

Mission Accomplished

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What's My Mission?

Glad you asked. It's to help partners and other leaders in professional service firms find and keep the clients they want, and to have fun doing it. The having fun is for you and for me, too. Life's too short for anything else.

A Gracious Hello

Welcome to the premier issue of *Mission Accomplished*. The name is a reflection of my drive to help you achieve your marketing and business development goals, and in doing that, to fulfill my own mission. I hope you find its contents always useful and occasionally entertaining.

In these pages you'll read about how to find, create and sustain human relationships – which is the essence of effective business development. You might be surprised at the variety of issues

covered here. It's always been my contention that professional services marketing affects — and is affected by — every other part of a firm.

Successful marketing starts from the inside out: when everyone in the firm understands where the firm is today, where it is going, and the role each team member can play in getting it there. That's why I'll cover everything from implementing practical, effective marketing plans to the best ways to answer telephones.

You're welcome to share *Mission Accomplished* with anyone you like. Pass it on. In the meantime, happy reading.

Melinda Guillemette

Marketing Plan Not Working? Try This.

If you're working from a "ready, fire, aim" marketing strategy, you're probably spending too much money and wasting time doing the wrong things. A well thought-out and implemented marketing plan will help you distribute resources, both human and financial, more effectively.

Many of you have advanced far enough in your business development knowledge to be the proud owners of a marketing plan. My bet is that in most cases it's currently residing in someone's computer, collecting electronic dust.

If you want to make your marketing plan a reality, get very specific in your goals. You want to be more visible in a specific market niche? Then show specific steps in your plan (think of it as an *action* plan rather than a marketing plan) as to how

you'll do that. What precisely will you do? Who will be responsible for each action? When will it occur? What will success look like?

If you really want to shake things up, do a 90-day action plan, then make sure you monitor

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Marketing Plans Continued from Page 1

When executing your marketing plan, remember to:

- Create champions for every action
- Have a deadline for each action
- Reward and recognize even the smallest marketing achievement
- Analyze failures
- Celebrate and study your successes

the results. Well-run meetings can create their own kind of positive peer pressure; for a 90-day plan meet every week to discuss how everybody's doing with their assigned tasks. You can prevent too much hot air from blowing by conducting

stand-up meetings; tired feet inspire brevity. When your team members achieve even the smallest marketing result, remember to recognize and reward them for it. Little things like "everyone" emails (I call them bragmails)

highlighting someone's marketing achievement can do wonders for both the individual and the team. And nothing adds to the feeling of accomplishment more than a simple, personal pat on the back from the Guy or Gal in Charge.

Better Client Service: Get Off Your Speaker Phone

In an informal and totally unscientific survey, I've learned that more people than I are driven to utter distraction by speaker phones. If you're using yours for any reason other than a conference call or when you've been put on Endless Ignore, stop it. When you put your caller on speaker

phone, you're sending a couple of clear messages: one is that whatever you're doing (shuffling papers, typing emails, whispering to a colleague in your doorway, etc.) is at least as important as the caller; another is that whatever your caller is telling you may not be confidential. You might

also be creating the impression that you're arrogant. Clients really don't like arrogant professionals – just ask them. Do yourself a favor and invest in a headset for your phone; less than \$100 will buy you a very nice one. Your clients will love you for it, and so will the rest of us.

I help clients by:

- *Creating and executing firm marketing plans*
- *Helping partners and other firm leaders set and achieve individual business development goals through individual marketing plans*
- *Training all experience levels in marketing, including client service, referral development and cross-serving clients.*

Ask me about brown-bag lunch sessions!

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Pick Up a Good Read: David Maister's *First Among Equals*

It's hard to beat Maister for his insight into professionals. In *First Among Equals*, he helps us understand how to lead a group of intelligent and independent thinkers without being cannibalized in the process. Among other things, Maister

poses the idea that real leadership can't be forced on a headstrong group of professionals; they have to welcome and accept it before you can make any real progress as a team. He then gives plenty of suggestions how to make that happen. *First Among*

Equals is well worth your time.

