

Mission Accomplished

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Leadership Makes Business Development Happen

Firms can make remarkable progress if the leaders understand their roles and carry them out effectively. It's not enough just to think about individual practices and "books of business". If you build teams and achieve team goals within your firm, everyone will do better.

Here's what I've learned in a dozen years of working with professionals: nothing positive happens in a firm unless the leaders initiate it, demonstrate it, recognize it and reward it.

This applies to all areas of the practice. It particularly applies to business development. The firm's leaders must be the ones who make marketing and selling happen; "bottom-up" marketing strategies just don't work. The leaders must create the programs and make sure those programs are carried out. They have to cheerlead

the firm's marketing path internally and externally. They have to recognize and reward those who are just beginning to show marketing effort and those who actually bring home the bacon.

Seems like a big load to carry, particularly when leaders have a million other things to do. But I haven't seen anyone anywhere be successful in marketing without leadership support and participation. People seldom initiate new behaviors without a role model, and that includes

business development.

So leaders: become business development champions. Plan your firm's marketing activities, communicate the firm's goals to everyone in the firm, and make sure marketing tactics are executed. Recognize and reward everyone involved in the process. It's the surest way to success.

Email: For Information Only

Technology has given us so many ways to communicate — and so many ways to create a mess as we do so. How many times have you been working at your computer, only to be assailed by a nasty-mail? How many battles have been started because someone wrote a snippy, condescending, or scorched-earth email?

Productivity is lost when we use email as a weapon rather

than a tool.

Before you hit that "send" button, read what you've written. Remember that the recipient can't see your face or hear your voice. She has only your words to interpret your message.

If you have a beef with someone, don't use email to get it off your chest. Go see that person face to face. It's much tougher to start a war

when your eyes are meeting the eyes of another human being.

When you receive a nasty-mail, don't allow the sender to engage you in email war.

Gather your courage, get out from behind your keyboard, and go make human contact. You'll demonstrate that you're the bigger person in the conflict and you'll very likely be successful in avoiding its

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- How much productivity is lost when we use email as a weapon rather than a tool?
- Use email positively to convey good news: someone's recent achievement or a great new client, or example.

escalation. It's just so much harder to fight face to face. Unless the cause is great, it usually isn't worth it.

Email isn't your best choice if you want to persuade or convince someone to do something. Face to face contact, or at least telephone contact, is a far better tool than email. People will get excited about your project or idea if you present it to them personally, where they can see your face light up and hear the energy in your voice.

It's nearly impossible to convey that kind of emotion electronically.

If you have a criticism of someone's work or behavior, talk to him about it. While an email may seem simpler at the moment, the consequences often will come back to bite you.

Email helps us convey information more quickly, but it doesn't help us communicate better. It sure doesn't help us behave more humanely when

used as a weapon.

On the flip side, it's a great tool for lifting up everybody in your organization. Use it to spread good news and see the positive difference you can make with the push of a button.

Good to Great: Good Readin'

Good is the enemy of great.

— Jim Collins

Jim Collins has written a terrific follow-up to his book, *Built to Last*. Titled *Good to Great*, it uses empirical data to study what made 11 companies break through the pack to sustain outstanding performance over 15 years. These select companies each generated stock returns that outran the market by an average seven times over 15 years. Collins comes up with several distinguishing success factors in all 11 companies: exceptional leadership, correct

staffing, honesty, focus and discipline, among others.

In my opinion, the most interesting aspect of the great companies is that they first sought to get the right people "on the bus", as Collins puts it, then got the wrong people off the bus, then — and only then — they figured out where the bus should go. Many of us have had experiences of creating brilliant strategies, only to have them fail on execution because we don't have the right people in the right places. It takes skill

to get the right people on the bus and courage to get the wrong ones off the bus, but in the long run it's the most effective move to make.

Collins' book gives us a framework on which to model our organizations — or at least pick up a hint or two to make things run a little better. Fascinating reading.

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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A Little Self Promotion

In the months since I started my consulting practice, I've developed and presented a nifty little program called Practical Professional Business Development. It's broken into five parts that can be presented over the lunch hour or in one full day. The topics include client service, marketing plans, cross selling, referral source development and selling. The presentation has been well received, much to my great

excitement. One participant told me: "I've sat through four presentations similar to what you're doing. Yours was the best." Call me at 505.263.9460 if you want to schedule Practical Professional Business Development for your firm.

