

Practical Success

Cordell M. Parvin

10 Days to Launch Your Client Development Efforts: Days 6-10

In my last column I wrote what you could do in Days 1-5 to launch your client development efforts. I began with a self-assessment on Day 1 and ended with writing and speaking to build your profile on Day 5.

So, in this column I'll cover what you can do to launch your client development efforts in Days 6-10.

Day 6: Speaking to Business and Industry Groups

1. What industry associations would be most interested in hearing you speak?
2. What is the timeliest topic right now?
3. What is the best way to get asked to speak to that group?
4. If you have gotten the invitation to speak, who will be attending?
5. Will you present with or without slides?



6. What is the very best way to capture your audience in the first 90 seconds?
7. What visuals will you put on your slides?
8. Can you create slides without bullet points and endless words?
9. What will be the layout of the room where you are speaking?
10. What handout will you have for the audience?
11. What is the most important takeaway from your presentation?
12. What will be the best way to follow up after the presentation?

Day 7: Focus on Your Contacts and Relationship Building

1. Make a list of all of your contacts.
2. Rate them 1-10 three ways: How often you are in contact; nature of contact (email only is a 1, in-person is a 10); how important they are (someone who you will never do busi-

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ness with is a 1, a client is a 10). For each contact, what do you know about him or her on a personal level?

3. Who are your “strong ties?” (close friends, family)
4. Who are your “weak ties?”
5. Who are your “dormant ties?” (people you know, but have not been in contact with in some time)
6. How can you create more “weak tie” relationships with people who will learn what you know?
7. How can you reconnect with your “dormant ties?”

Day 8: Meeting with a Potential Client

I never tried to “sell” my clients and I only made “pitches” to clients when we responded to an RFP. I learned early in my career that I needed to learn how to ask questions and listen. So, on your 8th day, I want you to focus on learning to ask great questions that you can use when you meet with a potential client.

Let me share with you an actual example to illustrate the point.

Several years ago I received a telephone call from the U.S. head of a Dutch construction company I had helped on a previous construction project

When I received the call, I learned that the Dutch company was now in a joint venture with two other companies building a complicated bridge and tunnel project and was struggling because the design was defective.

I learned the joint venture was interviewing lawyers/law firms to help them prepare and prosecute a claim for additional compensation. I was invited to meet with the joint venture a week after the telephone call.

1. What questions would you have asked during this telephone call?

2. What homework would you do between the telephone call and the meeting?

I learned I would get a tour of the project and then would meet for an hour with the principals of the three companies who would decide which lawyer/law firm to hire.

1. How would you start the meeting?
2. What questions would you ask during the meeting?
3. How would you end the meeting?
4. How would you follow up after the meeting?

If you do not have good answers to my questions and want to learn more, I recommend reading Andrew Sobel’s eBook: *Power Questions to Win the Sale: Overcoming Nine Critical Sales Challenges*. After you finish reading it, come back to the questions again.

Day 9: Making Your Friends Your Clients

I actually wrote a column on this very subject. If you save back issues, look for it.

1. Become the second lawyer. Focus on building the relationship and being the second lawyer or firm.
2. Become the subject matter expert. A second strategy is to become the “go-to” leading expert in something a company needs.
3. Add value the other firm is not providing. A third strategy is to find a way to add value that is beyond just the legal work. You can only achieve this by knowing a great deal about the company and asking great questions to learn what is going on with the company.

Day 10: Put it All Together

Day 10 is really pretty simple, I want you to focus on putting it all together.

1. What do you intend to do in the next 6 months? 90 days?
2. How will you hold yourself accountable to make sure you actually do what you say you want to do?
3. How will you make time when you are busy?
4. How will you make sure you persist when you do not immediately see results?
5. Finally, what is the ONE Thing you can do next week such that by doing it everything else would be easier or unnecessary? (Taken from the book: *The ONE Thing: The Surprisingly Simple Truth Behind Extraordinary Results* by Gary Keller.)

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