

Law Firm Business Development: CMO Success Factors

By [Silvia L. Coulter](#) on June 7, 2017

At a recent meeting of about 20 mid-size to large firm managing partners, someone asked, "What do you consider the most important success factors for your firms' CMOs? I'd like to communicate these to our CMO so she has a greater chance of success than our last CMO." Here were their answers:

- Take the initiative to connect with key stakeholder partners in person (the same advice you give to them about their clients as one partner reminded the group) and build relationships. Most partners have no idea (regardless of the number of emails you send) what you or your team actually do.
- Take initiative to present your plans to senior leadership for the success of your team members through education and other opportunities.
- Survey partners for Marketing and Business Development team performance and conduct "after-matter" follow up with partners about specific projects.
- Watch what you wish for. You may want to think it through before making a big deal of something that in the end you wish you were not part of or didn't "own."
- Demonstrate your awareness of best practices and trends. Instead of agonizing over the fact our firm may not be doing something, present a trends presentation about what's going on in the industry and with competitors. Be prepared to go deeper on some content in case you are asked for more information.
- Treat team members with respect; try not to micro-manage. The partners the team members support are very aware of how "their BD person for their practice" is treated. If you have a problem team member, do something about it quickly. You will be seen as someone who can manage through good and bad situations.
- Dress for success. Everything speaks when it comes to you and your team.

Some good reminders and also reflects some of the comments we hear when we conduct marketing and BD audits.