

Selling Legal Services: The Art of Effective Questioning

By [Jim Cranston](#) on October 23, 2023

In the realm of legal services, successful client acquisition isn't about diving straight into a sales pitch. Picture this: You walk into a doctor's office, and before you can say a word, the physician launches into a sales spiel about their services. Sounds off-putting, doesn't it? There's a natural flow to effective communication, especially within the sales process. Surprisingly, many attorneys miss this crucial point and rush into the pitch, overlooking the power of a well-structured conversation.

Far too often, aspiring rainmakers assume that business development equates to relentless pitching. In reality, successful business development starts with a fundamental skill – listening. And the cornerstone of effective listening? Asking the right questions. The better your questions, the more business you'll secure.

So, here are some strategies to help you prepare for and maximize the value of your next business development meeting.

1. **Define Your Objective:** Before your meeting, take a moment to clarify your goals. What do you aim to achieve from this interaction? Script several questions that align with your objectives. Craft queries that unearth a client's priorities, challenges, or initiatives.
2. **Stimulate Engaging Conversations:** Kickstart the dialogue with a relevant topic or two. Consider discussing subjects that dovetail with your legal services, such as recent legislation, industry trends, or regulatory changes. Alternatively, delve into issues or projects your client is currently involved in, drawing from your pre-meeting research.
3. **Master the Art of Follow-Up:** Pay close attention to the keywords and phrases your client uses during the conversation. Show that you're actively engaged by reiterating what you've heard. Then, demonstrate your genuine interest by asking follow-up questions that delve deeper into the topic. This not only shows your attentiveness, but also rewards the client for sharing their insights.

By leading with insightful questions, you'll uncover the client's needs and concerns before offering any solutions. This approach allows you to diagnose before you prescribe, leading to more fruitful and favorable outcomes for both you and your clients.

The path to selling legal services isn't a one-size-fits-all sales pitch; it's a personalized journey that begins with the art of asking effective questions and truly listening to your prospective and existing clients. By mastering this skill, you'll not only build stronger client relationships but also enhance your overall business development success.