

# JAM Sessions



JAM Team – left to right  
George Amidon, Kaleen Barbera, Jim Morel and  
Greg Heffington

Our newest program:

### COMPASS—Navigating Better Finishes

Learn how to:

- Maximize the “Yes”
- Minimize the “No”
- Eliminate the “Maybe”

April 2015

Issue 3

## Field Advantage by George Amidon

As “March Madness comes to an end many of us participated in the frenzy with our NCAA bracketology. What you might not be aware of is that “March Madness” traces back to Illinois’ statewide high-school basketball tournament which began in 1908. Whether it’s high school, college, or professional sports, this time of the year creates a heightened sense of urgency. Both high school and college begin their playoffs for the winter sports and the Pros begin their mad push for the final playoff spots.

So, in our newsletter focused on understanding your field advantage, why would I bring up March

Madness? I believe it’s a perfect tie in to what all of us do in our industry. We compete on a daily basis whether for new clients, new assets, or more access and opportunity; simply put, trying to grow our business. If you think about the teams competing in March Madness, they’ve spent the season developing a chemistry. They’ve come to understand what their strengths are as well as their challenges, both as a group and as individuals. The teams that move on and find success during this time understand and leverage those strengths while minimizing their challenges.

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George Amidon  
Managing Partner



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## Why you? by Greg Heffington



Greg “Heff” Heffington RCC  
Managing Partner

The field advantage you have goes well beyond how competitive your product is, how large your firm is, how many clients you have, or the size of your asset base. It really starts with who you are and how you communicate that to your clients and prospects.

The challenge here is defining who you are, what is important to you, what makes you unique, and why you do what you do for your clients. (continued on page 4)



## From the Field

# Differentiating Yourself in the Right Way

By Kaleen Barbera



Kaleen Barbera CPC  
Managing Partner

We realize that in today's competitive environment, regardless of industry, we need to stand out from others. We will always have to work hard as a representative for the company we work for, as well as a one-to-one service provider, to identify and put into practice the things that make us different (aka 'better') than the rest of the pack. Right? Well what if we are standing out for the wrong reasons? What if we are differentiating ourselves because we consistently commit faux pas? There are times when standing out can hurt us, not help us. Often times those are the tie-breakers between building our brand and breaking it down. Consider the following: you're on the phone with someone and can hear noise in the background, papers shuffling, typing on a keyboard, and then they interject with something off-topic or interrupt the speaker, etc.. What is your impression of that individual?

Take a minute to think of the kind of person with whom you like to interact and work. Which do you prefer: organized, professional, understands how to manage a conversation while eating, treats others with respect, focuses on what others are saying before speaking, thoughtful, responsive? Or this: oblivious to others, talks on the phone in front of others, multi-tasks during meetings, impatient, speaks negatively, lacks table manners, takes days to respond to phone calls or emails, always

running late, preoccupied, rarely smiles/make eye contact, etc.?

Obviously, we want to work with the individual who fits the former description rather than the latter. However, are we emulating that persona ourselves? Think back to your 3 most recent meetings or interactions with another person. These could be with a business associate, client, or even a friend. Can you name 2 things that made you feel good about the time spent? Now, think of 2 things that you learned about that person. Do your answers come back to things that resulted from a genuine interaction and dialogue? Did you learn things about the other person because you asked and were interested? Or did you do the majority of the talking and learn nothing new?

As salespeople, most of us possess an inclination to talk too much. This turns into a bad habit and bad habits are hard to break. When we talk too much, we diminish our brand because we are not focused on being in a dialogue; hence, not being present with others. Studies show one of the top attributes that appeals to people is spending time with someone who is genuinely present and engaged with them. If it sounds like you need help re-developing your ability to be present, we have some suggestions:

1. Be sure your phone is off, put away, and limit all other distractions that you can control.

2. Drive your half of the conversation by asking questions, not telling.
3. Validate what you're hearing. Repeat back and clarify if necessary. Probe for further understanding.

What you'll find at the end of the conversation is that you learned valuable information about the other person, their values, and their needs. Information someone shares with you allows you to connect with them in a way others may not.

While the hope is that the other person will be aware and reciprocate by your good example by asking questions, showing an equal interest, and looking for your input, we cannot control others' actions. Keep in mind you can only control your brand, not the brand of others. But by putting those 3 things into action, you can be confident that when you are remembered, it will be for reasons that allow you and your personal brand to be differentiated in the right (aka 'better') way.

## Coach's Corner by Jim Morel



The "Coach"  
James A. Morel  
President

Are you tired of skeptical clients responding with a polite but insincere "maybe" to an invitation to join you in a business relationship? Would you like to minimize the client "maybe" and maximize the client "yes"?

Try this ASK EARLY TELL LATE CONVERSATION MODEL. It will differentiate you from your competitors and put skeptical clients at ease. This conversation model is based on a behavioral science principle: Facts (tell) are not heard until feelings (ask) are addressed. For example, first telling a client about you, your company, and your products is not heard or retained before first asking the client to share his/her history, challenges, etc.

Follow these "Ask Early, Tell Late" steps: [\(continued on page 3\)](#)

# MARCH MADNESS



They utilize their “field advantage” to give themselves a better chance at success.

In our industry we find ourselves in daily competition and generally the stakes are always high. The advantage we bring is what separates us from our competition – it’s our field advantage! The question I have for you is can you clearly articulate what makes you and your team different? If you can, great! If you can’t then here are some things to think about:

### What is -

- Your story
- Your values
- The way you express yourself
- Your sense of humor
- Your passion & knowledge

### What do -

- Your clients say about you
- Your clients say about your team
- You do differently from your competitors

Understanding your “field advantage” and being able to clearly articulate it will help separate yourself from the field. Vince Lombardi, the legendary Green Bay Packers football coach has provided many memorable quotes. One that has always hit home with me is:

***"The measure of who we are is what we do with what we have."***  
*Vince Lombardi.*

Each of us is unique and we bring something special to the game: find that uniqueness, embrace it, and utilize it to your advantage. Here is wishing each of you a successful and prosperous season!

***"The measure of who we are is what we do with what we have." Vince Lombardi.***

## Coach's Corner

(continued from page 2)



The “Coach”  
James A Morel  
President

1. ASK client to share history, transitions, values, and goals in that sequence and then follow by sharing mutual experiences.
2. ASK client for current situations, challenges, plans and then follow by sharing what your clients like about you, what matters most to you, and your talents in that sequence.
3. ASK if client is open to discussing a business partnership in detail. If response is Yes, Feelings and facts have been adequately addressed. If response is No, more dialogue is needed by asking what concerns they have in moving forward.

Net outcome, by “Asking Early and Telling Late” you can eliminate the maybe response and maximize the opportunity for the yes response!



**JAM Consulting -  
Helping You  
Succeed In  
Today's  
Ever-Changing  
Environments**



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## Why You? (continued from page 1)

Describing all of that without sounding boastful or arrogant can be a challenge for many of us.

It starts with a realistic assessment or inventory of you. Self-reflection is a very important part of this process and will serve you well in your ability to convey your field advantage. Ask yourself three questions:

- What are my talents?
- What matters most to me?
- What do my clients like most about me?

Be honest with yourself, be realistic in your assessment, and focus on the things that allow you to really serve your clients. The point of the exercise is to identify those characteristics, interests, and concerns that make you unique. I have coached many sales professionals who believe they are unique and when asked what makes them unique, they spout off a bunch of non-descript generalizations that anyone could say and therefore have little meaning to the audience they are addressing. It becomes sort of a “me too” concept. Very little is really conveyed about how you are going to help them or how much you care. Think about those ideas as you write down the answers to the

questions above.

Once you have the answers to the above questions, you will need to craft a message/statement that becomes the basis for communicating your personal field advantage to clients and prospects. It is rare that you will use the statement from start to finish. You will have the information in your head which will allow you to have a well thought out response to questions like, why should I do business with you?

It will be important to be concise, creative, and compelling when you communicate your value to clients and prospects. You want to illicit a response along the lines of “that is interesting, please tell me more”.

In the end, it has to be in your words and more from your heart, not just your head. If your intention is to persuade your audience for your gain, it will not work as well as it should. If your intention is to help them with their challenges regardless of your personal gain, it will succeed more often than not.

*At JAM Consulting we specialize in helping select sales groups become more impactful in a highly competitive marketplace through personalized programs and coaching. We believe that every client is unique in who they are and the challenges they face.*

*Developing a personalized approach to address those challenges and elevate their performance is our focus. Our clients say what separates us from our competitors is our ability to listen, understand and adjust to their ever-changing business needs.*