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*Law Firm One*

## **PERSONAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT COACHING PLAN**

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Draft

### **SUMMARY**

#### **GOAL ONE: Goal 1 Description**

1. Focusing on the key aspects of how clients buy legal services
2. Creating a prioritized list of existing clients and prospects that represents the best opportunities to sell services and working the list systematically
3. Crafting a personal brand statement using a features and benefits approach
4. At the conclusion of each significant stage of a case or matter, seeking formal satisfaction feedback from key client contacts at and using it as an opportunity to expand the existing relationship; secure references; and seek referrals and introductions
5. Considering the four parts of a successful sales meeting and how to prepare for a sales session
6. Assessing involvement in reputation-building activities and revising promotional materials with the goal of refining your brand to qualify yourself for the type of interesting and profitable work you seek at this point in your career

## GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND SPECIFIC ACTION STEPS TO REACH THEM

### Introductory Information about Personality Traits that May Impact Business Development

#### 1. You score high in Need for Stability. Below are some actions that may be of assistance:

- o If you think it may be useful or helpful, read Chapters 12 (“The Optimistic Life”) and 14 (“The Optimistic Organization”) of Martin E. P. Seligman’s book, Learned Optimism. Consider how you may begin using the ABCDE strategy to modify a hard-wired tendency to pessimism that could impede business development efforts.
- o Review the “Influence Strategies for the WorkPlace Big Five™.” When interacting with clients or colleagues who appear to have a different natural work place style than your own – more resilient or outgoing, e.g., - consider which of the Influence Strategies to use to create positive rapport.
- o Read Amy Gallo’s blog post from the April 29, 2011 Harvard Business Review titled, “How to Build Confidence.” How do her ideas relate to becoming more confident in internal and external business development situations?
- o Read David Maister’s article, “How to Give Advice.” Consider whether it would be helpful to integrate any of Maister’s concepts into your client counseling or business development efforts to build your personal confidence and improve outcomes. What might you do differently in such situations based on Maister’s suggested strategies?
- o Focus on a key difference between business development efforts and substantive legal work: i.e., business development activities don’t have to be perfect – in design or execution - to be successful. Commit yourself to practicing business development efforts in low risk situations in order to build confidence, and then to move on to more strategic opportunities.

### GOAL ONE: Goal 1 Description

#### 1. Focusing on the key aspects of how clients buy legal services

- o Read David Maister’s article, “How Client Choose,” and consider its applicability to your personal sales process. What strategies should you consider to address the issues raised in the article?
- o Read Robert Cialdini’s Harvard Business Review article titled, “Harnessing the Power of Persuasion.” Consider the six aspects of professional influence identified by Cialdini. Which of these practices/strategies may be helpful for you to integrate into your approach to the business development process? Also read the Harvard Business Review interview of Cialdini, “The Uses (and Abuses) of influence.”

- o Consider the specific steps involved in “asking for business.” While there are multiple steps in the sales process and on average you may need to make from five to ten contacts with a prospect before it is appropriate to ask for business, this is the ultimate goal of our process and you want to feel confident about asking for work once you believe you have enough information to determine there may be a need for your services. Consider the following items:

- > How will you determine whether there is a need for your services? Review Exhibit (“Conducting Prospective Client Interviews”) for suggested questions to pose to determine need and interest.
- > Your natural [describe particular traits as evidenced by the WorkPlace, etc.], but keep in mind that “80% of sales is listening,” and consider a tendency of many attorneys to talk too much in sales meetings. Provide cues to your audience that you are listening and concerned about the issues being presented. Practice active listening techniques—such as summarizing your understanding of the prospect's needs or concerns—to demonstrate engagement and interest.
- > How will you determine it is the right time to ask for business? What words will you use?
- > How will you respond to “objections?” It’s a good practice to anticipate the objections that a prospect may raise and to formulate potential responses to each in advance.
  - . In particular, consider how to address a frequently asked—or implied—sales question, 'Why are your fees so high?' You may prepare yourself by focusing on Law Firm One's many competitive advantages relative to other firms' capabilities, and presenting options for non-hourly rate fee structures.
  - . Rather than being anxious when such an inquiry arises, be prepared to engage in a discussion with the prospect focusing on the critical need of legal services in 20XX, and how, Law Firm One's's deep experience and breadth of skills help some of the most successful businesses.
- > In some cases the response to your “ask” may be ambiguous. What strategies could you use to convert an ambiguous response to “yes?”
- > What will you say if you are turned down? How will you keep the door open for future opportunities?

## **2. Creating a prioritized list of existing clients and prospects that represents the best opportunities to sell services and working the list systematically**

- o Start by using the the Contact ID Matrix (See Exhibit \_), and listing your business development contacts in the various categories indicated. This list of contacts becomes an essential business development tool that you will update and add to over the course of your career. Invest the time needed to develop an initial comprehensive list so that going forward you will need only to update it from time to time for it to be accurate and useful.
- > Add the universe of your contacts in the various categories indicated on the Contact ID Matrix. Prepare the list by refreshing your recollection of your various contacts by reviewing your Outlook Contacts; LinkedIn Connections; InterAction records associated with your name; your client billing data for the past three years; etc. Be sure to include contacts you have met through church functions or socially who you would like to approach to discuss potential business opportunities. [Also include key contacts from companies with which you have been prospecting such as X, Y and Z.]
- > Note that it may be best to work on developing the list in several different settings (perhaps putting it down and picking it up three different times). Try to identify 25 to 50 contacts in the aggregate across the various categories. You will need to include individuals with whom you have not had recent contact but limit it to those who most likely would promptly remember you; do not include individuals who would not readily recall you (even after your remind him/her of your acquaintance).
- o Using data from the Contact ID Matrix, create the “Best Opportunities List” (See Exhibit \_). This will be your master list of contacts that appear—based on what is known now about these entities—to be the best prospects for new business in the near term. Develop a list of 15 contacts with recognition that if you work a strong list of 15 targets, you are likely—within 18 months—to convert no more than five into actual business opportunities.
- > With respect to identifying key referral sources for the Best Opportunities List – [such as venture capital contacts] - determine the benefits that you have obtained and are seeking presently from your referral relationships (e.g., introductions to prospective clients, serving as references for your services, joint selling opportunities, etc.). Analyze your existing referral sources and rank them based on opportunities obtained from/created by those referral sources to date and potential future opportunities they may create for you.
- > As part of the strategy planning process described below, also consider the value you have provided to date to those referral sources and what other opportunities there may be for you to add continued or greater value to them.

- o For each contact listed, indicate the relative value of the opportunity if you actually get the work (e.g., use “low,” medium,” or “high” to indicate potential value based on what you now know about the opportunity). In addition and again based on what you know now, rate the likelihood you will succeed in getting new business if you work the contact systematically and persistently through the business development cycle. Any contact on the list that has “high” ratings on both of these categories of information should be the first focus of your business development efforts. In the same way, contacts that you rate “low” in both categories, should receive less time and attention from your business development efforts.
- o List three strategies or actions you can take (by specific dates) for each contact on the planning matrix to advance the relationship to the point of potentially asking for business or significant referrals. Consider the following actions as possibilities if they seem to be likely strategies for advancing a particular contact relationship:
  - > To the extent that any of your contacts are social friends first, consider strategies for introducing a business discussion. For example, in the context of a social event you may say, "Jim, at some point I'd like to learn more about your business and ask for some help and advice in connection with my law practice. Could we schedule coffee or a call later this month to discuss?"
  - > Introduce contacts to potentially valuable business people like potential clients for them; referral sources like bankers, accountants, or investors; new employees; other people in the industry; etc.
  - > Make referrals to the contact's business
  - > Ask appropriate contacts to co-author articles (you will take the laboring oar) or co-present at prestigious conferences
  - > Invite client contacts to practice group [or your specific office's office attorney meetings] to bring "the voice of the client" into the firm (provide a list of questions to the contact in advance that you would like him/her to address such as "in the next three years, what innovations do you anticipate will occur in your industry, and what will your organization need to do to address them?")
  - > Provide financial and moral support to key contacts' community and charitable causes
  - > Conduct periodic entertainment events for the client contact's and the firm's respective service teams
  - > Ask to attend a contact's industry events as a guest so you may better understand their business
  - > Dig deep into understanding the competition for the contact's legal work; figure out what opportunities there are to obtain it and what the competition is providing that you need to consider adding to your firm's services if practicable

- > With existing clients you seek to expand, create a client service team to focus on more opportunities to expand the relationship
- > Follow contacts on LinkedIn, and other automated on-line research services (such as Google Alerts, Manzama, etc.)
- > Provide quarterly educational or other types of value-added programming for client contacts and prospective clients as well.
- o Follow through on designated activities with each contact and track progress. Note that in some cases you will decide to remove certain contacts from the list because as a result of your activities, you may learn that there is no strong potential relationship. Be sure to replace those contacts with others of which you become aware during the time you're "working the list," including those on the B List, described below.
- > In addition to the prospects and referral sources listed on the Best Opportunities List, create a "B List" of all other potential clients and referral sources listed on the Contact ID Matrix. Include on the list key representatives of each entity, and obtain address and other contact information.
- > Develop "low touch" or "no touch" strategies to stay in touch with B List contacts, such as connecting on LinkedIn; emailing white papers or other firm information; sending invitations for firm-sponsored seminars, conferences and other public programs; etc.
- > Add those contacts you remove from your Best Opportunities List to your B List.
- o Add all of your contacts—categorized as Best Opportunities and B List contacts—to the firm's contact management database. Learn to use the database as a system for tracking your development activities and keeping abreast of the relationships that other firm attorneys may have with your contacts.
- o Read David Maister's article, "Marketing is a Conversation," for ideas on strategies for continuing the marketing discussion with key contacts through to the point of engagement, and beyond.

### **3. Crafting a personal brand statement using a features/benefits approach**

- o Identify four important constituents of your practice (e.g., key contacts at an existing or former client, current or former colleagues, existing referral sources, etc.), and schedule time to ask each for his/her opinion of your technical expertise and service delivery style. You want to obtain some consistent information that will allow you to provide a compelling answer to the question: "What is it that I do as an attorney which adds remarkable, measurable and distinguished value?"

- o Obtain current information from firm marketing professionals describing Law Firm One's competitive advantages when compared to other firms. Study the features and benefits that are being promoted by the firm to distinguish its capabilities from those of other firms. Consider how to incorporate this information into the personal brand statement(s) you develop.
- o Using information obtained from the four interviews and other feedback/information you've obtained, develop several versions of personal commercials or brand statements to use in different settings describing how the features of your skill, experience and/or expertise benefit clients in ways that differentiate 'Brand Sample' and 'Brand Law Firm One' from competitors.
- o For each statement of feature/benefit, have a client success story ready to illustrate the point.
- o Practice using your personal brand statement and success stories in connection with your referral source, new prospect and client expansion business development efforts.

**4. At the conclusion of each significant stage of a case or matter, seeking formal satisfaction feedback from key client contacts at and using it as an opportunity to expand the existing relationship; secure references; and seek referrals and introductions**

- o Consider when within the next three months you will complete a significant phase or stage of a major case or matter for existing clients with growth or referral potential. If the firm is currently "off assignment" with these existing clients, then simply proceed to set up an interview with key client contacts as described below.
  - > For each case or matter, identify the key contacts the firm has worked with on the particular stage or phase.
  - > Consider how best to advise such contacts that you would like to conduct a brief satisfaction feedback survey to obtain some specific information regarding the contact's opinion of your team's performance on this particular phase of the case or matter. If you are not the lead attorney, be certain that the lead Law Firm One attorney is notified in advance that the interview will take place.
  - > Follow through and set up 30-minute telephone or personal interviews with contacts at appropriate clients.
- o Using the Sample Client Satisfaction Feedback Survey (See Exhibit \_\_), develop a version of a client satisfaction feedback survey that you may use for each call. Be sure to include questions about how the client's business priorities are evolving, and consider what types of new product or pricing offerings you and your team may develop to track those changing needs.
  - > At the appropriate time, follow through and conduct the survey with the client contact(s).



- > If there are any comments regarding performance improvement, be sure to follow up and take action, and then advise the client contact of how the issue/situation has been addressed.
- o If the client is particularly pleased with your and the firm's work at this stage:
  - > Ask if you may use the contact as a reference in connection with new business opportunities
  - > Thank the client for the opportunity to be of service and ask whether there are other pending situations on which the firm may provide advice or counsel
  - > Advise that you are always interested in working with excellent clients and businesses—like the client—and seek referrals to other sophisticated in-house counsel or management who may be interested in the firm's services. Consider adding the names of any referred contacts to the Best Opportunities List.
- o Share the feedback you obtain from each session with members of the team as a way of involving them in the client development process.
  - > Consider clients' positive comments, and ask the team for ideas on how to continue to meet and even exceed clients' expectations. Focus on how to continually improve relationships to build client loyalty and seek referrals.
  - > Consider clients' less than positive comments—if any—and brainstorm on how to address those concerns. Solicit team members' ideas on how to troubleshoot future problems.
- o Assuming that the client is well-pleased with Law Firm One's services—even if certain adjustments are requested and required—then ask questions similar to the following to determine how you may continue to add value to the relationship while you are off assignment:
  - > May we offer a “forensic” review for you and your staff of the key issues that arose in our most recent representation and how we addressed them? This review may also include a “lessons learned” aspect when we consider corporate policies and practices that may need to be changed to better position the company in these types of situations.
  - > Would you—and perhaps other company leaders/managers—like to receive a monthly update of the matters we are working on and key events that have occurred?
  - > Because your key employees are located in various geographic offices, we'd like to offer quarterly educational programs by webinar—subject to employees' responses to a brief survey on topics of interest.
  - > We'd like to visit your various locations to get a better sense of how your business works, who your employees and customers are, and otherwise understand your business challenges and opportunities.



-> We regularly produce alerts on topics of interest to your industry. Would you and/or your colleagues like to subscribe to those e-publications?

- o After implementing one or more "value add" strategies for at least six months, assess the growth of the client relationship and receivable.

## **5. Considering the four parts of a successful sales meeting and how to prepare for a sales session**

- o Sales meetings typically have four discrete parts as follows: introduction, prospective client interview, presentation and closing—the most important of which is the client interview. For an overview of the process, read Felice Wagner's article, "The Shy Lawyer's Guide to Business Development." If multiple attorneys will be involved in the sales meeting or pitch, be sure to prepare and practice with the entire team; these opportunities are often the final decision-making step for prospective clients and no one should "wing" this type of meeting.

-> The purpose of the introduction is to set the proper tone for the meeting, including confirming the goals for the session, and to establish peerage with the prospect. During the introduction use a version of your personal brand statement/commercial described under Objective [v] above.

-> During the interview, you explore the new business opportunity by using open-ended questions. The point is to get as much information as possible from the prospective client about his/her concerns and priorities for a particular transaction or matter so that you may assess the type of opportunity it presents for you and whether to pursue it.

-> To prepare for the prospective client interview, consider the questions listed on Exhibit A and use those that are most appropriate to develop your understanding of the client's need for service.

-> Prepare a brief presentation that you will provide in a conversational way, following the interview phase of the sales session. You will weave into your presentation the concerns stated by the prospective client and address why you and Finnegan may be the best choice to resolve those concerns.

-> Be sure to "close" the meeting by agreeing with the prospect on what the next steps in the sales process will be (e.g., for you to provide more information about specific services; to meet again with others from the company to talk further; to begin a conflict check; etc.). The purpose of the closing is not necessarily to ask for the business, but to advance to the next logical and appropriate stage in the sales process.

- o If it would be helpful to do so, as part of a coaching session participate in a mock sales meeting with Mary Kaczmarek playing the part of a referral source or prospective client. Use this opportunity to identify best practices for conducting a meeting, and to prepare for actual opportunities that you will be pursuing

**6. Assessing involvement in reputation-building activities and revising promotional materials with the goal of refining your brand to qualify yourself for the type of interesting and profitable work you seek at this point in your career**

- o Using the Brand Management Assessment Form (See Exhibit \_\_), identify all of the promotional activities that you are engaged in presently and those you are considering. This matrix should include anticipated events as well as potential new organizations.
  - > Next to each item listed on the Brand Management Assessment Form (See Exhibit \_\_), estimate how much non-billable time you spend or plan to spend annually on the activity and briefly state the business or professional development goals related to it.
  - > Rank each activity listed on the Brand Management Assessment Form (See Exhibit \_\_) from “1” to “5,” with “1” meaning “very important for the growth of my professional reputation and practice,” and “5” meaning “little or no importance for the growth of my professional reputation and practice.”
- o Based on the foregoing assessment, make proactive decisions about which activities and organizations to continue to pursue or to add to your non-billable responsibilities and which to curtail.
  - > Talk with contacts at key clients to obtain information about the professional organizations of which they are active members and the primary publications they read to stay current on legal issues in their respective industries.
  - > Research organizations that may prove helpful in pursuing business development, and in particular any that might provide an opportunity for you to leverage your expertise in [for example, a foreign language]. Consider adding to the activities identified on the Brand Management Assessment Form (See Exhibit \_\_) based on what you learn.
  - > Consider curtailing all activities listed on the Brand Management Assessment Form (See Exhibit \_\_) that require more than 10 hours of your non-billable time annually and are ranked as “3” or higher in terms of importance to the growth of your professional reputation and practice, including the numerous in-house activities in which you are engaged; the focus at this point in your career should primarily be external target markets.
  - > Acknowledge that from time to time it will be necessary for you to take a “pass” on professional activities you have enjoyed and engaged in at earlier career stages, in order to have adequate time to focus on current goal achievement.
- o In connection with your attendance at conferences as well as other networking events, review Best Practices for Networking Success (See Exhibit \_\_). Be sure to set goals for your attendance at these types of activities and to follow up promptly—such as by connecting on LinkedIn—with contacts you develop.

- o Whenever you write an article, deliver a speech or otherwise engage in a reputation-building activity, be sure to “recycle it” into other business development-related activities.
  - > If you write an article, consider creating a practice group or client training program or another speech based on the content.
  - > If you are a member of a panel, volunteer to summarize the comments and produce a document that can be distributed by all panel members to their contacts.
  - > Email articles and summaries to your Best Opportunities Lists and to your B List.
  - > Post the material on the firm’s website and on your LinkedIn profile.
  - > Consider a blog, RSS feed, podcast/video, and any other distribution channels available.
- o As a final step, update your firm profile and create a LinkedIn profile that takes into account what you have learned in developing your brand statement (as discussed in Objective 3).

## Exhibit A

### Conducting Prospective Client Interviews Overview and Suggested Key Questions

#### Overview

- o **Spend time in preparation .** If you want to maximize the results of time spent on business development, then always prepare for business development interviews and meetings with potential clients. Consider what you wish to achieve as a result of the interview and plan accordingly.
- o **Consider where you are in the sales cycle.** At the beginning of the business development process or sales cycle with a particular target, ask more general questions about business and priorities. As you progress through the sales cycle with the contact, it is appropriate and necessary to ask more specific questions about the decision-making process and hiring authority.
- o **Use open-ended questions to build trust and obtain more information.** Remember that a sales meeting is not a deposition. Your demeanor should be friendly and interested. Allow for pauses in the discussion; don't rush to fill in with comments or chat, particularly with quiet or more serious individuals. Be sure to use open-ended questions to build trust and to obtain more information.
- o **Don't be afraid to say "I don't know."** Expect to be asked a few tough questions as part of the interview process. If you don't know an answer, be honest and ask for the opportunity to obtain the information and get back to the prospective client promptly.
- o **Listen more than you talk.** The prospective client interview is your opportunity to learn more about the prospect, his or her circumstances, and whether you and your firm are the right resource for the prospect's legal needs. Plan to listen most of the time so that you may obtain the valuable information you need either to eventually make your sales presentation or to determine that this is not a good opportunity for you and the firm.
- o **Close the interview for the next step in the sales cycle.** Unless it is clear that the time is right, don't "pitch" for business at the first opportunity. View business development as a process with multiple steps and close the client interview for the next appropriate step in the sales cycle, e.g., asking to meet other decision-makers; setting up a meeting with other attorneys in your firm; scheduling a formal sales meeting, etc.

### **Suggested Key Questions**

1. How long have you been with the Company? Where did you work before?
2. What are your primary responsibilities?
3. Tell me about your department/business unit.
4. Describe the Company's primary achievements last year.
5. What are the Company's priorities this year? How will your work/your department's work impact those priorities?
6. What trends have you identified that will impact the Company's business prospects?
7. What are the challenges your industry is facing now? How will the Company address those challenges?
8. Does the Company plan to open new offices or otherwise expand its operations this year?
9. Tell me about the Company's in-house counsel staff.
10. How many attorneys are part of the corporate counsel function? How is the unit structured? What responsibilities do they have to the Company?
11. For what purposes do you work with outside counsel?
12. How often do you retain outside counsel in the course of a typical year?
13. To which outside firms do you typically refer work? What do you particularly like about working with those firms?
14. What do you dislike most about working with outside firms?
15. What is your opinion regarding the effectiveness of alternative billing arrangements (i.e., other than billing by the hour) for outside legal counsel's services?
16. What is the decision-making process for hiring outside counsel?
17. Who besides you is responsible for making decisions to hire outside counsel?
18. What questions do you have for me?

**Exhibit B**  
**Contact ID Matrix for Best Opportunities**  
(List 25 to 50 potential sources of new business opportunities)

<b>Current or Former Clients (2 years)</b>	<b>Potential Value (A/B List)</b>
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

<b>Existing Referral Sources</b>	<b>Potential Value (A/B List)</b>
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

<b>Colleagues/Former Colleagues/Firm Alumni</b>	<b>Potential Value (A/B List)</b>
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

<b>Experts/Consultants/Opposing Counsel</b>	<b>Potential Value (A/B List)</b>
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	

7	
8	
9	
10	

**Civic/Community Groups**

**Potential Value (A/B List)**

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

**Professional Organizations/Social Media**

**Potential Value (A/B List)**

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

**Personal Friends/Family/Other**

**Potential Value (A/B List)**

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	



**Exhibit C**  
**Best Opportunities for New Business – Sample Pages**  
*(List No More Than 15)*

<b>Who</b> (Prospect Name)	<b>Where</b> (Organization)	<b>What</b> (Describe Opportunities)	<b>Why</b> (Potential Value / Likelihood of Success)	<b>How / When</b> (Strategies / Dates; List at least three)
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				

## Exhibit D

### Sample Client Satisfaction Feedback Questionnaire

1. On each matter we've handled for you, have we met or exceeded your expectations with respect to the following areas (score on the basis of "1" to "5" with "1" meaning "always exceed my expectations" and "5" means "consistently fail to meet my expectations"):
  - Technical expertise
  - Appropriate level of staffing for your needs
  - Responsiveness to your requests/concerns
  - Timeliness
  - Proactive advice
  - Forward thinking (i.e., we approach you to explore needs/growth areas)
  - Communicating information about project status and what we need from you to complete a project or a particular phase
2. Can you provide an example of when you were particularly satisfied with our services?
3. Our goal is to continually improve in technical quality and service delivery. Can you give an example that would help us understand an area for improvement?
4. On a scale of "1" to "5" as described above, indicate how satisfied you are with the value of services provided relative to the fees paid. Please explain your response.
5. On a scale of "1" to "5" (with "1" meaning "yes, without reservation" and "5" meaning "definitely not"), would you be willing to recommend our Firm and its services in response to an inquiry from a business colleague or acquaintance? Please explain your response.
6. Have you worked with other attorneys in the past? If yes, are there any practices or procedures used by that firm or firms that you suggest we incorporate into our service to you?
7. What is the greatest business challenge your company is facing now? Describe what you are doing to address it.
8. What will be the greatest business challenge for your company three years from now?
9. In your current position, what are your top priorities?
10. Assuming you have had a positive experience with our firm, what additional services of the firm do you think you may need in the next three years (prompt response by providing examples, in particular of new/innovative service offerings) ?