

Law Firm Business Development: Lose a Client; Gain Some Perspective – The 5+ Ws

By [Silvia L. Coulter](#) on July 23, 2015

You lose an opportunity for work after spending hours on an RFP or just hours and months on the sales process. Or you lose a good client. Don't pack up your bag just yet. Here are some good questions to ask (adjust depending on the situation) and don't be shy about doing so—you've undoubtedly earned the right by investing all the time in the relationship. Remember this is a people business and it's (mostly) all about the relationships.

1. **When** will you be conducting another review of your outside counsel? OR **Which** areas are you likely to hire outside counsel for next?
2. **Who** are the individuals from your board we should meet for future opportunities? (Particularly useful when you are told we wanted to hire you but someone on our board.....)
3. **What** else should we be doing to have the opportunity to work with ABC? OR **What** could we have done to save our relationship with your company?
4. **What** was the final decision based on? (e.g., fees, experience, geographic locale, etc.)
5. **Who** from our team will be helpful for your team to meet next?

I'm always amazed at how often the opportunity to ask these questions is passed up. Whether it is the partner responsible or a key member of the business development team, don't let the opportunity go by. It could lead to another try for the gold!