

Weekly Column
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Melvin University
and Me

Big fish in the small pond

I often talk about "big fish in the small pond" when I meet with our university staff, especially the vice president and the head of the faculty. It is expressed as a joke in the case of a new professor at school or a large church pastor who participates in the school management. It doesn't mean there's a problem with such people coming into school. The key is how to deal with it from the school's point of view.

In any organization, in any ministry, there are competent people. They might always think, "Should I stay here longer?" Therefore, rather than expanding their organization or ministry, they always check whether they can grow or not in here, or they can leave at any time. Because they are big fish, so it is inconvenient for them to stay in a small pond. There are two options for us as leaders at this time: let them leave freely, or grow our organization and make it bigger. Certainly the latter is a wiser choice, and I think it's entirely up to us, the top leaders.

In the case of our Institute, there have been several such moments. In the beginning stage, the fish were small, and the pond was small as well, so there was no problem at all. But a few years later, exactly two years later after begun the Institute, big fish slowly came into our

pond. So definitely with their help, our pond was slowly upgraded and became an increasingly large pond, and eventually expanded internationally, so the big fish in our pond were satisfied. I think they are determined not to leave our Institute. Because they think they can grow in our pond. And the pond got bigger and bigger. It became like a big river, and later like the ocean.

But something happened. This is the third step. Small fish, and those who first started the Institute, could not survive in the present large pond. They seem to be depressed, thinking about leaving on their own, "I don't have to stay here, in this big pond anymore." It was sad, but was true. So some left and some remained. The remained were not key members as they used to be, and eventually they remained behind the scene.

As a top leader, I often find it difficult to keep both big and small fish in one pond. It is now a realistic job because there are two classes of people at Melvin University today. I think it is my job to continue to improve the school so that the big people can be satisfied, and also to make the early members to get proud and not feel bad.