

This Month

- **The right level of attention for clients**
- **Client expectations**
- **Differentiate the firm - Brand**

Clients (along with team members) are the most important contributor to the success and development for a law firm but they do not necessarily get enough attention from all concerned. From finding a new client, performance, retention, relationship to referrals

All firms need to take a good look at Process, Procedure, accountabilities, training, empathy, attitude

Firms need to spend more time

- Identifying potential clients within the strategic plan – type, scale, work-type, geography. Developing the product marketing plan, the target market and the best routes.
- Focussing on the right prospects as a result of the plans and approaching them in the right way with the right people – the right route to market (direct marketing, web, social media, networking and referrals, and then the effective management of the response
- Winning a new client and getting the first purchase. Then performing right and with empathetic relationships – **not forgetting the benefits of achieving a 60% enquiry conversion ratio – rather than a benchmark 20% without the necessary attention -**
- Subsequently getting the client to purchase more of the same but also broadening the activity across multiple work-types – that cross-selling thing
- The client selecting your firm as its supplier of choice for all legal matters
- The client with a strong attitude to your business
- The client becoming a referrer of business to you

There is always a potential client life cycle that has to be worked to move a suspect to a first-time client, then a major client to an advocate for the firm needs to be part of the plan. Technology makes is much easier these days either with spreadsheets or simple CRM to actually list individuals or commercial businesses and their status. There should then be a plan with accountability for action by appropriate members of the team to progress the status. This would also include gap analysis showing the services not being taken and action plans by department or client account managers to fill the gaps.

This is by far the cheapest route to market

- Suspects – target potential clients
- Prospects – interest shown and conversion actions
- First time clients – got that first deal and great delivery to be undertaken
- Repeat clients and potential additional work-types – cross selling of the full portfolio – filling the gap analysis
- Advocates and referrers – relationship with lawyers unafraid to ask for referrals

What values does the client want/expect in his relationship with the firm

The firm needs to organise collection of this kind of data. Multiple means – client questionnaires, social media and staff client discussions. The topic should always be on the agenda for department and board sessions. Mystery shopper facilities also exist. Client dissatisfaction is of a very high % as would have been seen in previous articles

- Become aware of the positive and negative feedbacks – “the lawyer was fine but I am not going there again because of reception rudeness”
- Clients are all different people with differing expectations – it does no harm to ask them about experiences and expectations
- All law firms are expected to handle the law issues so is it empathy and efficiency that the clients seek – surprising how few make a decision on price (benchmark c10%)
- Do we know what is causing upset – lack of communication/updates, not availability when phone calls and e-mails
- For commercial clients – do we demonstrate enough overall awareness and interest in their business
- For personal clients are we proactively demonstrating that we are aware of the challenges they could be facing – especially with private client work during Covid

It is very important that we have the right processes, people and attitudes in place to meet the needs and desires of clients. It can be handled through internal management but also a third party assessment and coaching could also be achieved through third party involvement like www.questforexcellence.uk (4) Martin Lee | LinkedIn

Also looking at the profiles and personalities of our staff and the same with individual clients as the interface can also assist in reducing obvious conflict. In December I wrote about the useful use of DISC [December2022.pdf \(professionalchoiceconsultancy.com\)](http://December2022.pdf(professionalchoiceconsultancy.com)) linkedin.com/in/pete-coop-a961533b

Client Communication and the Right Brand

Many law firms during Covid have fallen short in terms of practical and positive communications with their clients – failing to directly communicate when for example there is a market demand and clients not knowing what to do [March2023.pdf \(professionalchoiceconsultancy.com\)](http://March2023.pdf(professionalchoiceconsultancy.com))

Direct communication with clients should be undertaken – simplest example updating Wills with changing circumstances and LPAs with people in care and remote.

This can be enhanced for client satisfaction as well as potential new prospects with web sites that clearly demonstrate the key knowledge and support available. Regular updates demonstrating knowledge and experience and empathy is quite critical these days – again third party data can be put to good use – such as input from www.app.legalrss.co.uk (MLS Advantage supplier)

The Firm's Brand

It does however go much further and many professional services providers – lawyers and accountants have never really considered their image in the market place. For many years individual lawyers and their law firms because of their “unique” skills have unfortunately adopted an ego approach.

The world is now a very much a different place with clients and potential clients expecting the skills but are seeking personal benefits and empathy from engaging with a firm or an individual.

The market is so much more competitive and clients more demanding so it is now very important to visit the Brand for the individual or business. People want and expect the skills, value for money and empathy and they are looking for potential suppliers who make that clear.

It is not only clients either but many highly skilled and younger staff are looking to leave law firms that do not have a social conscience and awareness, not working with an effective diversity and equality programme. So, getting that image right and part of the operation will certainly enable staff retention and recruitment. A timely LinkedIn post in June

[The 'Think Brand - not bland' Guy - Phil Strachan | LinkedIn](#)

It is becoming so important to differentiate the individual and/or firms' image from the competition. With the right messages about contribution to client support, social conscience and diversity/equality.

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