

Nailing the Fundamentals – Connecting the Dots to Grow a Client Relationship

By [LawVision](#) on August 4, 2016

Solving a client's business issues if you don't know the solutions or services your firm has to offer can be like trying to solve a jig-saw puzzle without all the pieces.

We often encourage attorneys to meet with their clients, to focus on their clients' business needs and broader industry issues. Active listening and asking good questions are arguably the most important skills to develop for such meetings. However, also having a conversable knowledge of the firm's offerings is important if you want to connect the dots between the issues the client is facing and the solutions your firm has to offer.

Members of the marketing team can play a big role in helping lawyers better understand and articulate the specific capabilities and differentiated offerings that their firm has to offer. This is especially true for laterals who may bring new capabilities to the firm.

Developing a write-up of an offering, capability or "product" that differentiates the firm and can broaden an existing client relationship, or open doors to new ones, is helpful to facilitate client retention and growth. Product sheets can generate capability awareness within the firm and serve as a useful tool for relationship partners to align firm services with a client's profile.

Like a jig-saw puzzle, helping put together the interconnected services of the firm can create a broader picture to the client of your capabilities and help to build stronger relationships.

The following is a simple check list to help with this idea.

1. Create a list of those offerings that differentiate your firm. What are you known for?
2. Identify, with specificity, the profile of a client that can benefit from these services.
3. Write the offerings up. Craft pithy one-pagers that articulate the solutions you offer to the actual problems that clients face.
 - o What is the issue?
 - o What does your firm do in response to that issue?
 - o What relevant and timely experience do you leverage that makes you the expert?
 - o What benefit does the client receive as result of your actions?
 - o Who is the point person to contact?
4. Write the services in simple English. Avoid jargon, case law or dense text.
5. Focus on the benefits the services offer to clients
6. Socialize these write-ups internally. Educate your most potent sales-force, your attorneys, on the capabilities of your firm and where and how to apply them.

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