works. Do your homework and be on target.*
11. Having the best fishing equipment in the world and extraordinary talent using it will not help you one iota if you don't use it. *Only you can use your potential. If you have the best natural contacts and the smoothest delivery but fail to engage them, you will have no business.*
12. No equipment will help you catch fish if you don't use it properly. *You need to follow the script or a practiced approach and use it as prescribed or you have to depend on luck. Depending on luck is a losers game.*
13. It takes different skills to catch different fish. *If you want to work in different markets you have to have different skills. Those you have to learn.*
14. You can't find every possible fish in one spot. Each fish has their favourite place to be. *The kind of prospect you are after determines where you advertise, market and prospect.*
15. If you want to catch fish, you have to go where the fish are. They are not likely to seek you out. *Staying in the office with your shiny shingle on the door is not prospecting. OK, today there is some prospecting that you can do on line, but that still isn't sufficient for long term success in most markets.*
16. Some fish are much harder to catch than others. Sometimes catching them takes a lot of patience. *Prospects are the same. The best prospects are the busiest and hardest to see. If you try once and give up you're like the guy who invented "preparation G" and gave up.*
17. To catch a lot and the largest of a specific fish, you have to know a great deal about what they are and what they do so you can give them what they want. *Prospecting for the biggest hitters means being very familiar with their needs,*

concerns, wants and options. Then you can tailor your approach to get their attention.

18. Just looking and talking like a fisherman will not help you catch fish. *Looking and sounding like a great advisor is necessary in today's market but it still isn't sufficient for success. Taking action is.*
19. Having a fishing license is not enough to convince the fish to bite. *Credentials of any kind almost never attract prospects and business. Today, they are commoditized... they are expected, not value added.*
20. Keeping a top fishing boat and your gear in the parking lot at the lake and then going for coffee with other fishermen to discuss fishing issues and the lack of fish will not put fish in the boat. Ever. *Doing everything but asking for an appointment will still not get you an appointment.*
21. If you don't fish all the time, you lose the touch and fishing becomes more difficult. *Your prospecting skills get rusty real fast. If you don't keep them sharp you will lose them... maybe even irretrievably.*
22. There are many different ways to catch the same fish, but they all start with actually going fishing. *It's better to use your average talk many times a day than spend weeks and weeks practicing and never using it.*
23. To get the biggest and most elusive fish, you usually need a guide to help you. *Joint business with an expert in a market you want to enter is the way to do it right. Sharing business is better than not having any. Also, finding and developing a good advocate in the market you want to pursue will help you get in faster. Developing takes time...*
24. Sometimes all the best preparation, equipment and planning won't land you a fish. Some days nothing you try works. That's just the way it is. *And so it is with prospecting and all business.*
25. If you just can't fish, but you still want fish, you better make friends with someone who can fish. *Teaming up with a great prospector and sharing your technical talent can be a great way to build a team in the business.*
26. Some fish just aren't worth catching. Some prospects are the same way. *Consider the potential of your market and the effort required to access it. If you can't be sure of a good return -even in the long run, stay away from it.*
27. It doesn't matter how good you are or smart you are; some fish get away once in a while. Get over it. It's part of fishing. *Even the best prospectors lose big ones. There is no success without loss. SW, SW, SW, SW, Next...*

