

Finding Your Niche

It's recommended to find a niche, the people who would be your ideal clients. If you have a foot problem, would you rather go to a general physician or a doctor who is a specialist in foot care? By narrowing your focus on a specific niche, you probably can be of more service and more successful, rather than spreading yourself too thin by trying to serve everyone. Your niche is your specialty and directly connects you with those you want to serve.

Four keys to finding your niche:

1. Reflect on what areas you are drawn to.

- Note your passions, interests and experience

2. Clearly define your niche.

- Who are people in your niche?
- What segment of the population (age, gender, location, specific interests/industries)?
- Where can you find them?
 - * See list below for ideas on where to find prospects in your niche

3. Identify their struggles by entering into their world.

- Research: get to know them from meetings, interviews and reading information.
- Ask questions to find out about their experience

4. Specify how you can help them.

- What do you have to offer, given your life purpose, talents, background and services?
- Also note what gives you credibility to your prospects.

*** Places to find prospects in your niche:**

- What organizations, clubs, and associations do they belong to?
- What meetings/conferences/ trade shows do they attend?
- What do they read? Include books, newsletters and magazines
- Where do they network?
- Where do they hang out?
- Does any organization or group have a "list" of these people?
- Where can you reach them in larger numbers and inexpensively?
- What websites do they frequent?
- Who would refer them to people like you?
- What directories are they listed in?
- What other professionals provide them services?

Getting Prospects Involved

For building a holistic practice, we found that the people we serve generally respond best to a personal approach that allows them to get to know us. After all, we are in a people profession and the people we serve want to feel safe and positive with the person who is offering to help them. They have to believe that we can help them and trust us enough to bare their souls to us.

We use the following four stages for building relationships with prospects:

1. **Create Affiliations**, which can be established through networking groups, writing enews letters, doing talks and/or demonstrations of your work, conducting radio interviews, and so on. We also know of people who have taken part-time jobs at metaphysical bookstore and health food stores to connect with potential clients.
2. **Get the Prospect's Attention**. This may involve establishing yourself as an expert in an area that is of interest to your prospects or somehow creating a connection between what you offer and what they are seeking.
3. **Establish Familiarity**. This is where the personal touch comes in. We encourage people to contact us personally to discuss their needs and goals, so we can get to know each other and let them know how we can help them. Repeated contact also creates familiarity, as with people who receive our enews letters every month. After a period of time, they feel that they know us.
4. **Provide More Information**. Now you are ready to find out if your prospect is interested in your services.

These four stages may not always be strictly defined, and in some cases, you may just connect easily with a prospect the first time you meet. In such cases, there is no reason to hold back, just notice how the prospect is responding and move at his or her pace. Or a person may read an article you wrote in a local magazine and immediately want your services. Again, be attentive to the prospect.

As a note, we learned this approach from professional coach and marketing expert Christian Mickelson, who you can find on the internet.

Creating an Effective Marketing Message

Marketing expert Robert Middleton has developed an effective overview of how to “get thru” to your prospective clients with an effective message. Where people tend to start by expecting prospects to enter their worlds and describing their practices, he turns it around. Instead, he suggests that you enter their world by discussing the challenges you help people with that they may also face. For marketing materials and conversations, here is an overview of his approach:

1. **Describe the challenges you help clients to address.** You may say something like “I help people who are feeling stressed by the frantic pace of their lives to find peace and create joyful lives.” People will generally hire you because you can help them to solve their problems. Your prospect is probably thinking “Why should I be interested?” Describing the pain you can remove is likely to start a conversation. You might expect a response like “Wow, that sounds interesting. How do you do that?”
2. **Describe your solution.** The prospect may now be thinking “Sounds interesting. Could this be for me?” so you want to provide more. “I first teach some effective state-of-the-art relaxation techniques and follow up with effective strategies help you to shift into living at a comfortable pace, so you can enjoy each day.” As you describe the solution, the prospect may think “This is exactly what I am looking for.” Now you are getting her attention.
3. **Tell a story.** Following up with a story brings the message down to earth. It answers the question “What results could I expect?” Use the best story you have. “I have a client who was at the end of her ropes with all of the demands on her with a full-time job and a family. I helped her to learn ways to stop the momentum, then determine how she could take control of her time, rather than just responding to all the demands others were making of her. Her life turned around completely. Now she is enjoying her life in ways she couldn’t have even imagined a month ago.”
4. **Give yourself credibility.** Describe your credentials. This is not the time for modesty. You want to answer the question “Who else has used this service and what were the results?” If the prospect has connected with what you have to offer, she will be wondering if it can work for her. For stress management, you might say “These types of problems are quite solvable. I have helped scores of people to turn their lives around.” When you start, you most likely cannot say that you have worked with hundreds of people, so you might say “The approach I use is so effective, thousands of people have turned their lives around with the techniques I use.”
5. **Describe your process.** Now you are seen as a person with real solutions, so this is the time to describe what you do. You are answering the question “How does this work?” with something like “I am a Stress Management Coach. I generally work with people on a weekly basis to get right to the heart of the problem and ...”
6. **Take action.** If the prospect is still interested, be prepared with a follow-up. She may be wondering what to do next. You may offer a free session, offer to email a related article or brochure, put her on your newsletter list, and so on. The key here is to always have a follow-up in place for the end of any interaction.

Of course, in a one-to-one conversation you will have an opportunity to personalize the message more by asking effective questions. We describe the details on the audios, along with ways to implement this sequence on your website, on flyers, and so on.

Creating Your Benefit Statement

Sometimes called your audio logo or elevator speech, this Benefit Statement is a brief, concise description about what you do. Develop it to be a clear, natural response.

Things to Avoid:

- **Describing yourself with a label:** “I’m a Reiki Practitioner.” “I’m an energy healer.”
- **Describing process/techniques you use:** “I do EFT and hypnotherapy.” “I use Bowen Therapy.” “I coach people.”

These first two pitfalls are ineffective because: they are boring, too self-centered, and too generic. Also the other person may not even understand the terminology.

- **Overtalking and not listening enough.**
- **Trying to sell or “convince” a person.**
- **Offering them too much too soon.** If they are truly interested follow up in stages, perhaps first sharing an article or something else related to your services.

Things to Include in your Benefit Statement:

1. **Who you work with** (your niche)
2. **What their problems are** (brainstorm possibilities and target ones that you address and are appropriate to the person)
3. **How you can solve their problems or benefit them.** (Tell the results clients have received from working with you).

“I help _____ [ideal client] who struggle with _____ [identify client problem] and would like to [benefits, results you offer].”

Example: “I help overweight people, who have been struggling a long time to keep their weight off and would like to be their ideal weight for the rest of their lives.”

4. If the client wants to know more, share a personal success story. Example: “When Mary worked with me she attained her ideal weight in less than 3 months and attracted a great relationship as well.”

When to use your Benefit Statement:

- In networking settings
- Your website
- Brochure, business card
- Whenever people ask what you do
- In your phone message
- Email signature file