

Kiss That Frog! - Personal Communication

In a high tech-high touch world, high touch wins every time.

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Let's talk a little bit about "Frogs and Networking," but you'll have to indulge a short explanation to make the connection.

At any one time, there are hundreds of network marketing companies. They have been billion dollar companies that are household words, and they have been Mom and Pop businesses you have never heard of.

What sustains them all is obviously sales, but what fuels their success is the ability of their distributors to recruit. And at the foundation of all recruiting is good communication and people to people bonding.

Technology is changing the game, but don't sell short the old fashion hug or handshake as the best bonding and recruiting machine yet invented.

So, what's the impact of the high tech tools like the Internet on your success in recruiting? Well, our experience suggests that we definitely have a step forward in communication, but not necessarily in closing the sale or recruit. There is no substitute for what is often referred to as "pressing the flesh."

This is a people business and human contact is the thing that cements the bond.

With the advent of television, a famous media observer, Marshal McLuhan coined an interesting observation. He said, "*the medium is the message.*" Unless you are a university professor, that one may leave you puzzled. But actually, what he was probably saying was that "*the way in which you say something may be as important as what you say.*"

So when you send your message by spam, when you send your message by an automated telephone device, when your recruits respond to your ads by calling and being greeted by a voicemail or answer machine, when their email is returned like a boomerang by an autoresponder... when they are greeted by an amazing array of technological communications devices, is it any surprise that you lose the recruit, someone who might have been pivotal in helping build your sales organization.

This is not to say that numbers are not important. The rule in the sales world has always been that you have to expect a lot of nos if you are expecting to get a yes. In other words, you have to kiss a lot of frogs if you are going to marry a prince.

One ingenious networker applied the frog kissing principle to network marketing. The message is hands on, and this old MLM fairytale is entitled Network Marketing and Frogs. The tale goes something like this:

You've got to kiss a lot of frogs to meet a prince.

That's the job and you've got to kiss'em.

You can't mail them a kiss.

You can't stay in the office and wait for them to hop in and kiss you.

You can't let advertising change them into princes.

You can't ask your secretary to kiss them.

You can't kiss the same one 40 times.

You can't spend all of your time in kissin' school.

You've got to spend time with frogs and you'll find them out there in the marshes.

Then... when you find one... you've got to make contact.

Remember, kissing is a contact sport.

That is, if you really want to meet a prince.

In other words, in a high tech-high touch world, high touch wins every time. One of the great networking trainers, David Stewart, likes to say that, although the follow up on decisions is often driven by logic, people make decisions based on emotion.

Think about it for a second. He's right.

Eminem doesn't say play the music, he says lose yourself in the music. In other words, connect your soul. Computers, Internet, answering machines, emails can't do this. People don't lose themselves in email or autoresponders.

People make the decision to commit based on visceral instincts.

When they say reach out and touch someone, it resonates.
Reach out and send an electronic message does not resonate.

All the studies done on why distributors join and stay with network marketing companies point to the top factors as personal and emotional:

Bonding with company leadership;
Bonding with field leadership;
Bonding with company vision;
And Bonding with the product itself.

All of these connections are visceral and personal.

So, use all those new high tech tools for great communication. But don't kid yourself. There is no substitute for the personal connection if you intend to be successful in recruiting and network marketing.



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On any given day you can catch Jeffrey Babener, Babener & Associates, lecturing on Network Marketing at the University of Texas or the University of Illinois, addressing thousands of distributors in Los Angeles, Bangkok, Tokyo and Russia, or writing a new book on Network Marketing, an article for *Entrepreneur Magazine* or a chapter for a University textbook.

Over two decades he has served as marketing and legal advisor to some of the world's largest direct selling companies. An active spokesperson for the industry, he has assisted in new legislation and served on the Lawyer's Council and Government Relations Committee of the Direct Selling Association (DSA) as well as serving as General Counsel for the Multilevel Marketing International Association.

He is an MLM attorney supplier member of the DSA and has served as legal counsel and MLM consultant on MLM law issues for many DSA companies. He has chaired more than 50 national conferences on the subject of "Starting and Running the Successful MLM Company". He is editor of one of the most informative and popular websites on Network Marketing, Direct Selling and MLM, www.mlmllegal.com.