

## Legal Business Development: Know Where You Are Going

July 21, 2011 by [Paula Black](#)

**I was working with a client today and I gave her an assignment to make a list of relationships that could help her in developing business.** She asked... "you mean that could **give** me business?" And I realized that to me the distinction is very clear, but that I should define it.

There are many circles in which we have relationships and in each of those there are different ways that people could help us develop business.

### **First, let's explore the ways...**

- Obviously there is the category of a **client** that has the authority to send us work.
- There is the person that can **recommend** to someone that they call you.
- There is the individual or group that has **influence** over what a larger group of people might think... like clergy or an executive director of an organization.
- There are suppliers that can help **make you look good**... you get work, they get work.
- There are people that you can **learn** from... to be a better lawyer, business person or business developer.

### **Second, there are all the circles that exist in your life...**

- **Your family and friends**... you would be surprised how many lawyers never tap into this group. Who knows you better and has your best interest at heart more than your family and friends?
- **Business colleagues**... from various places of employment, organizations, etc. where do you have relationships that you could cultivate? Could they introduce you to others?
- **Law school classmates**... stay in touch, grow together and meet their friends and colleagues, grow the circle.
- **Civic and religious circles**... where do you spend your time? Do you have deep relationships or are they simply people you just say hello to?
- **Hobby circles**... if you love things like playing music or ride horses, etc. this circle could be what fuels your passion... and creating a bridge to your legal practice could take your work to a whole new level.

You get the idea. I bet if you give it some thought you can come up with several more.

**Business is about relationships and it couldn't be more true in the legal profession.** You need to focus on those circles and look for people that can help in various ways. And you **need** people helping in all those ways. Just because someone isn't in the position to send you work doesn't mean they can't contribute to your success in some other way.

# In Black & White

COMMON SENSE STRATEGIES FOR GROWING YOUR LEGAL PRACTICE



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