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LEGAL MARKETING

Face-to-Face Marketing: Some Tips for Getting Back to It

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Special to the Legal

Hi folks. Dust off your business cards, your best handshake (or elbow bump) and 30-second elevator speech. Clean up your bio so that it shows all the value you bring to clients. Take off those cozy sweatpants and casual clothes you have been living in while working remotely because: It's time to do some face-to-face marketing again.

You may have gotten rusty about key marketing tactics so let's review!

First and foremost—if you remember this maxim, you will be all set for any encounters with clients, referral sources and potential clients. Here it is: **It's all about them.** Whatever you plan to do, say or offer, consider how it will affect your target, enrich them, and make their life or world better. If you make someone feel like they are the most important person you have ever helped, great results will occur.

Onto the specifics!

VISITING CLIENTS

Do it.

If your clients are interested in being visited—and ask them first—get out there to see them. Come with something of value that



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they are not charged for to strengthen the relationship in a meaningful way. This could include a one-on-one client feedback session on your work. Or a tour of new facilities, or importantly “hellos” to key personnel you have not seen in a while. Another thing to consider is what kind of “news” you can bring to them—such as a quick briefing on changes in the law.

When you get back to your office, assess what kind of follow-through you need to do on anything they told you. If they said they were worried about a new regulation, maybe they need a checklist from you on how to deal with it. If they spoke about one of their key charities that is a passion of theirs, send a check or offer to volunteer or host an event. Is there an award you can nominate them for—then do so. Schedule the next off-the-clock “touch” that will make their professional or personal world better and keep you top-of-mind status.

GOING TO A CONFERENCE

Whether you are attending or speaking at an industry meeting or CLE program, remember to do these things before you go:

- Think about how to maximize your attendance. First, research who is attending. Ask the organizers for a list. Check the event's or organizer's page on LinkedIn. See who else is liking the event posts and indicating they are attending.

- Announce on LinkedIn you are going to the event—make sure fellow members in relevant LinkedIn groups know you are going—in case you can schedule a get-together.

- Plan to meet with two or three people.

- Do some background research on them to make sure you get a sense for what is going on with them personally or professionally.

- Pack business cards.

- Plan and bring professional outfits (you look smarter and more important in business attire!)

And once you're at the conference:

- If you meet with anyone, try to ask them questions and get them talking for 80% of the time so you can learn about them and identify pain points or other things you could help them with later.

- Make contemporaneous notes about what you spoke about so you can use them as “a cheat sheet” for later follow-up.

- Consider how you can use the speeches you hear—or the one you are giving—to educate your current clients, referral sources and anyone else on your mailing list.

- Make a point to meet the organizers and compliment them on the event. Offer to help them or other committee chairs with the next event.

- Meet two people you did not know before the event. Ah yes, commence again the fine art of networking. Find someone standing by themselves who is not on her phone and start up a conversation: “Hi. What brings you here today?” You will be off and running.

After the conference:

- Right away, send a three-sentence handwritten note to certain people you met with to follow-up. (“Great to meet you, so happy to have learned X, let’s plan on doing Z together”).

- Consider how you can use the speeches you heard—or the one you gave—to educate your current clients, referral sources and anyone else on your mailing list. Create a one-paragraph alert, write a personal letter, or write an article or social media post on the salient points you think they should know.

- Plan your next “touch” to people you met who could be important to your practice. Calendar to do something in 30 days’ time to check-in or provide something of value for them.

- Tell your colleagues at your firm some of the key takeaways for their clients—so they can cross-sell you.

- Put Google alerts on anyone you met at the conference so you can

follow news about them and have cause to reach out.

- Prepare a summary of one or two major things you learned and share with clients and others on your mailing list. Keep it extremely short. Have them wanting more and a reason to speak with you.

- Make a point to meet the organizers and compliment them on the event. Offer to help them or other committee chairs.

Whatever you plan to do, say or offer, consider how it will affect your target, enrich them, and make their life or world better.

IT’S JUST LUNCH, DINNER, GOLF OR BIRD WATCHING

You can start to entertain clients in a way that they would enjoy. Understand time constraints and how convenient the location is for them. Have a special lunch or a fast cup of coffee, bring your families to an event, or do something the client adores like the ballet, a concert, golf or pickleball. Enlist your assistant or colleagues and brainstorm on something that would be thoughtful and memorable to do. One-on-one activities are extremely impactful.

GET OFF THE BENCH

Get involved in something important to your clients, referral sources or you personally. One of my favorite expressions is fish where the fish are! Ask your clients, referral sources, practice mentors and more where they are going for professional education and go there. Join the organization if you can and

get active and rub elbows. Be a familiar and valuable face.

IF YOU ARE SCARED TO START

Many of my clients have indicated they are nervous to get back out there. They have gotten confident on Zoom meetings so now, they are unsure of how to act or what to say in person. Two easy tips:

- You don’t have to talk or entertain. Remember, it’s all about them. Ask the other person questions about their life. You will learn so much more than if you did all the talking. Most people would rather talk about themselves anyway! Everyone is more comfortable then. You will be so much less stressed and get so much more out of the encounter.

- Look for one kernel of knowledge to follow up with them on—like a movie they loved, their daughter’s softball schedule, what they really enjoy or dislike about their job or a problem they are having. You have formed a connection now without ever engaging in selling at all.

If you get stuck, get in touch with me. We will brainstorm. As always, I’m rooting for you. •