Planning For Success

This Session:

Planning and Tracking for Success

Prospecting Successfully

Goal:

To Create a Basic Business Plan to Attain Success by Providing the Specific Activities Necessary to Reach Your Goals

A Break Down of an Advisor's Job

These are not hard rules, merely guidelines to judge your progress.

Advisor's Job

	Ref.	Calls	Appt. Booked	Open	Close	Apps	FYC
1st Quarter avg./wk	16.5	26	9.3	8	6	5.2	$1,257
1st Quarter Total	165	261	93	80	60	52	$12,567
1st Year avg./wk	18.7	28.8	11.1	8.7	6.9	5.5	$1,370
1st Year Total	858	1324	512	398	316	254	$63,021
MDRT	1990 - $44,000 FYC, 2013 - $114,800 FYC, Gross Up $164,000 FYC						
Holiday	5 Weeks						

Compass Foundation for Growth

Set Financial Goals

Total Annual/Requirement ……………………………………………… ____________________

Less: Estimated Renewals/Residual Income……. ____________________

Other Income …………………………….…… ____________________

Income required from the new business ………………………………… ____________________

Estimated Value of sale to clients meeting your profile …………………….. ____________________

Number of new sales required (annually) ____________ cases/year

Number of new sales required (monthly) ………………………..months ____________ cases/month

Number of new sales required (weekly) …………………………..weeks ____________ cases/week

Weekly Tracker for ________________

Week Of	Cases	Rev (FYC)	Calls	Appt. Made	SC Open	Pres. Close	Intro Referral
Activity Goal/Week							
Qtrly Total							
Qtr Wkly Avg							

Weekly Tracker for _______________

Week Of	Cases	Rev (FYC)	Calls	Appt. Made	SC Open	Pres. Close	Intro Referral
Activity Goal/Week							
Qtrly Total							
Qtr Wkly Avg							

Weekly Tracker for _______________

Week Of	Cases	Rev (FYC)	Calls	Appt. Made	SC Open	Pres. Close	Intro Referral
Qtrly Total							
Qtr Wkly Avg							

How Do You Spend Your Day?

Please jot down all of the activities you do in a day and state the amount of time it takes for you to do it The purpose of this sheet is to help understand the activities you do.

Day / Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat / Sun
Before 8:30						
8:30						
9:00						
9:30						
10:00						
10:30						
11:00						
11:30						
12:00						
1:00						
1:30						
2:00						
2:30						
3:00						
3:30						
4:00						
4:30						
After 5:00						

Activity Record

Activity / Day	Referrals	Phone Calls Made	Appointment Scheduled	Opening Meetings	Cases Opened	Closing Meetings	Cases Closed	FYC
Monday								
Tuesday								
Wednesday								
Thursday								
Friday								
Saturday								
Sunday								
Week Total								

Building Your Client Information Database

When recording your client information you should try to have the following information:

i) Name

ii) Sex

iii) Age

iv) Marital Status

v) Number of Dependents

vi) Occupation/Employer

vii) Annual Income

viii) Source of appointment

ix) Date of Closing Interview

x) Client's Need

When recording your application information you should try to have the following information:

i) Date Written

ii) Type of Plan

iii) Mode of Payment

iv) Cash Received

v) First Year Commission

vi) Delivery Date

Planning Your Week - Outlook

Sunday

3		

Monday

4		
8:00am	9:00am	Education
10:00am	11:00am	Appointment
12:00pm	1:00pm	Business Lunch
2:00pm	3:00pm	Appointment #2
4:00pm	5:00pm	Appointment #3
6:00pm	7:00pm	Phoning

Tuesday

5		
8:00am	9:00am	Phone
10:00am	11:00am	Appointment
12:00pm	1:00pm	Business Lunch
2:00pm	3:00pm	Appointment #2
6:00pm	7:00pm	Phoning
7:00pm	8:00pm	Appointment #3

Wednesday

6		
8:00am	9:00am	Education
10:00am	11:00am	Appointment
12:00pm	1:00pm	Business Lunch
2:00pm	3:00pm	Appointment #2
4:00pm	5:00pm	Appointment #3
6:00pm	7:00pm	Phoning

Thursday

7		
8:00am	9:00am	Phone
10:00am	11:00am	Appointment
12:00pm	1:00pm	Business Lunch
2:00pm	3:00pm	Appointment #2
6:00pm	7:00pm	Phoning
7:00pm	8:00pm	Appointment #3

Friday

8		
10:00am	11:00am	Appointment
12:00pm	1:00pm	Business Lunch
2:00pm	3:00pm	Appointment #2
4:00pm	5:00pm	Appointment #3

Saturday

9		
11:00am	12:00pm	Paperwork
3:00pm	5:00pm	Planning for Next We

Planning Your Week

NAME:				WEEK OF:			
	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
6:00	A WINNING WEEK						
7:00							
8:00							
	Education	PHONE	Education	PHONE	Administration		
9:00						Phoning	
						Appts.	
10:00	APPT.	APPT.	APPT.	APPT.	APPT.	Paperwork	
						Reading	
11:00						Planning for	
						Next Week	
12:00							
	BUSINESS LUNCH	BUSINESS LUNCH	BUSINESS LUNCH	BUSINESS LUNCH	BUSINESS LUNCH		
1:00							
2:00							
	APPT.	APPT.	APPT.	APPT.	APPT.		
3:00							
4:00							
	APPT.		APPT.		APPT.		
5:00							
6:00		PHONE	PHONE	PHONE		**THE WINNING SYSTEM**	
	PHONING (GOAL OF FIFTEEN APPTS. IN NEXT FIVE DAYS)						
7:00							
						10 New Contacts/Day	
8:00		APPT.		APPT		6 Referrals/Day	
						2 Openers/Day	
9:00						1 Close/Day	
						2-3 Sales/Week	
10:00						2-3 Hrs. Self-Study/Week	
						10 New Applied Life &DI/Month	
11:00						100-150 Sales/Year	

OT PROSPECT		TO CALL		GOAL	
				IDEAL WEEK	
				CALLS	
				APPT.	
				OPEN	
				CLOSE	
				SALES	
				FYC	
				YTD Goal	
				CALLS	
				APPT.	
				OPEN	
				CLOSE	
				SALES	
				FYC	

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
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THINGS TO DO				Sunday	
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Time	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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Creative Prospecting

1. **Prospecting is a mind set**
    1. Opportunity or burden

2. **Prospecting must be efficient**
    - Effort related to outcome
    - This must be measured

3. **What is prospecting?**
    1. What am I searching for?
        - Who would lose out if they do not meet me?
    2. Where do I search/attract?
    3. How I search/attract?
    4. How many do I need?

4. **The daily prospecting plan**
    1. Set time each morning to plan
    2. Review your schedule
    3. Prepare mentally “who benefits”
    4. Become creative
    5. Use your style
    6. Tailor to situation
    7. Prepare names

Introductions, Centres of Influence, And Nests

What is the best way to continuously meet people you don't know right now…and find out enough information about them to qualify them as prospects? How can you help these prospects have confidence and trust in you?

Up to this point, you can think of yourself as standing in a small circle, surrounded by the people you know – your initial market. A market is people. And your personal market consists of the people you know that you can approach with some degree of mutual confidence and trust.

If you have developed a list of 300 qualified prospects from your initial market and proceed to close one out of every six, you will have 50 sales. This is a good start… but don't let it lull you into a false sense of complacency. The people you know are a valuable source of prospects, but there's only a limited amount of business you can secure from this one group.

More important than the names that appear in your initial market are the names that *don't* appear… the recommendations of those people you know to the many people you don't.

You must expand the small circle of people you know by moving out to meet new people and identifying new prospects you can sell. ***It must become part of your daily routine.***

Why? It's a fact of prospecting life that, after a few months, **successful salespeople secure most of their sales from people *they did not know*** when they entered the business. And if we can pinpoint one common denominator among these agents, it's the simple fact that they **have trained themselves to seek out, meet and sell people they did not know before.**

Did they overlook or bypass their initial market – their friend, relatives, people they knew? No. They, too, started with their initial market, but it served primarily as a starting point…a means to a *large* end. These agents recognized that, for continued success, they had to meet people *outside* their initial market.

Several proven techniques will be presented in the following sections to help you expand your market. Become thoroughly acquainted with them, and put them into daily practice because they will mean much to your future success.

There can be no greater discouragement than to wake up in the morning and not know where to go that day. Conversely, there is no better way to start each day than knowing whom you will see and why.

Introductions

Ask most successful professionals or businesspeople, and they will agree that the most powerful and economical type of advertising is a word-of-mouth recommendation – where one person tells another.

Ask most leading agents and they'll agree that a similar force – called introductions – provides the most powerful and productive means to prospect and expand a market in the financial services business.

Agents obtain introductions from those they know, and can use them as a "bridge" to those they don't know… when the following three items are secured:

1. A name.
2. Qualifying information.
3. Permission to use the name of the person who furnishes the lead.

Now – instead of just yourself – visualize each person you know standing in the centre of his or her *own* circle of relatives, friends, business associates and social contacts. Can you begin to see the geometric progression of possibilities for you to meet people you don't know through the people you do know?

Whether it's a Centre of Influence, a contact in a nest, a client or prospect in a successful or unsuccessful interview or phone call, the principles of asking for introductions are basically the same. In this section, suggestions and techniques for using Centres and nests to obtain introductions are discussed. The next two sections will focus on other types of leads.

Centres of Influence

In compiling your initial market with the aid of the worksheet "Identifying Your Initial Market," you were asked to select the names of at least five people who meet the qualifications of a Centre of Influence.

Centres of Influence are people to whom you can go to get names of other people, as well as considerable information about them. Equally important, you can "borrow prestige" from the Centres to meet these people under more favorable circumstances.

As we have emphasized, people have a built-in fear of strangers. Naturally, this would also apply to people's reactions to an unknown representative who calls on them. Centres of Influence can help people to have more confidence and trust in you when you call – especially if they will introduce you to the people they know in person, by telephone, or by a letter or card of introduction.

A personal introduction is, of course, preferred. A written introduction or supportive word from your Centre by telephone is also very helpful. In many cases, cards of introduction will prove useful, especially if you get a number of prospects from the same Centre. An effective introduction can be just a few words written by your Centre on the back of your business card, or the Centre's.

This Introduces

Phil Cubeta, CLU, ChFC

Independent Advisor

Referred by

Al Brownell

How to Approach the Centre

Centres of Influence can also be helpful even if they do no more than permit the use of their names when you call on people whose names your Centres have given you.

First, put yourself in the Centre's place. You will then be able to appreciate the other side of the picture when you approach him or her. For example, if you walked in to see a person and simply announced that you were now in the financial services business and would like to meet some people he or she knows, what thoughts might flash through the Centre's mind? Chances are, they would be something like:

"I'd like to help, but… "
"Who needs financial services products? Nobody I know."
"Even if I did know someone, I don't believe I'd want my name used." "It might prove embarrassing to me."

Thus, you can readily see the need to know what to say and how to say it. An *organized, prepared* talk improves your chances of these people agreeing to become Centres of Influence for you, because you will demonstrate your competence and gain their confidence.

To sell the Centres on promoting you, as a way to help people they know, your initial presentation should…

- Let the Centres know about your new position with HUB Inc.
- Establish in their minds the benefits and genuine value of the financial services products you sell.
- Demonstrate your sales presentation.
- Advise the Centres that you need help in meeting people, but that you *do not* expect them to know whether or not these people are really prospects.
- Describe the people you want to contact.
- Provide the Centres with a memory jogger that will help them think of situations and people you would like to get to know.
- Tactfully ask the Centres for an introduction to these people in person, by telephone, or with a written note or letter.
- Other potential Centres may need to be "courted" before providing recommendations.

Being able to take advantage of a Centre's knowledge is an important part of prospecting, so learn the Centre of Influence talk your Manager recommend just as though it were a sales talk to a prospect. Keep in mind that this is not a "one-shot" interview for few names, but actually the start of a relationship that can endure over the years and provide you with a continuous source of names and information.

Talking To A Center of Influence (#1)

Attention. "Hello, Bill I'm glad to see you. I've come value your judgment and want your opinion on something I am now an Independent Advisor with HUB Inc. My work is very interesting and I'd like to tell you a little about it."

Point. "I am specializing in what we call financial services. I'd like to take a moment or two to show you some ideals, and then I want you to tell me frankly what you think."

Reason. "If you think it's a worthwhile idea, which will greatly add to my enthusiasm. And, perhaps someday you might be interested in it for yourself. If you don't think it's worthwhile, I'd like you to tell me why. Fair enough?

Example. (Proceed with your organized sales presentation exactly as you would with any prospect. Whether he buys now or not, he should be a good Center of Influence for you as well as a good prospect for the future.)

Your next step, before you leave your prospect is to get several introductions. The following prospecting talk is designed to obtain these names.

Action. "Now that you've seen my presentation, Bill, what do you think of it? I'm glad you think so highly of it because I have a great deal of respect for your opinion in order for me to be the success in my business that I want to be, I must meet and talk with a great many people ever day. I would like to meet successful people like you who might want information about a plan like this."

Asking for introductions. "Let me describe the type of person I am interested in meeting, someone between the ages of 20 and 50 – man or woman – preferably married, a business or professional person, a junior executive that kind of individual."

Show "People We Would Like To Meet…" "Perhaps this will help you think of someone. For example, do you know someone who has just been promoted? ... Or changed jobs?"

Qualify names. "About how old is your friend?... Live here in town?... What kind of work?… About how much in earnings?… Any special hobbies or interests?"

Special request. "Bill, when I go to see your friend, would you mind if I mentioned that I know you?" (If the response is "Please don't say I sent you," just reply "I understand just how you feel Bill. You can be sure I will respect your wishes.")

Appreciation. "I do appreciate all you've done for me, Bill, and I'll make it a point to keep in touch with you to let you know how I'm doing."

Talking To A Centre of Influence (#2)

The following approach talk to Centres has been perfected over the years, and will yield results if used consistently:

"You can relax, Mr. Johnson, because I'm not here to sell you anything, but rather to get a little help.

"As you can imagine, my success in this business depends on my ability to meet and talk to a sufficient number of people who have a problem or situation that indicates a need for the kind of products HUB Inc. offers.

"I'll bet if I were to ask you if you knew someone who was interested right now, you couldn't think of anyone – because it's too general a question.

"Therefore, I have few 'idea starters' here to help you to help me… if you can spare just 4 or 5 minutes. Can you?"

- Use the worksheet, "People We Would Like To Meet."
- Be sure to ask for adequate information to qualify each name.
- Get permission to use the Centre's name, and ask for an introduction.

"Thank you, Mr. Johnson. This information will keep me from approaching these people as a complete stranger. When I call them, you won't mind if I say that I know you, will you?"

If the Centre objects to this say:

"If one of these people were to walk in here now, you would introduce me, wouldn't you? Then you won't mind giving me an introduction (in person, in writing on a business card, by telephone)."

Helping the Centre

If you simply ask for promising prospects for your financial services products, your Centres won't be able to think of names. Their answers might be, "No, I can't think of anyone right now, but if I do I'll keep you in mind." But if you help them think of events, it will be much easier for them to tie in people with these events. That's why HUB Inc. provides "People We Would Like To Meet…"

A series of questions to help Centres think of events that bring to mind the names of people they know. Promotions, job changes, going into business, purchase of a new home – to name just a few events – can provide an excellent climate for the discussion of needs that our products can fill.

If you want specific names, you must ask specific questions. Ask your Centre of Influence leading question built around: "Who is…?" "Who was…?" "With whom do you…?"

For example, "Who is your best friend?… your neighbor?… the person at that desk?… the teacher of such-and-such a subject?… the sales manager?… the treasurer?… on your list of the most important employees here?… your doctor?… your lawyer?

"Who has had a new baby?… parents who have become dependent on them?… had a promotion?… obtained a new job?… started a new business?… inherited money?… gotten a pension?… purchased a lot of CDs?… bought or sold a new home?… or a new car?… been married recently or become engaged?

"With whom do you play bridge?… play tennis or golf?… go fishing?… go on vacation or travel?"

As you gain more experience, you will develop more Centres among the people you sell and even the people you don't sell, but whose confidence you win. These people will be in addition to the Centres you knew before coming with CBS Inc. And, all of these people will know five o*ther* groups of people:

- Relatives
- Friends
- Business associates
- Business competitors
- Social acquaintances and neighbors

Whenever you become favorably acquainted with a person, you will almost unconsciously say to yourself, "This individual knows fives groups of people. Which of those five groups am I most interested in cultivating as prospects at this time?"

Have made your decision, you should phrase your questions accordingly. For example, let's assume your interest lies in his or her business associates. You might say, "In your organization, who is most likely to go places in the next 10 years?" Or, "Who is your district sales manager?" Your Centre of Influence can answer these questions by giving you specific names – names that may become qualified prospects.

Bring A List

Another method of enlisting the aid of your Centres of Influence is to show them a list of names and ask if they will give you as much information as they possibly can about each name on the list.

For example, a local doctor probably knows a great deal about other doctors in the community – their age, whether married or single, who has children, homes, special hobbies and so forth.

Say to the doctor, “Here are a few other doctors I’m planning to contact. Since you undoubtedly know many of them, I’d appreciate your help in eliminating those you believe would be a waste of time for me to see. How many of these doctors do you know?”

You can build such lists from many sources: professional group listings, clubs, telephone books, church memberships and alumni associations.

But remember that a name, at best, is only a “maybe.” After a Centre offers a name, try to get specific information that will help you to determine if you have a prospect. The information you want, of course, depends on the type of prospect you are seeking and usually includes items such as age, marital status, children, earnings, home ownership, any recent change, best time to call, and special interests or hobbies.

Cultivating Centres

To make the Centre method most profitable for you:

- Point out to your Centre that you don't expect anyone to find people who need financial services products for you. Unless you do this, the Centre is sure to offer to "talk with my friends about buying a mutual fund" – and this will not be productive. You need to contact these people *yourself.*
- Make a follow-up appointment if your Centre doesn't have time to go through "People We Would Like To Meet…" with you. Don't leave the worksheet with Centre, because people normally won't take time to fill it out. Instead, arrange to come back when the Centre has more time.
- Try to have the Centre's spouse or business partner present during your interview, because he or she may provide you with additional leads.
- Prompt your Centres to recall names by suggesting that they take a look at their personal address books, their booklets of birthdays and anniversaries, or their greeting card lists.
- Use "People We Would Like To Meet…" with each of the referrals you see. In this way, you will build up an endless chain of new, qualified prospects and set yourself solidly in business.
- Prove to your Centres of Influence that you are a competent advisor on financial matters. They will not readily recommend you to others unless they feel that you not only know product details, but that your purpose is to do more than merely "sell". You must make them realize that you are motivated by a deep, sincere desire to help people solve their future needs and meet their financial goals.
- Drop in to see your Centres of Influence occasionally and tell them a human interest success story of financial services at work. Help them feel that when they give you the name of a friend, you will be able to provide that person with sound counsel.
- Whether or not a sale is made, it is important to make a report to Centres of Influence on the results from each lead – without violating the prospect's confidences. Centres are interested in the outcome; otherwise they would not have offered the leads. Reporting back on results shows courtesy and it is also good business. As you tell your Centre that "Mr. Peterson was interested in reviewing how large an estate he could create," or that "Mr. Nelson likes the thought of paying off her mortgage in the event of her death," you are paying the way for a continuous flow of new names.
- Make your partnership with a Centre of Influence a two-twenty effort. If a Centre owns a music store, tell him or her about the family you called on yesterday whose children are interested in a musical education… but whose piano is in need of replacement. Your Centre will appreciate this information.
- Perhaps your Centre is interested in the Scouts, Community Fund, Red Cross, athletic events, or some other particular community activity. If so, talk about the person you met yesterday who you believe would also like to get into that type of activity.
- Let your Centres know you are not just interested in their business contacts, but also interested in them as friends. Telephone your Centres on their birthday, send a note of congratulations on their being given some civic or business recognition, and make it a point to express your pleasure about something good that has happened to them or someone in their family. These may seem little things to do, but they will mean a great deal to your Centres of Influence.

Looking Further

The successful agent is always looking for more Centres of Influence. Examine the following suggestions and see where you might locate additional Centres for yourself:

Those in your own family.
First look for prospective Centres of Influence in your own home and among your relatives. Who in your family works for someone who, if properly cultivated, might become a good Centre of Influence? Who in the family has a friend in a position to give you good prospects? Who in the family knows, on a personal basis, a doctor, an accountant, a banker, school superintendent… or anyone else who is in a position to become a good Centre of Influence for you?

Personal friends.
Persuade your personal friends to help introduce you to their friends and associates. They can help you enter their circles… enabling you to tap an entirely new source of names.

Former business associates.
When you came into the financial services business from some other line of work, you left friends. Perhaps your former occupation gave you good contacts with these people; you may have won the goodwill and friendship of a department head or an executive or one associated with many acquaintances. Compile a list of people you know as a result of working in other fields prior to joining CBS Inc., and record the names of those you feel will meet the qualifications of good Centres of Influence.

The people you know from school and religious activities.
People invariably make acquaintances through the schools and the religious services they have attended; these contacts are potential Centres of Influence.

Those with whom you worked on community projects.
Think about the people with whom you have worked on community projects. If you approach them in the right way and under the right conditions, you can develop these acquaintances to the point where it will be logical for you to ask them to sponsor your contacts with their friends and acquaintances.

Collecting Centres of Influence

Some agents believe that, because they are in business for themselves, they have to go it alone in prospecting. But others wisely look for partners – Centres of Influence – who will help them to locate prospects. Centres are valuable because they:

- Know people you don't
- Can get you to people who are hard to see.
- Can help you qualify names.
- Add to your prestige with their endorsements.

If you select just one Centre from each classification below, you will have 10 assistants to help refer names and recommend you.

Try it, you will find it is not only more profitable to have partners, but more stimulating, too. When 10 other people suggest people for you to see – and you know they're waiting to hear the results – you are bound to stay motivated.

Where you went to school
High school and college classmates
Instructors
Alumni association activities
Varsity club

Where you volunteer
Service blubs
Chamber of Commerce
Civic activities
Charity drives

Where you attend religious services Clergy and lay leaders Men's and women's clubs Choir and other organizations

Where you consult
Doctor
Dentist
Attorney
Bank officer Accountant

Where you used to work
Former employers
Coworkers
Competitors Association members

Where you relax Social clubs
Fraternal lodge
Golf
Tennis
Hobby clubs
Racquet club
Health clubs

Where you live
Neighbors
Friends of neighbors
Maintenance people Realtors

Where you do business
Bank
Stories and shops
Restaurants
Garages
Gas stations
Hair stylist

Where you are best known
Relatives
Close friends
Your relatives' friends
Former neighbors Family friends

Where your family is known
School
Parent's organizations
Youth organizations
Athletic teams
Scouts

Nests of Prospects

Working in nests of prospects is another technique that enables salespeople to meet qualified prospects in an atmosphere of confidence and trust. Remember: any group of people that has a common interest represents a broad definition of a nest. For example, shortly after joining the industry, an agent called on a manufacturing plant that bought stationery supplies from the agent's former employer. The agent made a sale to a supervisor and started to develop a nest by getting referred leads to other employees in the plant.

Another representative, who specialized in insurance, had previously been a violinist in a symphony orchestra and so knew many professional musicians. Three years after joining the Company, this salesperson was known as "the musician's insurance agent" because he built a nest in that professional group.

As you can see, nests can be developed within a company, an industry, a professional association, or other types of groups that bind people together with a common interest.

Searching for prospects can be time-consuming – and in this business time is a precious commodity that must be used wisely. A good nest gives you a concentrated area to work in and, with a proper approach, also provides an excellent means to demonstrate your service.

Most important, word travels fast in a nest; when one satisfied customer tells another about you, you get the most powerful and economical advertising you can find anywhere. With tact, you'll be able to move from one person to another in the group, building prestige, meeting people in an atmosphere of confidence and trust, and eliminating competition. You can become "the agent" of that nest.

Getting Started

What names did you list in "Identifying Your Initial Market" as possible nests? Why did you list each name? How does the group measure up in ability to pay? Can you meet people at one or more levels, feel comfortable with them, and tactfully persuade them to buy from you?

To select your best prospect within the nest, also ask yourself whom you know within the nest. What is his or her status within the group? The ideal, of course, is for your contact to enjoy high status. Because the higher the status of the individual, the better the referral possibilities for you.

But remember that, to be successful in a nest, you have to enter at an income level where you can effectively meet people and establish rapport. If your contact is on the "low rung" of the organizational ladder, evaluate the nest and decide if you might spend your time more profitably elsewhere. And don't rush into a nest without first doing some serious fact-finding and planning. Find out all you can about "who's who" in the group; then select the most influential person in the group whom you are able to contact under favorable circumstances.

Because you start to build prestige with your first call, be sure to deliver what you promise. And sell you contact on the value of your service at every opportunity.

To maintain a supply of prospect in the nest, ask your initial contact for referred lead. Keep in mind that you want to meet other people in the group. If you have demonstrated your service to your initial contact in the nest, you have earned the right to ask about other people who might be interested in the same service – whether or not you have made a sale to this person.

You might say, "Janice, you are now familiar with the services I have to offer. I'm sure there are other people here in the plant who may be interested, too. I'd like to meet them, get acquainted, and let them know about my services. Even if they don't need insurance or other financial services products today, I'd like them to know about me so that when they are in the market they will keep me in mind. Fair enough? By the way, who is the fellow in the next office?... his position with the company?... married?... any children?

Remember; don't ask who might need a retirement plan or mortgage insurance. Ask about *definite* people within the nest. If you already have some names, get more information about them from your contact. You can also use the memory-jogger "People We Would Like To Meet…" worksheet. And be sure to ask about people *outside* the group in the individual's "whom do you know" circles.

Just as with an introduction from a Centre of Influence, ask your contact for an introduction in person, by telephone or in writing. You might say, "I'd appreciate it if you would introduce me to the supervisor of the accounting section. Let me reassure you that I will approach everyone in the same manner that I contacted you." Depending on circumstances, you may contact other people in the nest by direct mail or phone to secure appointments.

Follow Through

Follow this plan, and in a short time you will become known as “the agent” of the group or business. People in the group will speak of you as *their* representative. This is the goal toward which you should strive.

By building several good nests of prospects, you will always have a place to go, and you will always have a source of new names. You will feel at home in the groups and make sales more easily because of favorable words spoken on your behalf.

As you look for more nests, keep in mind that people in similar professions or lines of work often eat or relax at the same spots. For example, a popular restaurant near a medical office building will attract these professionals for lunch. The same thing is true of bowling alleys, clubs and other favorite gathering places. Farmers or ranchers may have a favorite café, store or barber shop where they meet when they are in town. Being favorably known in such spots, you will meet many people who later could become your client and friends.

The best way to break into such group is to cultivate the respect and friendship of one influential member. Make it a point to discover such meeting places in your territory, and then use the contacts you have to enter the groups.

There are great rewards in prospecting in nests, but there are also great obligations. There is only one way to enter them and to remain welcome – namely, by doing a sound and businesslike job for every person you serve. Three or four receptive prospect nests can and will provide you with thousands of dollars of business year after year.

Personal Observation

What is Personal Observation?

Personal observation simply means keeping your eyes and ears open for new prospects.

- It's *looking* at people and thinking "prospects."
- It's *hearing* about people and thinking "prospects."
- It's *reading* about people and thinking "prospects."

For example:

- You discuss with your family their plans for the day. Who will they be meeting? Any prospects?
- On the highway into the office you pass dozens of trucks with signs on the side? Any prospects?
- You're driving to an appointment. Do you see any new businesses or houses?
- You're at the club and the foursome on the court next to you is joking with one of the players about the problems he is having in getting the right furniture for his new office. Is this a prospect?
- You are at your daughter's high school play and read over the advertisements in the program. Any prospects?

Reasons to Choose Personal Observation

While personal observation is a prospecting strategy, it is also a way of thinking – a very important way of thinking for a sales representative. It makes prospecting part of your daily routine. You will start to "see" prospects in everyday situations and in a new light. You will also be alert to nee opportunities. A steady source of new names that you encounter every day is readily available to use if you will focus on your powers of observation. Open your eyes, and your ears.

The Who, Where and How of Personal Observation

Question: Who am I looking for with personal observation?
Answer: You are looking for potential clients; the same kind of people you would be looking for with any other prospecting strategy.

Question: Where do I find people by using personal observation?
Answer: Personal observation is a prospecting strategy that you should be in the habit of using all the time so it is likely to help you find prospects anywhere. Personal observation is more likely to yield qualified prospects in the areas where your current clients live, shop, have their businesses, and spend their leisure time. People of similar economic and professional backgrounds are likely to be clustered together.

Question: How do I get the best results from personal observation?
Answer:

- **Make it a habit.** Personal observation works only if you do, and it works best if you do it all the time.
- **If you observe a name write it down.** Don't trust your memory. Use your day planner to record both the name and the circumstances in which you observed it.
- **Make contact quickly.** The best way to manage yourself to get it done is to call the person in the next two days. That way the details of your observation will be fresh in your mind and you can share them with the prospect if you think it will build rapport.
    - "I drove by your store yesterday and saw the new sign. It's a great eye-catcher. I wonder if I could drop by tomorrow for a few minutes, introduce myself and tell you about the kind of work I have been doing for some of the other store owners in town."
    - "I saw your name on the directory of the Oak Center building while I was there working out the details of a business continuation plan with Carter and Smith on the third floor. I am going to be back in the neighborhood on Friday, I wonder if I could stop by about 2:00 to tell you briefly about my company's services, or would next Monday at 2:00 be more convenient."
    - "My daughter tells me that your daughter, Sue, is captain of her basketball team at the high school. I am an Independent Advisor, and I do a lot of work with families working out plans to help pay for college. Is that something of interest to you?"

Personal Observation

I prefer to meet with prospects and clients at their office as opposed to mine for two reasons. The first is, I find people are more comfortable and, hence, more apt to open up when they are on their own turf. This makes the fact-finding process smoother and more comfortable for me.

The second reason is I can't help but meet someone while I am there. Sometimes I meet people while waiting in the lobby. Sometimes it's on the way to my prospect's office; and other times, it is while I am with my prospect, usually in the form of an interruption. I know agents that really get irritated with interruptions, but I think they are great because I can put a new face with new name and Bingo… I have another prospect.

When it comes time to ask for referrals, I don't say, "Who do you know?", I say, "Tell me about John." If he is the type of person I am trying to get to, I will tell my client that I plan to give him a call. When I do, I can say, "Hi, John, my name is Kim McKown, I met you the other day while I was in to see so and so." My client did not have to give me a list of referrals, just the background on those people I met while in to see him.

Kimberly McKown
Commonwealth General Office

Using the Internet to Help with Prospecting

Quick Reference Guide ~ **3 X 5 Tips**

The Know More! Reference Guide provides many tricks, tips, and resources to find information in ways you never thought possible, so you can ensure relevancy in every meeting, every time. However, you certainly don't need to implement all of the search tip in the Guide, especially if you're preparing for a first phone call or in-person meeting. For that, just practice the 3 X 5.

Prior to any call or meeting, spend three minutes trying to find five pieces of information, or five minutes trying to find three pieces of information. That's it!

By having just a bit of information about the other person and what he or she cares about, you impress that you've done your homework, you can find something in common, and when you talk about the other person first, you gain PERMISSION to ask the next, more in-depth question. Following are the recommended tips and resources to practice the 3 X 5, in order of importance:

SAM TIP	WHERE TO GO, WHAT TO DO
1) Company Information View the company's website so you know what services the firm offers.	**www.google.com** 1. Conduct a Google search on the company's name. Make sure to enter the name within quotation marks. You may also want to search for and gather information on the company's customers and/or competitors. 2. If multiple results appear, add additional information to your search query, for example, a city name. 3. If the site features links to social networks, make sure to connect with and follow the company. If the company has a Blog, register to receive blog postings via email.
2) Newspaper Articles Find an article that features the company, and/or the person with whom you're meeting.	**www.google.com** and/or **www.yougotthenews.com** 1. Enter a company name or a person's name; make sure to put within quotation marks (e.g., "joe smith" or "widget corporation"). 2. Use Boolean (see Google section) to expand or narrow your search. 3. In Google, on the search result page, click the "News" tab. If there are too many articles, click the "Search Tools" tab and choose a date range by clicking the "Recent" pull-down menu. 4. In YouGotTheNews, add years separated by two periods (e.g., 2009 .. 2011) to limit your results to only news stories during that date range. Click on the tabs to sort your results by news type. Click the "Relevancy" button to toggle between sorting by relevancy or by date. 5. Find an article about the company and/or the person you're meeting with and reference the information. Leverage what you find to make the other person feel important, and to ask better, more relevant, questions.

SAM TIP	WHERE TO GO, WHAT TO DO
3) Professional Background Search for detailed information about the person you're meeting with and his or her background.	**www.linkedin.com** 1. In the "People" search form, enter a person's name within quotation marks. If it's a common name, enter part of the company name. 2. Prior to any meeting, see if a person has a LinkedIn profile and review it. Discover the person's work history, educational background, interests, and more to see if you have something, or someone, in common. 3. Request an introduction via the "Get Introduced" forms found by clicking the "Send InMail" pull-down menu on an individual's profile page.
4) Articles and Documents Find PDF files, which are typically articles, press releases, legal, documents, etc., featuring a firm and/or its executives.	**www.google.com** 1. In the Google search form, enter the name of a company or a person. Make sure to put the name within quotation marks. 2. In the search form, add Filetype:pdf (e.g., "acme corporation" filetype:pdf). 3. If too many results appear, add additional terms, e.g., geography. 4. To sort your results by date, click the "Search Tools" tab and then choose the "Recent" pull-down menu and select a date range. 5. Try and locate a white paper, proposal, or report about the company and if appropriate, reference it during your meeting.
5) Personal Background See if the person you're meeting with has made his or her Facebook account open to public viewing, and if yes, see what you can learn about the person by visiting his or her profile.	**www.facebook.com** 1. Using the main search form, enter a person's name or a company name; you may need to click the "See More Results" link located at the bottom of the Search Suggestions box. 2. On the results page, click the People tab in the main navigation. 3. If too many results appear, try entering something else about the person that you know, e.g., location, company name, school, etc. 4. Search the company name as some companies have a Facebook page. If there is a page, look to see if any of the company's executives have commented on a link and if yes, click the name to access the person's profile. 5. Be careful about mentioning what you find on Facebook. Rather, use the information to identify areas that you have in common.
6) Charitable Contributions Most non-profits post member lists, donor lists, etc. online as PDF files. See if a company or the person you're meeting with donates to a particular cause.	**www.google.com** 1. In the Google search form, enter the name of a company and/or a person within quotation marks. Then add a geographic location, and then the terms donor OR donation (OR in uppercase). Then add Filetype:pdf. For example, "acme corporation" + Utah + donor OR donation filetype:pdf 2. The search results may feature non-profit organization where the company and/or the person you're meeting with has donated time or money. 3. Use what you find to learn about the other person's values. If you donate to the same or a similar charity, mention your involvement.
7) Political Contributions Learn if a company or person has made political contributions and their political persuasion.	**www.opensecrets.org/indivs** 1. Enter the name of the company or an individual then choose a location. 2. Choose the years you'd like to search, or choose "Search All Cycles." 3. Enter the given security key. 4. Knowing what not to say, is as important as knowing what to say.

Quick Reference Guide ~ **People Search**

Following are 13 of the 25 Invisible Web People Search Secrets featured in "Take the Cold Out of Cold Calling" (www.takethecold.com) and the Know More! Video Series (www.samrichter.com/kmvideo).

SAM TIP	WHERE TO GO, WHAT TO DO
Address/Phone Finder Just like the phone information system, 411.com helps you locate contact info.	**www.zabasearch.com, www.411.com, & www.numberway.com** 1. Enter a person's name and choose a geographic location. 2. For a listing of international phone number search engines, use Numberway.com. Choose a country and try the various provided options.
People News Search See if your prospect has appeared in the local newspaper (e.g., wedding announcement, charitable donation, etc.).	**www.yougotthenews.com** 1. Enter a person's name within quotation marks and add other terms. 2. Click on the various tabs to filter your results.
Executive Biographies Imagine a search engine that scours the web but only looks for pages that contain information about people.	**www.zoominfo.com**/s/ NOTE: you must end the web address with /s/ 1. Enter the first and last name of the person you're interested in finding. If the name is a common name (e.g., Pat Smith), enter in additional information and/or use the various advanced search menu options. 2. Click on a result. On the person's biography page, review the information and click on the "cached" link to review the actual source.
Company Contacts Research companies and learn about employees prior to sales calls.	**https://connect.data.com** 3. Register for your free account. 4. Upload your contacts to earn Data.com points. 5. Enter a company name in the main search engine; the results page returns basic company information. Click the "See All" link to access names. 6. Purchase contact information using points or dollars.
Public Records Search Unfortunately there is no meta-search engine for public records, but there is one exceptional directory engine that will point you to the best resources.	**www.blackbookonline.info** 1. Use the main search form to enter a type of resource, e.g., Ohio licenses. 2. Or search by category or state by clicking the links in the Category section. 3. Or click the "Custom Search" link and build your own search query by choosing one or more types of records and one or more states. 4. The results page delivers a list of third-party resource websites. Click the link to visit the site. Once on the site, you'll need to determine how best to locate your desired information.

SAM TIP	WHERE TO GO, WHAT TO DO
Individual Resumes, Employee Search, and Virtual Networking Build a virtual network of contacts, build your credibility, and help facilitate introductions. Search for detailed information on prospects.	**www.linkedin.com** 1. In the "People" search form, enter a person's name to see if you have a connection. Enter a company name to see who works at the firm. 2. Prior to any meeting, see if a person has a LinkedIn profile and review it. 3. Use "Advanced Search" to find individuals who meet a specific profile. Broaden or narrow your search using Boolean and the various options (e.g., in the Job Title area, conduct a search for 'ceo OR "chief executive officer" OR president' then select an industry, geographic region, keywords you want to see in someone's profile e.g., marketing, etc.). 4. Request an introduction via the "Get Introduced" forms found by clicking the "Send InMail" pull-down menu on an individual's profile page. 5. If you don't have a connection and only receive a job title, or if you have a 3rd degree connection and can't see the profile, copy the job title and any other information provided (e.g., 3rd degree connections will provide the first name) and then paste the job title within quotation marks into Google, and add the first name if you have it. Conduct a search and Google will provide the person's name. Copy the name and go back into LinkedIn's people search form, search for the person, and review his/her profile. 6. In the "Companies" search form, enter the name of a company (use quotation marks if the name has more than one word) and conduct a search. 7. See who you know at the company. Click the "Insights" tab and see recent departures and other information. **8. Link with Sam Richter at http://www.linkedin.com/in/samrichter**
Contact Life Events Learn when a contact changes a job, gets a new job title, or even has a birthday. Quickly access information about the people you are meeting with each day. Download the mobile application and have the information sent to your mobile device.	**www.linkedin.com/contacts** 1. Make sure you are logged into your LinkedIn account. 2. Click the Network tab and then Contacts. 3. On the "Settings" area (to access, click the gear icon "Settings" link in the upper navigation) choose to link with the selected applications. You can link with external contact programs, calendars, and even email programs. 4. Once you are synched, you can use the Contacts dashboard to review changes and events that are occurring with your contacts, that day. 5. On the dashboard, see who has changed jobs; send them a congratulatory note. See who is celebrating a birthday and send them a best wishes email. If you've synched with your calender, you can even see who you're meeting with that day and quickly access their LinkedIn profile so you can remind yourself about the person's history, accomplishments, and interests. 6. Download the LinkedIn Contacts mobile application to your mobile device and easily access information anytime, anywhere.

SAM TIP	WHERE TO GO, WHAT TO DO
Group Prospecting Find prospects who are interested in a specific topic and connect with them. Share your expertise to build your and your company's brand.	**www.linkedin.com/groups** 1. Make sure you are logged into your LinkedIn account. 2. To find a Group that you'd like to join, enter terms into the search engine, e.g., "plastics industry," "University of Minnesota alumni," etc. 3. On the results page, select "Groups" from the side navigation. 4. Select a Group to learn more about it and its members. Click the "Join Group" button to become a member. Some Groups will automatically accept you, while other join requests need to be approved. 5. Once accepted, participate in Group discussions by adding your expertise. Pose a question. Share an article. Even promote relevant events. 6. To search for prospects, select a Group from your Groups page; locate the Groups page by selecting the "Interest" tab on the main navigation. 7. On the Group page top navigation, you'll see the number of members who belong to that Group. Click the number and you will then see a list of all of the Group members. 8. To search for members who belong to the Group, use the side search box and enter relevant terms, e.g., job titles, company names, geographic location, etc. Use Boolean for better results (e.g., put quotations around terms like "vice president"). 9. Once you've found a member you're interested in contacting, select the "Send Message" link located under their name and job title and craft a brief note. Make sure you mention that you share a Group together and any other relevant information.
Personal Information See if someone has made his or her Facebook account open to public viewing, and if yes, see what you can learn about the person by visiting their profile.	**www.facebook.com** 1. Using the main search form, enter a person's name or a company name. 2. Click the "See More Results" link located at the bottom of the Search Suggestions box. 3. On the results page, click the People tab in the main navigation. 4. Enter in a company name in the search box. On the results page, click the People tab to find individuals who have the company name in their profile. 5. If the person has made their profile available, view their information. 6. You can also try searches using natural language, for example, 'people at 3M in Minnesota' or 'people in Minnesota who like golf.' **7. Connect with Sam Richter at www.facebook.com/samrichterknowmore**
Political Contributions A gateway to U.S. political contributions by individuals and companies.	**www.opensecrets.org/indivs** 1. Enter the name of the company or an individual then choose a location. 2. Choose the years you'd like to search by clicking on the corresponding check boxes, or choose Search All Cycles. 3. Enter the given security key.

SAM TIP	WHERE TO GO, WHAT TO DO
Golf Handicap Golfers are passionate about their game. If your prospects play golf, you can find their handicaps at the USGA's Handicap Network.	**www.ghin.com** 1. Click the "Handicap Lookup" tab on the upper navigation. 2. Choose the "Name and State" tab. Enter the person's name and state to look for handicap index information. 3. Click the name for handicap history.
Criminal Records See if a person has ever been in trouble with the law. Some communities even include traffic violations.	**www.criminalsearches.com/search/criminal/advanced.aspx** 1. Enter a name and choose a state. 2. See if your person appears and view the code to see what law was violated. 3. Note that by clicking a name, you'll need to pay for additional information.
Real Estate Values Locate the value of a personal residence, annual taxes, and more.	**www.zillow.com** 1. Enter an address plus a city, state, or zip. If you need to locate an address, try www.411.com or www.zabasearch.com. 2. On the address result page, click the address link to find price information and in some markets, a "birds-eye" view of the home and area. 3. Scroll down for price estimate information, sales data, and the homeowner's real estate tax details.

Success Factors for Superior Insurance Advisors

Research has determined differences in thinking and acting between superior and average Independent advisors. Nine Success Factors represent the underlying characteristics that account for the differences. **Success Factors can be defined as what superior performers do more often for better results than average performers.**

1. **Self-Confidence**

Definition: The advisor has a strong belief that he or she will succeed as a sales advisor even in the face of challenging obstacles.

a. Express strong belief in what he or she is doing.
b. Communicates that he or she has strong values.
c. States he or she has an understanding about own weaknesses and takes action to do something about them.
d. Describes self as able to overcome rejection.
e. Describes self as possessing confidence and a strong self image.
f. Describes self as competitive and wants to win.
g. Communicates belief he or she will be successful.

2. **Image of Being a Sales Professional**

Definition: Advisor views self as a professional with a sense of mission about work.

a. Describe self as high achiever.
b. Displays persistence in staying focused on goals with client.
c. Believes in and has enthusiasm about the business of life insurance.
d. Expresses belief in the mission of the business rather than the commission.
e. Is loyal and enthusiastic about the company.

3. **Self-Control**

Definition: The advisor demonstrates self-control in order to meet business needs.

a. Describe self as one who is resilient (bounces back).
b. Remains calm in the face of rejection and/or attack.
c. Exercises self-discipline to do what needs to be done.
d. Overcomes call reluctance.

4. **Self-Discipline**

Definition: The advisor displays discipline about his or her work activities.

a. Sticks to something until it gets done.
b. Displays discipline work habits.
c. Disciplines self to follow up to fulfill a promise, services business, or maintain a relationship.

5. **Client-Centered Behavior**

Definition: The advisor understands and responds to the client's perspective, needs, and goals in the selling and servicing of business.

a. Provides value added service to the client.
b. Understands client's need and creates product to match it.
c. Senses most appropriate approach to reach a client and responds.
d. Develops a high degree of credibility with the clients.
e. Knows how a product will fill a need or solve a problem.
f. Recognizes needs and interests of clients.
g. Earns client's trust as an advisor.
h. Spends time with clients and prospects.
i. Knows buying signals.
j. Listens attentively to the client.
k. Strives to develop rapport with the client.
l. Communicates simply and removes technical jargon in speaking to clients.

6. **Goal-Directed Behavior**

Definition: The advisor establishes clear goals and plans activities to reach those goals.

a. Plans actions which he or she follows on a consistent basis.
b. Describes self as knowing exactly what he or she wants.
c. Communicates a desire to be a top performer.
d. Sees more quality people on a consistent basis.
e. Is active and purposeful in learning about future products, tax laws, etc. and applies this information in making sales.

7. **Initiative**

Definition: The advisor takes initiative to create business opportunities.

a. Initiates actions that anticipate the needs of clients and the business.
b. Recognizes the need to invest in the business.
c. Takes initiative in using staff and other resources.
d. Describes self as having drive and determination.

8. **Ask Key Questions**

Definition: The advisor gathers information, facts, and feelings which are critical in matching the client's

a. Asks key questions of clients to find out their goals and needs.
b. Probes for information and feelings.
c. Describes self as knowing when to ask questions.

9. **Creative Problem Solving**

Definition: The advisor displays the ability to explore creative alternatives in making a sale.

a. Volunteers creative ideas.
b. Overcomes obstacles again and again. Tries more than once.

InforcePRO

The “Prospecting as Fishing” Parable

by Jim Ruta

Jim Ruta's Blog

“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. 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, SW, Next…

28. No one can make you like fishing. But, if you like fish, you have to force yourself. There is no replacement for prospecting. You have to have a way to get prospects. Change your perspective on prospecting and you are well on your way.

I've told this story many times and audiences are always amazed at how easily you can exchange "Prospect" for "Fish" and "Prospecting" for "Fishing"...

The rules of fishing and the rules of prospecting are strikingly similar.

The parallels here are real and if you can learn the lessons of fishing, you can learn the lessons of prospecting. With the right insight, equipment and tactics you can improve your prospecting mindset and overall results.

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