



Corsini's Point of the Week™

JULY 19, 2010

Specialize, Don't Generalize

Recently, a new client was telling me about his company and talking about several of the things that they currently are doing.

They are all over the place.

I asked him to give me a list of what the company offers, and about five minutes later he finished listing everything they do. I said, ***"It sounds like you do everything."***

"Yes," he said proudly. *"We want to make sure we don't miss any opportunity, so we make sure that our list of products and services covers everything."*

"But in saying you do everything, you are telling people that you don't specialize in anything." I replied. ***"People don't want generalists; they want experts. Truth is, most businesses can't specialize in everything."***

I could tell that he was thinking hard about what I said. I then told him how I came to embrace this concept.

Almost 20 years ago, when I started my consulting firm, I had that same philosophy. ***My goal was to make sure I never missed an opportunity.*** One thing I did was list all of my services on every fax cover page I sent out. (I bet I had close to 20 services on that list.) One day, I sent that to someone who was interested in talking to me, and after getting my fax he said, *"It looks like you don't specialize in anything."*

Well, hearing that hurt my feelings, but, at the same time, ***I recognized that he was authentic enough to give me one of the best pieces of advice I've ever gotten in business.*** I took that advice to heart. ***I narrowed the focus at CCG to just five areas, and we've stayed true to that ever since. In the last few years, we've even become more specialized with three main areas of focus:***

- **Business Coaching/Professional Development,**
- **Strategic Planning and**
- **Speaking.**

CORSINI'S POINT

People want the best products and services they can afford. They want to work with experts. You would not consider going to a general practitioner for a specialized, unique medical procedure. Just think about if you asked the doctor if he or she had ever done the procedure and the response was: "I read an article once on the topic." Narrow the services you offer; demonstrate up front, and without a doubt, that you are a specialist! Be the expert your clients are looking to hire. Once people see that you have a

Quote of the Week

"Very narrow areas of expertise can be very productive. Develop your own profile. Develop your own niche."

— Leigh Steinberg

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specialty, they most likely will ask you if you also offer the service they are specifically looking for. That's the irony of it all. By being specific, you'll get the important questions. Try doing it all, and you'll minimize your expertise. Chances are, people won't consider that you're expert enough to ask for your help!



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