



How to get the most from your business development training

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

CLIENT RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

LEADERSHIP

How do you ensure the business development training you've invested in does change delegates' old ways and habits? Here are our hints and tips to help you bring about the change you desire.

'Just in time' development - The success rate of any training and development improves dramatically when it is delivered 'just in time' for a particular challenge the fee-earner is facing, or at a relevant stage of their career. The more targeted the programme can be made to what the fee-earner is experiencing, the greater their buy-in will be.

Real clients. Real situations - The more successful firms ensure all the working examples and case studies in the programme focus on real life issues they are facing with specific clients in their portfolio. This transforms any training from an academic to a 'problem solving' experience, with new skills, processes and behaviours being adopted a lot more readily along the way.

Champions - The implementation of business development training dramatically improves when there are obvious 'champions' in the partnership – leading the initiative. They 'follow up' with individuals on the progress and changes each are making. In this respect champions are invariably someone on the firm's senior management, with the authority to take corrective action if a fee-earner is either struggling to implement their learning back in the office or is failing to do so for any other reason.

Time allowance - All too often we see fee-earners being called upon to implement business development training on top of everything else they have to do. The more successful firms recognise this. In encouraging a fee-earner to improve their business development skills and processes, they realign that individual's day-to-day time and work targets. They factor in the time it will take for the fee-earner to build their new skills into practice.

Coaching - The implementation of newly learned business development processes and skills greatly improves when fee-earners are offered coaching 'away from the classroom'. This is often done after they have attended a training programme; to help them put their learning into practice. We've seen firms use coaching very successfully in a number of different ways. Some have partnered the individual with in-house coaches or mentors. Others bring in external coaches to help the fee-earner find their feet with their new learning.

Support systems - We have seen newly acquired business development skills generate greater fee-income when a firm's support systems are also focused on the training programme. Examples of this include the:

- 1 sharing of target client lists amongst the firm to amass greater knowledge about individual prospects;
- 2 refocusing of marketing initiatives to appeal to the interests of particular clients and prospective clients being targeted;
- 3 involving the firm's market research to identify the key decision makers, issues of importance, industry challenges etc of specific target clients;
- 4 communicating, sharing and celebrating success to the firm as a whole.

Tangible measures - Whilst it is important to measure the outcome of any expenditure in training and development, it is better to set tangible measures (which can determine whether the programme is a success or failure) at the start of the programme. Those firms that:

- are specific about the results they want to achieve;
- set out their definition of how they feel those results can be attained
- help fee-earners fit these targets into their day job
- track the success of fee-earners in meeting these targets & give fee-earners support along the way to overcome any obstacles & tend to experience the success they aim for.



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