

How to Coach Your Lawyers to be Rainmakers from the Inside

By [LawVision](#) on September 27, 2017

Business development directors and managers are often tasked with coaching lawyers but many don't have a business development or coaching background. Despite interest and enthusiasm, some of these very capable people are unclear where to start or how to be successful in that role. Many of them also face challenges outside coaches don't have to deal with. Building trust, establishing credibility and building accountability from the inside can be more difficult. If this describes you, here are some ideas to get you started if you need to coach your lawyers in their business development efforts without the help of an outside consultant.

1. **Attitude is King.** When selecting coaching participants, remember that attitude is the number one qualifier. Introverted wallflowers willing to learn and try can be better coaching participants than budding rainmakers who think they already know what to do. Check in on attitude before you begin.
2. **Lead with Strengths.** Taking time to really understand the personality and strengths of those with whom you work so you can assist them in finding business development activities that will tap into their natural strengths. Leading with strengths increases comfort levels which increases amounts of time invested and success rates.
3. **Get "buy-in."** Working from the inside (as opposed to as an outside consultant) may require you to forge a different relationship than you have had in the past. Be open and transparent about this. Ask your coaching participants for permission to hold them accountable. Don't be afraid to push them to meet objectives they set for themselves.
4. **Get them to the C-Suite.** Coaching lawyers to form stronger relationships higher in the organization is a sound strategy and raises your own profile as well.
5. **Use Pipelines.** Centering business development activity on the pipeline moves lawyers away from static awareness activities (just writing an article or giving a speech) to dynamic relationship activities (meeting a new prospect or strengthening an existing relationship). Pipelines can help focus lawyers on next steps, assist in analyzing the depth and make-up of a lawyer's network and motivate lawyers to hit their goals. Keep them simple and useable.
6. **Move from Awareness to Relationships.** Many of your lawyers probably already speak, write, join and attend. Coaching at a higher level includes moving them from simple awareness activities to activities that find new and build existing relationships.
7. **Build Value Propositions.** It's not enough to just have your lawyers take people to lunch and keep in touch. It doesn't really matter how many ball games you take people to if you don't have something they need. Value propositions answer the question, "Why would I give you twenty minutes of my time." Help your lawyers create a value proposition that causes prospects to say, "That could help me, tell me more."

Need more help? To assist our clients in their coaching efforts we've partnered with the Legal Sales and Service Organization ([LSSO](#)) and launched a program that trains people to be successful internal coaches. Public sessions are scheduled for this October in Boston, MA and Newport Beach, CA. The program is two full days with both pre and post work including actual coaching sessions and feedback. Participants will come away certified as master trainers by the Legal Sales and Service organization with the skills to make them effective coaches in their respective firms.

Register for the training:

Boston: <https://lawvision.com/event/coaching-advantage-certification-program/#.Wcun4RNSz0Q>

Newport Beach: <https://lawvision.com/event/coaching-advantage-certification-program-west-coast/#.Wck17ltSx1s>