

Law Firm Business Development: What Is Winning?

By [LawVision](#) on February 27, 2014

The Winter Olympic games are over and, aside from a few disappointments, the United States fared pretty well as measured by the overall medal count. Medals are the universal success metric in the Olympics and, as such, what the media and casual spectator care about. Athletes know that winning a medal at the Olympics means starting sooner and “moving the ball” down the field at regionals, nationals and international events.

Typically, in law firm business development, winning a new opportunity is the primary, and many times only, measure of success. The fact is that there are several ways to measure success and should be taken into account as we deepen existing relationship and develop new ones as part of our business development efforts. The key is to keep moving the ball down the field.

“Moving the ball” with existing clients can come in many forms including: asking how we can improve our value delivery to them; getting business opportunities in new areas; being introduced to new decision-makers; being invited to internal briefings; and even being invited to non-business related functions signifying that the professional relationship is evolving into a personal one. “Moving the ball” with prospective clients includes getting a meeting to demonstrate thought leadership and to learn, firsthand, what makes them tick; being invited back to have a deeper discussion; having an opportunity to provide a proposal; and, even a loss can be a win by having a loss debrief discussion. This certainly isn’t an exhaustive list, but these activities and others like them should be considered wins and valued as such. There are many ways to measure wins in business development, but we should be careful that we don’t confuse activity with success. As long as we are moving the ball down the field, we may not get a medal, but we are most definitely winning.

What are some ways that you measure business development success in your firm?