
The Common Selling Mistake that 95% of All Coaches and Consultants Commit

By David Frey

A few months ago I was in a meeting with a successful small business owner and we were having a meeting about what I might do to help his business. After asking him a series of questions to get a better understanding of the problems he was facing and what he envisioned a successful outcome would be if we worked together, it was my turn to tell him how I was going to solve his problems.

I'm sure as a coach or consultant you've been in this situation many times. You have an intense desire and urge to start spurring out ideas on how to solve their problems. After all, that's what the meeting is all about and probably what the business owner is expecting you to do....right?

The Common Selling Problem of Most Coaches and Consultants

Most coaches and consultants would do exactly that – start giving ideas. But if you're smart, you'll want to hold back on giving great ideas because, in fact, that's NOT what your prospect really wants. Don't make the common mistake that 95% of all coaches and consultants make in a selling situation, which is misjudging what the prospect really wants.

What your prospect really wants is RESULTS.

They don't necessarily want to know HOW you're going to get something done, they want to know WHAT you'll get done. Always talk about the "what" before you talk about the "how."

Why?

Because when you talk about the possible results your client can expect, you're tapping into his or her dreams, hopes, and wishes. It turns the discussion into an emotional conversation and like it or not, people buy with their emotions.

Express Results in Terms of Emotional Benefits

When talking about the expected outcome of your coaching or consulting relationship turn your features into emotional benefits. For instance, suppose you mentioned to your prospect that you could increase their profit margins by 25%.

Take a moment and ask your prospect what that would mean to them in their personal life and their business life. What would it mean if in 12 months from now you could realistically increase their profit margins by 25% mean?

This is a powerful question because it puts your prospect in a position in which they have to verbally talk about the benefits of working with you. In essence, they start selling themselves on your services. At the same time, it creates a vision of what could be.

Continue asking them questions to bring out the emotional benefits of working with you such as, “If we did achieve a 25% increase in profit margins, how would that affect your employees?” “How would that affect the pressure and stress you mentioned you’re feeling right now?” “Do you think it would have an impact on your family life?”

These types of questions help your prospect visualize what success will feel like and will heighten their desire to achieve those results.

Tell Stories to Seal the Deal

There’s nothing more powerful than to relate a story about a client in a similar situation and the positive results you achieved for that client. I’ll never forget the time a partner in the consulting firm I was working with at the time and I had a meeting with a high profile client.

We were talking about the some of the problems they were having in their logistics department and how it was affecting their customer service. After asking him a series of questions I began to share with him that I had worked with another client here in Houston that was in a similar situation.

I mentioned all the problems that they were having at the time. As I began to tell the story, I could see my prospect’s head start to nod and his whole body leaned a bit forward. I talked about all the repercussions the problems were having on other parts of their business.

The client jumped in and agreed that they were experiencing those same problems. Then I explained very briefly how we went through a series of mini-projects that eventually

improved the situation dramatically. I didn't go into detail on exactly what we did, but I took the time to explain the positive consequences of each mini-project. I could feel my client's interest start to increase.

Then I spent the majority of the balance of our conversation talking about the benefits that my previous client received as a result of our successful consulting project.

The Business Will Ask for Itself

That was all it took. I didn't need to ask for the prospect's business because by the end of the conversation he was so excited about the possibility of us replicating the results of our previous project with our other client; he was ready to move forward.

You see, if you provide a vision of what can be, and you provide proof that you've successfully done it before, the business will ask for itself.

If your prospect has a bad enough problem, and is desperate to get it solved, he or she will want to believe everything you have to say. All you have to do is get them to take the next step.

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