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SOUTH FLORIDA LEGAL GUIDE

**TOP
LAWYERS:**
Class of 2011

**MID-SIZE
LAW FIRMS:**
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LEGAL FIELD OF DREAMS: Creating a Practical Blueprint for Growing Your Client Base

In the film “Field of Dreams,” protagonist Ray Kinsella portrayed by Kevin Costner, interprets commands from ethereal voices to erect a baseball field in the middle of his Iowa corn farm. Ray is initially conflicted as to whether or not he should listen to these voices and sacrifice harvestable land in order to build. Ray’s vision and persistence is eventually rewarded when spirits of baseball legends appear and begin playing on the ball field. The film provides valuable lessons about important business facets of practicing law.

With a strategic vision, actionable steps and positive persistence, you can begin crafting your very own practical blueprint for building and growing your client base. Developing dynamic client relationships is vital to any lawyer regardless of law specialty or firm size – from the boutique personal injury firm, to a senior associate who specializes in commercial litigation, to the managing partner of a national firm. Here are several straightforward steps that you can implement right away and begin creating your very own roadmap.

Set aside your laptop, netbook or smartphone and take out a piece of paper and pencil to start drafting your blueprint



for success. Employ this low-tech approach to minimize any modern-day distractions. You want to be completely focused on the journey you are about to take. Putting pen to paper is a critical step in order to clearly define your vision and start converting a passive stream of thoughts into active words. You are setting the stage for transforming intangible concepts into practical ideas.

The next step involves introspection and reflection. It is vital that you are honest with yourself as you move through this analytical phase. Ask yourself searching questions that include:

- Who is my target market?
- What are my target market’s needs?
- What solutions can I offer to fulfill my target market’s needs?
- What are my firm’s strengths relative to my target market?
- How can I leverage my and my firm’s strengths?
- Where can my target market be found?
- Who can help me gain an audience with my target market?

You have undoubtedly never seen the words “target market” appear so many times in print. There is an important lesson to impress upon you: It’s not about you, it’s about what’s important to your target market! Once you begin to view the

world from your target market’s eyes, you will have taken a measurable step forward into a client-centric mindset that begins to consider their “hot button” issues, opportunities and needs.

The third step in crafting your practical blueprint involves distilling your answers to develop an ideal client snapshot. This stage will come easier because you have taken abstract notions about who you desire to do business with and refined them into real-time information. If you already benefit from an existing ideal client relationship, here is a great opportunity to utilize it as a real-life template. Some important ideal client characteristics to consider include:

- Am I targeting companies, individuals or both?
- What industries or professions?
- Where are they located?
- What is the minimum revenue or income benchmark?
- How many years does a business need to be established or years in a particular profession for an individual?
- Do we share common interests, friends or colleagues?

You have now established your target market and constructed a vivid ideal client snapshot. You have made important progress in developing your practical blueprint for growing your client base. Keep in mind this is just the start of a discussion that should be ongoing as you further develop your personalized action plan and periodically evaluate your progress. By listening to your own voice and taking actionable steps, you are on your way to building your very own “Legal Field of Dreams.”

For more tips on growing your client base, drop an e-mail to joel.goren@sabadellunited.com with “Legal Field of Dreams” in the subject line. ¹⁷

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