

# Row, Row, Grow Your Business



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I was on a recent family trip and we had the pleasure of taking our children out for an afternoon on kayaks. We had a couple of double kayaks. Each vessel had one adult and one child. The adults were in the rear, and the children took the front seats. I observed some great parallels to business development and sales:

1. No matter how strongly I rowed, if my son decided to drag his oar in the water, it was incredibly disruptive. He made us turn in circles. I simply could not get where I wanted to go without his cooperation
2. If he was neutral (kept his oar out of the water), I could make forward progress.
3. If we coordinated our strokes together and agreed on our course, we blew past the competition (even though my wife and daughter didn't know it was a race).
4. If I stopped to take a break from rowing, my son felt it was his job to row, which would be great except when he was rowing he felt it was necessary to plot an entirely new course.

Working with clients and prospects appears quite similar.

1. If you want to get someplace, you are not likely to get there if they don't share your vision for the destination.
2. If some of the members of the client's team are neutral and not working against you, you can still reach your intended destination. But, all it takes is one disruptive oar in the water to get you spinning in circles.
3. If your efforts are coordinated, you can reach your destination (a.k.a. successful sale) faster than otherwise.
4. If you don't lead the process, rest assured that someone else will pick up an oar and plot a new course... and you may not like the trip or the destination.

Be sure to take the time to jointly develop a vision for what you client needs, and see what you can do to encourage them to row along with you. Above all, if you don't continue to play the role of captain, don't be surprised if you end up on a different course (potentially with sharks).

Thank you to my son for illustrating some valuable lessons during a great adventure.