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PERSPECTIVE

THE SOURCE

Networking Strategies for Lawyers: Cultivating Connections for Business Growth

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Irrespective of your tenure in the field, two truths resonate universally: the value of nurturing existing connections and also the forging of new alliances cannot be overstated. In the midst of a bustling legal practice, allocating time to foster and establish these relationships stands as an unwavering imperative. Our approach in these columns will be a systematic progression, commencing with bedrock principles and advancing steadily, level by level.

In our debut installment published on August 25th, 2023 we embarked on a journey to lay the foundation for building a strong legal brand—a crucial step toward establishing a thriving law practice. This month, we're diving headfirst into a topic that's as vital as it is nuanced: Networking Strategies for Lawyers: Cultivating Connections for Business Growth.

In the ever-evolving realm of law, expertise is just one side of the coin; your network is the other. It's not just about who you know—it's about how you leverage those connections to fuel your business growth. Networking is an art, a science, and a strategic endeavor. Let's explore how you can master this vital skillset.

1. Networking Strategies for Lawyers: Cultivating Connections for Business Growth

Effective networking isn't about amassing a vast number of business cards or attending countless events—it's about cultivating meaningful relationships that can lead to valuable opportunities. Here's how you can master the art of attorney networking:

a. **Know Your Goals:** Understand what you aim to achieve through networking. Whether it's sourcing referrals, collaborating with peers, or finding potential clients, having clear objectives helps you focus your efforts.

b. **Quality Over Quantity:** It's not about the number of connections you make, but the depth of those connections. Engage with a select group of individuals with whom you share common interests, goals, or industries.

c. **Cultivate Authentic Relationships Through Active Listening:** Successful networking goes beyond simply discussing your own achievements and interests. Make a concerted effort to listen attentively and exhibit sincere curiosity in other people's experiences. This forms the foundation for meaningful, genuine relationships. After conversations, jot down key takeaways and interesting points, and update this information in your Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. If you're not using a CRM, a simple alternative would be to note these details in your Outlook contacts or whatever contact management system you employ. This will help you identify relevant topics for future discussions and value-added exchanges.

d. **Share Your Connections with Team Members:** Informing your colleagues about your professional contacts, along with the context of your relationship, can create mutually beneficial opportunities. This act of transparency can pave the way for stronger collaborations and add value to team dynamics.

e. **Maximizing the Power of Digital Networking:** Although in-person interactions remain essential for establishing meaningful connections, the digital landscape offers a unique advantage in broadening your professional network. Platforms like LinkedIn serve as vital resources for engaging with your contacts which include peers and thought leaders within your field. Stay tuned for an upcoming edition of 'The Source,' where we will delve deeply into optimizing your LinkedIn experience.

f. **Give Before You Receive:** Offer value to your network before seeking anything in return. Share your knowledge, provide assistance, and showcase your expertise. This reciprocity builds trust and credibility.

2. Beyond Handshakes: Mastering the Art of Attorney Networking

Effective networking extends beyond brief encounters at events—it requires nurturing relationships over time. Here's how to go beyond handshakes:

a. **Follow Up:** After meeting someone, promptly follow up with a personalized message. Reference something from your conversation to demonstrate your genuine interest.

b. **Stay Engaged:** Regularly engage with your network through social media, emails, or even occasional meet-ups. Consistency keeps your connections warm and relevant.

c. **Offer Value:** Share relevant articles, resources, or insights with your network. Position yourself as a resourceful and reliable contact.

d. **Attend Industry Events:** Participate in conferences, workshops, and seminars related to your practice area. These events provide a conducive environment for meaningful networking.

e. **Elevator Pitch:** Develop a succinct and compelling elevator pitch that succinctly conveys who you are, what you do, and how you add value. This will make a lasting impression during networking encounters.

Networking is a skill that requires patience, finesse, and dedication. It's an investment in your professional journey that can pay dividends over time. By fostering genuine relationships and offering value to your network, you position yourself for growth and success in the legal industry.

Next Installment

In our next installment, we'll delve into the world of effective client communication—an essential aspect of attorney business development. Stay tuned to discover how improving your client relations can drive your practice to new heights.

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