



Winning the Business Development Battle Part 5: Basic Training

Business development basic training for your troops should be done early and often. While it's almost never too soon to begin training in the basics of business development, attorneys who have been practicing 4 years or more tend to make excellent recruits.

The first element of basic training should involve getting the attorneys 'over the wall.' In other words, they need to know that business development begins by getting out of the building and getting face-to-face with Clients and prospects.

'Corps' business development training should then begin with Client calisthenics. These workouts may include researching Clients and potential Clients to better understand their businesses and industries and learning to ask questions to help identify Client needs that they may be able to help with. The top candidates may then advance to a 'ropes' course where they get to learn the ropes of their Clients' businesses by visiting their offices, meeting their key contacts, attending their meetings or events - or even doing a secondment. There is no better business development tool than spending time learning all you can about your Clients.



Focusing on regular, ongoing training exercises will not only underscore the importance of business development to the firm, it will also demonstrate the firm's commitment to the attorneys' continuous development and growth, which can help in retaining top talent. After basic training, ongoing refresher courses should continue regularly to keep all attorneys in their best possible condition. Additionally, while training is crucial, even more important is regular one-on-one personalized instruction...