

Selling Internally at Your Law Firm—Keys to Success

By [Silvia L. Coulter](#) on August 8, 2013

A recent Yahoo posting reminded me of something we often discuss with our individual sales coaching clients – the need for what is often called “Executive Presence.” I recall a client who was recently passed over for a leadership role at his firm and was told that his partners, although they have a high level of respect for him and his work is outstanding, don’t see him as a leader in the firm. His office is a mess, his presence is sloppy, and his dress is not crisp and executive level. While many think their brains are enough to get them ahead, this is no longer accurate, if it ever was.

I like to ask: How do clients view you? If you lack good table manners (I’m serious), your office is a mess or your dress does not speak “success,” then you may want to team up with an executive coach and clean it up. Other items which fall into this category include: crooked teeth—get them straightened so you look like success to successful clients and others at your firm; ungroomed nails—YOU are the product—get regular manicures; unpolished shoes with heels that are worn down—easy fix to look the part; casual dress—it’s out the door with the 2002-2009 era. I’ve heard from C-level executives “the partners dress casual here at this firm.” You are not a partner and you want to get ahead, dress in a suit and look polished, and you will likely get the respect you deserve. If you are an associate or partner, think about how you look to your partners. Are you someone whom they will introduce to a client?

I’m amazed at how many people I meet in the many fine firms across the globe who are incredibly successful and yet, can be even more so with the right focus on an important part of the product—you!

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