

STRATEGY

AND THE

FAT SMOKER

CHAPTER

Firms have tried an amazing range of things... **CONTINUE**

BY **DAVID MAISTER**

FIRMS HAVE TRIED AN AMAZING RANGE OF THINGS that firms have tried to get people involved in business development. And, I'm told, they haven't worked as well as people hoped they would. They don't seem to elicit *enthusiastic* participation in business-getting.

Firms do not address the central question that non-participants have: "*Why* should I get involved in all this?" Firms keep trying to prove to people why their efforts would be good for the firm or because it will make them rich. Typically, this motivation is accomplished simply by announcing that those who bring in business will be rewarded. And that's it! They just say, "Do it and we'll pay you!"

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Not only are these appeals not always effective but, perhaps surprisingly, encouraging professionals to put effort into business development primarily for the money turns out to backfire badly. Frequently, *less* money is earned, not more.

By paying someone to do something, (or getting them to focus on the pay as the primary motivation for doing it) you are effectively saying: "Don't throw yourself into this because it has any meaning or purpose for you. Ignore those things. Do it for the money."

People who are doing things primarily for rewards do them less well than those who are motivated by the meaning, purpose, fulfillment and fun they find in the effort.

If you don't love what you do or those you do it for, why would you want to go out and get more of it? The traditional answer is, of course, "Because they'll pay me if I do. They'll pay me to do stuff I have no feelings for, for people I don't care for!" And that, of course, is the dictionary definition of prostitution.

The more you can really care about the work you do and the clients you serve, the more noticeable this will be to clients, and the more likely it is that you will be hired—by people you can care about for work that engages you!

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A large part of the problem in many firms is that there is no credit within the systems or culture of many firms for marketing contributions that cannot be linked to 'winning' a specific piece of business.

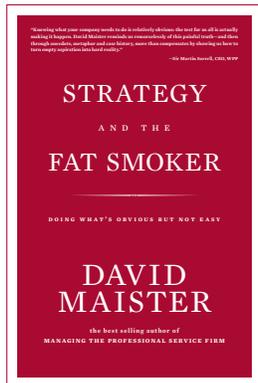
Not surprisingly, this mentality leads everyone to under invest in articles, seminars, innovative ideas and the like, and rush instead to "selling" activities. They start approaching prospective clients with an overeager rush of "Do you want to do it?"—which is not usually a recipe for success! What all these problems have in common is that firms are not only "in it only for the money," but they want the money *now*!

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Management needs to start saying, “Let’s do it as if we were planning to be in business for a long time. Let’s do it to really be helpful and valuable to people we can care about, and let’s have more fun and fulfillment!” Then they will be able to say, “Oh, and by the way, a wonderful consequence will follow—clients will love it and we will get richer!”

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INFO



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Maister is widely acknowledged as one of the world's leading authorities on the management of professional service firms. For two decades he has acted as a consultant to prominent professional firms around the world, on a wide variety of strategic and managerial issues. In 2002, he was named as one of the top 40 business thinkers in the world (Business Minds, by Tom Brown, PrenticeHall/Financial Times). He is the author of the bestselling books *Managing the Professional Service Firm* (1993), *True Professionalism* (1997), *The Trusted Advisor* (2000), *Practice What You Preach* (2001) and *First Among Equals* (2002). These books have been translated into 14 languages. For seven years, he served as a professor on the faculty of the Harvard Business School (1979-85), prior to launching his consulting practice. He lives in Boston, Massachusetts.

In March of 2005, he finally took his own advice, gave up smoking and lost 30 pounds.

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