

Law Firm Business Development: Don't make this common mistake when following up with a prospective client

By [Jim Cranston](#) on May 26, 2016

I chuckled as I read Jon Manley's article, "[Stop Touching Base with Your Prospects](#)." It might seem counterintuitive, but a closer look reveals a common trap many of us can fall into. Consider the following email outreach:

Hi Bob,

It's been a while since we last spoke, so I thought I'd call to touch base with you. Is there anything I can do to assist you on the projects we discussed? Please call me when you have a moment.

Bill

Mr. Manley suggests that "These words combine to form the most useless statement that can ever be regurgitated ***I just want to touch base with you***"

Interpretation *"I literally have nothing important, or value to offer you. Even though you may have been considering our solution, I do not have a single thing to say that might give you any reason to consider purchasing or even discussing this today. There is absolutely no reason why it would benefit you or your company to call me back, and the call would undoubtedly drag on for longer than you have time for because I do not know how to effectively communicate. During training I was told that it is important to stay in front of my prospects and customers, so I like to call once every 2 weeks to ensure they do not forget about me so that is why I am calling. At this point you would be better off to slam your hand in your desk drawer rather than answering my phone call."*

So what's a better follow up option? Rather than "checking in," have a relevant reason for the follow up. Consider the following:

- **Follow up on your next steps from an earlier meeting.** Intentionally agree upon an actionable follow up at the conclusion of your meeting
- **Bring insight.** Focus on continuing to educate your prospective client on industry trends or legal issues.
- **Offer further ideas or suggestions.** Consider a value proposition that gives you an excuse for the outreach
- **Consider an invitation to a firm sponsored event.** Unrelated to a specific matter but still a good reason for reaching out to a prospective client

Follow up is absolutely necessary (and critical) to your long term success. Just have a reason for the follow up!