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20 QUICK MARKETING TIPS 1 THROUGH 10

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This article might provide some reminders to experienced rainmakers. But it is mostly written for what I lovingly refer to as a baby lawyer: someone just starting out.

It will also be informative for the "service lawyer" who has spent most of his or her career performing (hopefully challenging) work for other attorney's clients. It will be particularly helpful for those who have well-developed legal skills, and now find that they must also bring in clients for the first time.

Here's a list of the first 10 tips:

No. 1: The good news is that for the vast majority of lawyers, marketing is a *learned* skill. That means if you're not a "natural," you can still learn to be an accomplished rainmaker. You have to want to. And you have to be willing to do the work to get there.

No. 2: Most attorneys learn by *doing* and not by *studying*. Think back to your start as a lawyer. You learned a lot in school, but you quickly realized that you didn't know much about how to apply it. Was your first court appearance or two a whopping success? Was your first contract or lease drafting your best work? Of course not. You had to keep working at it, advancing your skills and methods inch-by-inch in some cases.

No. 3: The 80/20 rule applies to rainmaking. Eighty percent of new business will come from existing clients, directly or by referral, and require 20% of your efforts. We call that plucking the low-hanging fruit. Conversely, 20% percent of your new business will come from new clients and require 80% of your efforts. When you block out calendar time to engage in your marketing activities, keep the 80/20 rule in mind.

No. 4: Networking is a fundamental marketing activity. You must find ways to build a variety of networks. You can pick activities and groups that you find interesting or personally rewarding. There are no "bad" networks. It's what you make of them.

No. 5: Building on point No. 4, keep in mind that you have to keep your antennae up for opportunities, because they are fleeting at best. A lot of attorneys don't even recognize when the window of opportunity opens right in front of them.

No. 6: Avoid the herd mentality. It may be more comfortable for you to go to an event with others from your firm. And that makes sense at bar events, industry conferences and so forth. But break away from the herd to meet different people; don't gather like a school of fish. You'll never develop your own relationships that way. Even better, gain the widest exposure for your firm by attending events others avoid.

No. 7: When it comes to events, remember that 50% of success is just about showing up. Most people skip events when the weather is inhospitable, or there's a sports playoff. But when it's raining, cold and snowy, hotter than Hades, or the Phillies make the playoffs, that's exactly when you want to show up. Remember, the only people who show up under those circumstances are those who are highly motivated to connect with others.

No. 8: This tip seems really obvious, but often doesn't get done. Keep in touch with people. Try to keep your contact list up to date, including classmates, former colleagues, people you've met at events, well-connected vendors and, of course, past clients and prospects.

Stay on the mailing list of your alumni association and update them on any accomplishments. Send notes of congratulations to others. Flag your contacts for automatic follow-up at some time.

When you meet new people, be sure to enter details into their contact card so you can remember who they are and why you want to stay in touch. I often note a point of conversation, a piece of clothing or jewelry, something to open a conversation later. The contact will appreciate being remembered.

No. 9: Following up on No. 8 is to connect through social media. You're building your network and communication pipeline on social media. LinkedIn is my top network, because my clients are lawyers and law office managers, and that's where they hang out. If I were a family lawyer, I would also have a business Facebook page and encourage every prospect and client to follow it.

No. 10: Incorporate client feedback/reviews into your end-of-matter routine. Make it exceedingly easy for clients to know exactly where to go to post a review. Ask for it. Follow up with clients who you know should be delighted because they got what they wanted and needed.

Remember that an independently written third-party testimonial counts more to a prospective client than any amount of paid advertising. So don't be shy about asking. It's the best free marketing you can get.

Need more help? Wondering whether to hire a marketing consultant? Thinking you have to pay big bucks for a search engine optimization/search engine marketing expert? Wondering if a coach might be necessary to get you to the next level?

If you're a PBA member, don't hire or spend a penny before arranging a free call with me to discuss your strategy. That's your dues dollars at work!

A version of this article originally appeared in the November 21, 2022 issue of the Pennsylvania Bar News.

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