

## Fish Where the Money Is!

Written by Jeffrey L. Boney  
Thursday, 10 May 2012 09:26

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### Fish Where the Money Is

Have you ever gone fishing?

Well, whether you have or haven't, I've got a simple question for you that I know you could easily answer.

If you decided to go fishing one day and came upon two ponds, one to the left and one to the right, which pond would you choose?

We will call the pond on the left, Pond A and the pond on the right, Pond B.

Okay, maybe that is not enough information for you to make your decision, so here is some more data to help you make a sound decision.

Let's say you come upon these two ponds and notice that there is a sign that says that there are 100 fish in Pond A and 100 fish in Pond B, which one would you choose then?

Yeah, I know, still not enough to help you make the right decision.

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What if you went further and saw another sign that said that Pond A had catfish in it and Pond B had bass in it, which would you choose?

Still not enough information to make a solid decision yet?

Okay, I know this will seal the deal for you.

If Pond A has 99 fishermen already there fishing, whereas Pond B has only 2 fishermen there fishing, which one would you choose?

Right about now, I am sure your answer is Pond B. And your reason would be simple.

You would more than likely choose Pond B, because there is more opportunity to catch fish because there are fewer fishermen there to compete with.

Some, however, would probably still choose Pond A because they simply like catfish more than they like bass. Others would choose Pond A because they have never had bass, so they would go with what they were familiar with or most comfortable with.

So, I have an even deeper question for African-Americans.

When it comes to our educational choices or our career choices, why do we oftentimes settle for Pond A, when there is far more opportunity for us in Pond B? When we go to college or send our children to college, what is the end goal?

We as African-Americans tend to choose degree paths that do not lead to careers that are financially lucrative. Remove the athlete or the entertainer from the equation and take a moment to look at the educational focus of African-Americans.

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Decisions by Congress and elected officials are slowly choking the life away from careers where blacks had significant careers and gains, such as teachers, labor force and the post office, by cutting funding for these areas or making decisions that impede growth in those areas.

Even when it comes to starting businesses, black folks tend to start businesses that are far too familiar and already oversaturated. How many more real estate agents, insurance agents, caterers, staffing companies and tax preparers will open up in the next year by African-Americans that will compete with the already existing African-Americans in those fields?

Now that isn't to discourage anyone from starting a business in those fields, but getting you to apply the Pond A versus Pond B analogy to your decision making.

If you look at the top industries where money is spent and made, black folks aren't in those fields. Whether it is oil, gas and energy, aerospace, medical, commercial construction, maritime or technology, black people are statistically underrepresented in these areas.

If you think that I am exaggerating, ask yourself this question and take a personal poll.

We will call the first question, Poll A.

Poll A: How many black people you know that are real estate agents, insurance agents, caterers, staffing companies, beauticians, barbers or tax preparers?

We will call the second question, Poll B.

Poll B: How many black people do you know that have a viable business, providing services and products in the oil, gas and energy, aerospace, medical, commercial construction, maritime or technology fields?

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I am sure you will find that you have more names in Poll A than Poll B.

If we want to build sustainable, long-lasting companies that can take care of our children and our great-grandchildren for years to come, we need to change the way we view our education and our careers.

If you know that the money is found in Pond B and there is more opportunity there, you need to go that route, even if it is the road less traveled.

Follow the money black people, you won't be disappointed, I promise you.

*Jeffrey L. Boney is the lead staff writer for the Houston Forward Times newspaper, Next Generation Project Fellow and a dynamic, international speaker. Jeffrey is the Founder and CEO of the Texas Business Alliance and is an experienced entrepreneur and business development strategist. If you would like to request Jeffrey as a speaker, you can reach him at [jboney1@texasbusinessalliance.org](mailto:jboney1@texasbusinessalliance.org).*

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