



Using Framing

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Framing is a powerful tool that allows you to define how a situation, event or occurrence can be viewed. If you set the frame, you control the conversation; if you control the conversation, you can control the relationship; and if you control the relationship, you control the business opportunity.

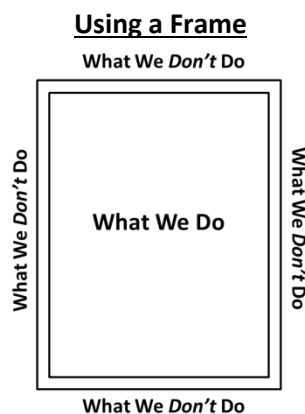
A frame works in the same way as the frame around a picture. A good picture frame draws you into the picture so you can focus on it, and enhances the picture, without being apparent itself.

People appreciate what has been framed, without realizing what has been framed,

Framing does 5 things:

1. Provides focus – so you are able to focus your clients, via your use and control of language, on what you see to be as the pith of the matter
2. Reduces mental clutter – make it easier to identify what you need to focus on
3. Helps to gain agreement
4. Accelerates movement and progress
5. Provides control

Inside of the frame is what is important, what is outside is what is not important, as shown in the picture below:





Framing a Situation

For example, you may be behind budget by \$20m. You could frame this in a couple of different ways, and how you frame it will affect and determine how you perceive and act on this.

- *Frame 1 – As a Problem:* We have a target of \$200m for the year and we are currently behind by \$20m. We should have made \$150m by this point in the year; we have only made \$130m. This means that we now have to make \$70m before the year end. We need to work harder to get more deals in.
- *Frame 2 – As an Opportunity:* We are working hard and well in a difficult market. We are \$20m shy of where we currently want to be, and need to make \$70m by the year-end. How can we leverage what we have already done? How can we work with other areas to help them and us accelerate the time it takes to do deals and increase the average deal size?

You can see in the second frame provides a positive, optimistic and creative context from which to drive the conversation and generate innovative ideas and actions. This helps to inspire and motivate people. The first frame is negative, pessimistic and looks at doing more of the same (which isn't working well as they are behind budget). This is more judgmental and is likely to lower morale.

Think how you can frame things to engage and include others in what you are trying to do, and to share this technique with your people in turn. A powerful frame can help to shape the perception, interpretation and how people engage with the situation, occurrence or event.