

Creating New Clients Healthcheck

This is a high quality diagnostic tool for professional services firms, which analyses 10 core aspects involved in the creation of new clients for a firm.

Please decide which of the following 40 statements are:

- 1 Just like your firm
- 2 Somewhat like your firm
- 3 Not really like your firm
- 4 Not at all like your firm

You will identify the strengths and weaknesses in your firm's ability to create new clients



PACE Healthcheck on creating new clients		Just like us	Somewhat like us	Not really like us	Not like us at all
1	Any marketing events we organise that are directed towards target clients are always thoroughly planned and fully supported (and attended) by all of the most appropriate people in our firm.				
2	Our people always start new business meetings powerfully, positively and confidently. They are able to introduce themselves and the firm succinctly (in two to three minutes) and to position the discussion so that the target client is keen to talk about his or her situation and requirements.				
3	We measure the success of all of our new business marketing efforts by the number of high quality new business meetings these marketing efforts generate in the short and long term.				
4	We have a clear, agreed and articulated vision of the types of new clients we are seeking to win in the future. We also know those organisations that we will actively avoid in the execution of our new client development activities.				
5	Our people focus their business development efforts on building strong relationships with target clients. They do not focus solely on trying to win individual pieces of work.				
6	Our firm has an agreed list of defined target clients identified as part of our database.				
7	Our people always put together (and work to) a plan to identify, meet with and win over all of the key decision makers and influencers in every major new business opportunity. This ensures that the best and most robust strategies are put in place and implemented.				
8	Our people are seen as real business advisers, not just technical experts. In addition to strong technical expertise they also have relevant client sector knowledge, key consulting and relationship building skills and a genuine interest in understanding every detail of each target organisation.				
9	Generally speaking we are always able to use the best people to pursue new client opportunities. Internal barriers do not get in the way of putting our best team forward.				
10	We have identified and articulated the factor (or factors) that will positively differentiate us from our competitors in our target markets. This 'edge' acts as a focus for real interest from potential new clients.				
11	Our people who get involved in winning new clients have all received appropriate training in the skills and approaches that work best. The evidence of this training is clearly demonstrable when we are in pursuit of a new client opportunity.				
12	Our firm manages the level, focus and quality of the activity going into new business development as accurately as it records fee income and profitability – and as tightly as it manages fee earning work.				
13	When presenting ideas our people only focus on the issues relevant to the target client. They avoid any irrelevant elements of the solution that may weaken or cloud its impact.				
14	We have planning tools and review procedures in place that help the firm to ensure balance and continuity in the efforts our people are putting into new business development. This helps the firm to achieve the most efficient and effective use of the limited (and expensive) resources working in this area.				
15	When an individual within our firm needs help in winning a new client there are people to whom he/she can turn who are regarded as excellent coaches and who can provide expert help.				
16	Those prospective clients that we have identified meet pre-determined, objective measures that single them out as being particularly interesting to our firm. These objective criteria also begin to identify how our services may be of value to them.				



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17	In order to achieve our future business goals we have calculated by how much we need to grow our client base per year. We have objectives for this, against which we can measure our success.				
18	We have a clearly defined BID/NO BID process, which is always applied to ensure that we never bid for 'no hope' opportunities.				
19	All of our people involved in new business development have been selected, at least in part, because of their excellence in listening.				
20	The organisation has in place an information/CRM system that provides the firm's management with a detailed view, at all times, of progress in our organisation's 'creating new clients' activity.				
21	Our people work in well-constructed teams focused on winning major new business opportunities. These teams use a combination of the most appropriate individuals – selected on the best fit of their personalities and skills as much as on their particular technical expertise.				
22	Our people are able to build strong relationships with target clients because they are good at generating a feeling of credibility, competence, compatibility and trust in people for whom they have not yet carried out work.				
23	When preparing a proposal or presentation our people continuously engage the target client in dialogue. This ensures that they really understand the client's situation and requirements and also ensures that the client really understands (and has contributed to) the thinking behind our solution.				
24	The business development process for winning major new business opportunities has been clearly defined within our firm. Progress is tracked and remedial actions taken where necessary to ensure a high degree of success.				
25	There is an agreed and communicated follow up plan in place for all target clients who attend the firm's promotional activities and events. This plan is always adhered to.				
26	Our people always gain the appropriate level of commitment from the client before attempting to move to the next stage of the relationship. They never try to push target clients to move more quickly than they are comfortable to go.				
27	All of the most attractive prospective clients identified by our firm are allocated to nominated individuals for action. These individuals are held accountable for activities directed toward these targets.				
28	Our proposals and presentations are completely focused on each individual target and each individual opportunity. They contain the bare minimum of background information relating to our firm and are never cut and pasted.				
29	Winning new work from new clients is an activity that is measured, recognised and rewarded fairly within our firm.				
30	Our people are expert at developing a deep understanding of the patterns of influence and politics in target organisations. They know how to build strong relationships with the key influencers in all parts of the target organisation and to use those relationships to increase their chances of success.				
31	All necessary resource allocation and training is given to those involved in the process of winning major new business opportunities from important new clients.				
32	When we receive unsolicited opportunities from non-clients, we have a set of objective measures that enable us to determine which ones we should pursue, and which ones we should turn down because they would divert us from our focused new client development activities.				
33	Our people will always reach an agreed (and full) understanding of the target's situation and requirements before being tempted to talk in any detail about our firm or to present ideas and solutions prematurely.				

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34	When our people encounter resistance to their ideas and proposals they never react defensively. Instead they 'bite their tongues', ask good questions and actively listen. They demonstrate empathy and a full understanding of all issues and concerns before providing any answers or 'solutions'.				
35	All of our new business marketing effort is designed to drive our 'message/brand/reputation' into the minds of the key people in our carefully chosen target market(s).				
36	The firm has tried and tested ways of objectively measuring new client opportunities in the pipeline and of accurately forecasting the financial outcome of these opportunities.				
37	Our people are expert at understanding the 'commercial' aspects of any opportunity. They always know the decision-making process, details of the budget(s) involved, any alternatives being considered by the target, the timescales involved in decision and implementation and they understand in detail the basis upon which all of the decision influencers will make their choice.				
38	Our people are completely confident in the fees they charge and believe them to reflect the value we add. They are never pressurised into reducing fees to win work.				
39	We have a tried and tested methodology for winning a high proportion of the formal tenders we bid for in non-client situations.				
40	People at all levels within our firm have strong personal networks of clients and contacts. These networks generate significant numbers of high-quality referrals to potential new clients every year.				



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