

Zen & The Art of Legal Networking

INSIGHTS & COMMENTARY ON RELATIONSHIP BUILDING WITHIN THE INTERNATIONAL LAWYERS NETWORK

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Ask Friday!

Here at Zen I've decided to start a weekly post called "Ask Friday!" where I'll take a reader question and answer it. You can leave your questions in the comments for any post, if you'd like, or message me on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) or [Facebook](#).

Today's question comes from [Larry Bodine](#), of [Larry Bodine Marketing](#), who asks **"What tips do you have to motivate lawyers to do business development?"**

My number one tip to motivate lawyers is to *share success stories*. I've found that showing how other lawyers have gotten business through various types of business development activities give attorneys

the comfort that someone has tried it before, and they've been successful.

But it's not always enough for me to be the one sharing these stories - it's often more helpful to get the attorney who's been successful to do the sharing. For example, as you know I'm a big fan of social media. I give presentations to our attorneys at each of our Annual & Regional Conferences, and recently, my presentations have focused on social media.

I've included a number of success stories in these presentations, but what helps most is when our Chairman adds his comments - he'll tell the group that his firm has eight blogs, one of which he works on. He'll discuss the time commitment and answer some of the regular concerns you hear, but he'll also share stories with them of how they've gotten clients because of their blogging.

That has a much greater impact than when I share a success story from an attorney that they don't know.

A few other tips for motivating lawyers to do business development that I've learned include:

- **Help them identify where they're most comfortable:** Not everyone loves public speaking, or should be doing it. Some people are better writers. Some are great at in-person networking. When you can find out where an attorney is most comfortable and what his/her strengths are, business development can seem less intimidating.
- **Come up with a plan:** For many people (myself included), when you're working on a project that's ongoing, it's easy to forget to take small steps every day. But if you can come up with a plan with measurable steps, it's much easier to keep up with it.
- **Competition:** This isn't something that we've implemented in the Network, but I know of a few firms that have created contests for business development. Set some goals that make sense for the firm, figure out how to measure them, and pick some prizes. Most lawyers love competition, so this will be a way to spark their motivation for business development.

These are just a few of the tips I've seen work - are there any other suggestions you have to add?

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