

Play to Your Strengths

Marketing and Business Development for Women Lawyers

November 2012

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Overview

- Provide practical strategies and tools that when combined with communication, nurturing, patience, and humour help you capitalize on personal strengths that advance your business development skills both as an individual and a member of a team.
- Develop a personal business development action plan that is balanced, satisfying, measurable — and do-able.

Play to Your Strengths

Sound familiar?

1. I never get around to it.
2. My strategy is all over the place.
3. I don't recognize or take advantage of opportunities.
4. I feel alone and need help.
5. I've lost clients to the competition.

Still sound familiar?

6. I'm not receiving as many quality referrals as I used to.
7. I have difficulty identifying what is standing in my way.
8. I don't feel successful and get anxious thinking about it.
9. Weeks can pass without me developing any business.
10. I have clients who absorb a lot of non-billable time.

Marketing and Business Development Cycle

1. Marketing — how you approach your target market and make yourself known.
2. Business Development — a series of steps to help nurture relationships with prospective clients.
3. Doing the work.
4. Follow up, admin and repeat.

Thinker “farmer” — not “hunter”.

Step One: Your Personal Brand

- What traits and skills are you known for?
- How did you acquire this reputation?
- Is this the reputation you want?
- If not, what steps are needed to change it?
- How do you explain succinctly who you are, what you do, and how you can help others?

Step Two: Review

- What worked and what didn't over the last two years?
- Why did it work and how can it work even better?
- What efforts led to the work you want most?
- Why did other efforts not work out well?
- What have others done and how did they manage it?

Step Three: Make Your Plan

- Determine what kind of work you want most.
- Prioritize and schedule actions to get the work.
- Set short-term actions for three to six month chunks.
- Use your best tactics early and often.
- For help, consult with a role model, mentor, etc.

Step Four: Check In With Your Clients

- Determine who are your best clients and why.
- Think about what they have to gain and approach them accordingly.
- Making contact to ask for an update and future plans.
- Learn about clients as individuals, not buyers.
- Any client personnel can be influential.

Step Five: Check in With Referrers

- Internal advocates — lawyers in your firms whose clients may be in need of your type of talent.
- External advocates — your network, delighted clients, etc.
- Consider what's new about your practice since your last check-in and provide a clear, concise update.
- Ask how you can help personally or professionally.

Step Six: Honour Your Skills

- Build marketable skills.
- Build on those marketable skills through repetition.
- Build on that repetition by making sure it becomes part of your reputation.
- Give something for nothing.
- Get word out about your reputation.

Step Seven: Reduce Commitments

- Focus only on efforts that working currently.
- Set aside non-working efforts for consideration at another time.
- Prioritize key clients and referrers — consider what more can be done for them.
- Prioritize yourself — schedule time each week for marketing and business development.

Step Eight: Prioritize Your Network

- Recognize your quality contacts and reconnect.
- Offer a helping hand in recognition of them having helped you.
- Ask what you can do for them — suggest what they can do for you.

Step Nine: Target Prospective Clients

- Write out a short list.
- Determine if people in your network can help.
- Research and consider what these prospects need most.
- Contact the prospect directly or its key people to learn about their industry, issues and needs.
- Attend an event where the target will be and engage with them.

Step Ten: Expand Your Network

- Ask people in your network who they know who can help.
- Consider membership in client industry associations.
- Consider membership in a community association.
- The best group will be the one you'll enjoy most and where you'll be able to participate actively.

Step Eleven: Team Up

- Find a team mate with complementary skills and a like-minded personality to yours — another lawyer, accountant, consultant, etc.
- Expands your audience; provides cross-referrals; and, provides a buddy system.
- Tag Team: presentations, panel discussions, client meetings, etc.

Step Twelve: Evaluate

- Measure how you're doing.
- Keep what works now — set aside what doesn't.
- Determine busy periods along with when more time is available to you for business development efforts.
- Recognize your efforts and reward yourself.

Play to Your Strengths

Your Plan — Your First Step

What I Love

What I Like

What I Can Tolerate

What I'll Never Do Again

Play to Your Strengths

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