Putting the “Work” in Networking

ABA Section of Litigation
May 19, 2015
Program Objectives

Teach participants how to:

- Effectively prepare for networking, including choosing which events to attend

- “Work a room” with ease and confidence using practical techniques and best practices

- Talk about what they do in an interesting and engaging manner

- Maintain interaction with networking contacts over time in ways that produce results
Akina’s Revenue Acceleration Framework outlines the key areas to execute successful client development

- **Getting in the Door**
  - Phases 1 – 3

- **Closing the Deal**
  - Phases 4 – 5

- **Growing the Base & Cross-Marketing**
  - Phase 6
Underlying Principles

- Business development is the natural outcome of an authentic relationship.

- Business development is about providing solutions to problems that should be solved.

- Success will be determined as much by **how** you execute as by **what** you do tactically.
Networking Fundamentals

- Cultivating authentic relationships
- Applying the Platinum Rule
- Using effective discovery questions
- Finding the authentic reason to connect
- Providing other-centered solutions
- Securing the Definitive Next Step
Where to Network

**NETWORK**
- Inside the firm
- Industry or trade organizations
- Specialty or technical organizations
- Hosted or sponsored events
- Client events
- Pro bono, charitable or civic organizations and events
- Personal/social events
- Alumni events
- Hobbies, special interests or affinity groups

**OPPORTUNITY**
- New work, cross selling
- Credentialing, profile raising, PCAs
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- SuperFan building
- Relationships with people of influence, demonstrating skills
- Credible introductions
- Reconnections
- Credible introductions
Qualifying Contacts

- **Prospects:**
  - Any person who can or will buy legal services now or at some point in the future

- **Connectors:**
  - Any person who knows people who can or will buy legal services now or at some in the future
  - Any person who knows people who know people

- **Alliance Partners:**
  - Any person who offers a complementary service or strength and shares your target market focus and your interest in developing business

- **Priority**
  - A-Level – highest priority, highest quality
  - B-Level – holding zone, qualify the quality
  - C-Level – lowest priority, future quality
Quick Pitch

- Describe the problems you solve and for whom

- Start a conversation
  - Keep it short and simple
  - Don’t ask too much of your Quick Pitch

- Make it memorable
  - Evoke emotion
  - Use humor
  - Describe how and/or why
  - Be relevant and timely
  - Be refreshingly simple
“What’s New?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>News</td>
<td>- Firm updates&lt;br&gt;- Innovations&lt;br&gt;- Personal news</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recent Wins</td>
<td>- Client wins&lt;br&gt;- Project wins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Work Projects</td>
<td>- Interesting projects&lt;br&gt;- How you are spending your time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What’s Best about the Firm</td>
<td>- Culture&lt;br&gt;- How this firm differs from others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking Forward</td>
<td>- What’s on the horizon&lt;br&gt;- What excites you about the future</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Working a Room
“Working a Room” - Preparation

- Why are you going to the event?
- Who is attending the event?
- Who do you ideally want to meet or see?
- What do you want to be better or different?

- The Core 4 for Preparation:
  - What is your **objective** and how will you know your time spent was worthwhile?
  - What are the **key messages** you want to convey?
  - What **discovery questions** will you ask?
  - What are your potential **definitive next steps**?
    - INvitation
    - INtroduction
    - INformation
“Working a Room” – Navigation

- The Ground Rules
  - Rule of Three Good Contacts
  - The Law of 1s and 3s
  - Two-Second Rule for business cards
  - 300 Yard Refrain
  - Using “high signs”

- The Effort
  - Engage in the activity vs. standing around
  - Stand in the longest drink or food line
  - Make an observation or ask a question
  - Come early and stay late
  - Handling hand-offs, facilitating intros
  - Remembering and utilizing names
Tips for Good Conversation

- Ask questions with childlike curiosity or with the eye of a reporter
- Ask open ended questions
- Maintain a general knowledge of major news and events
- Have a handful of topics at the ready
- Avoid controversial topics
- Prepare for specific conversations
- Pay attention to body language and non-verbal cues
Potential Conversation Killers

- Religion
- Politics
- Money
- Pedigree
- Sports rivalries
- Intimate subjects (TMI)
People You Don’t Know

- Schmooze Talk
  - What brought you here?
  - What do you hope to accomplish?
  - What do you do? For whom?
  - What’s happening in your organization, industry or market?
  - What are you currently working on?
  - What are you most looking forward to this year?
  - How can I help?

- Party Talk
  - What brought you here?
  - What is your relationship to the host?
  - What do you do?
  - What do you like to do?
  - How can I help?
“Working a Room” - Exit

- Remember the 3 – 10 – 15 time management continuum
  - 3 minutes – if not a fit
  - 10 minutes – if a potential fit
  - 15 minutes – if a good fit, ask for the DNS

- Exiting with finesse
  - “I have enjoyed meeting you.”
  - If necessary, excuse yourself to make a call, check email, get a drink or use the restroom
  - Introduce or ask for an introduction
  - If you want further interaction, ask for a business card and set a Definitive Next Step
Definitive Next Steps

- Three elements of a Definitive Next Step (DNS):
  - Specific
  - Time-boxed
  - Set in the moment
Issue Spotting for the “IN”

- Examples of issues that lead to an IN for a DNS:
  - Substantive or legal inquiry or interest
  - Industry related inquiry or interest
  - Potential introduction or relationship connection
  - New job search or new hire search
  - Supplier or provider recommendations
  - Charitable or pro bono interest
  - Home, real estate or neighborhood interests
  - Family or kid interests
  - Geography or travel interests
  - Hobby or recreational interests

- Potential Definitive Next Steps
  - INvitation
  - INtroduction
  - INformation
Staying in Touch

- Meals – breakfast, lunch or dinner
- Coffee or drinks
- Sporting events
- Alumni activities
- Charity events
- Arts or culture activities
- Family friendly activities
- Educational events
- Professional or industry events
- Scheduled phone calls
- Ask opinions
- Online sources
- Articles and news distribution
- Offers to help without obligation
- Personal introductions
- Professional introductions
- Social media
Executing the DNS

- Follow up reluctance is normal

- Time-boxing and scheduling is key

- Try first thing in the day vs. end of the day

- Tell someone about your next steps

- Ask someone to hold you accountable

- Tell stories as you go

- Celebrate successes and learnings
Your Contact List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Company/Firm</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>Last Date</th>
<th>Next Date</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>


Remember…

- The ask or invitation is almost as good as the acceptance.

- If it feels contrived, it probably is.

- Align your approach to your authentic style.

- Update your top 20-40 contact list as you go and schedule follow-ups.
Action Plan

- What will you implement immediately?