

Some prospects, though, still insisted on knowing his rates up front and didn't want to get into a dialogue first. He knew grinders like this would just drag his business down, so he began to weed them out. That meant giving up the chance to earn a little money, which caused some short-term pain, but it also freed him up to search for better clients—clients like the health start-up. If he could get another opportunity like that and price his services appropriately, he and his business could make a big leap.

Wavering

While he didn't find such a client right away, he did uncover projects that were more lucrative than he was used to. Unfortunately, the first few times he reviewed his value-based prices with these larger prospects his voice wavered, which usually led to the prospect asking for discounts. He tried to follow Karen's advice not to discount, unless it was related to getting paid quicker, but he still found himself making some exceptions. And whenever he did that, he ended up feeling underpaid.

He eventually got tired of feeling like that and decided to take a hard look within. After considering