



Connecting With Our Clients Means Providing Full-Cycle Service

In the summer edition of So to Speak, Warren Evans spoke about the need, as a 'Professional' speaker to produce results for our clients, he stated "Those results may range from, knowing how to harness the internet or manage time more effectively, to feeling more optimistic about the future, or discovering our spiritual soul." Many of the results we produce may have little to do with our presentations but are a simply part of the 'full-cycle service' process.

Several dramatic changes in the speaking and training industries have begun to place greater demands on us to provide specific results:

- 1) Exponentially growth in the information technology industry. ("currently a \$7.8 billion (US) industry and is expected it will grow at an estimated 54% annually, reaching \$26 billion in the year 2000*"). Clients don't need information, they can gather it from the internet, a CD Rom, a video, or one of 150-200 TV channels, they need assistance in applying it to solving problems.
- 2) Clients don't have time. They look to immediate resources (you and I). Speakers, unless they are celebrities, are no longer being asked to simply motivate an audience. We are often asked to present a keynote, a seminar or workshop, follow up consulting and/or coaching or a 'full-cycle of service'.

Recently, I was working with Jeff Mowatt on a project for his business. We began to discuss some of the changes in our industry and it became clear to me that I follow a process or 'cycle of service' from presenting a keynote and/or training session to consulting or coaching to help implement the tools and skills and often the process begins again. The reverse may also occur; I would get a consulting contract which leads to a presentation. Understanding this porcess has helped me to grow my business: In a recent situation I was asked to delivera three hour presentation skills seminar, then expand it to a 6 hour session and again to include coaching. Later I proposed to the client that we partner the program with another presenter to include a session on writing skills...the client implemented the entire program.

Providing full-cycle service can be a challenge for some of us;

- many speakers are good at only part of the cycle,
 - time to provide a complete cycle of service is limited,
 - clients often look for an all-inclusive package and may not want to pay speaker rates.
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Here's a few solutions to this on-going challenge:

1) build a strategic alliance/partnership or referral network with other speakers, trainers or consultants (especially in your chapter).

One of my upcoming engagements came from a chapter member. The combined program for business owners is partnering a direct marketing sales program with my presentation on visual communication. A similar project with another member will combine business management with my creative thinking program. The combinations are endless.

2) incorporate your clients as partners in the process

A year ago we did a focus group with key clients to determine strategies for the direction my firm. the results were tremendous.

3) refer a new client to an existing client. Have the new client follow the existing clients processes and look for a parallel strategy they can implement in their own organization.

4) organize clients in non-competitive industries as a mastermind group to share resources and strategies...

As a speaker delivering a presentation is only a part of 'full-cycle service'. If you are looking at how you can create added value for your customers and increase your business, look for unique ways to complete the cycle of services to create the results your clients expect.

(*source Dataquest 1997)

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