

Establish Your Brand In The Firm

- Reinforce your value; make partners look like heroes.

By Joe Heller, High Performance Sales Coach

We've all heard how beneficial networking can be, however few marketers recognize the value of networking inside their firm. Building your reputation through internal networking is comparable to Intel's positioning strategy – "The Brand Inside." The perception is that Intel is the only choice when it comes to choosing a computer microprocessor. As a professional, you can apply the same principles to become the recognized marketing expert in your firm. You can also use the same principles to help the partners and professionals in your firm establish their own brands within the firm.

Distinguishing yourself as the recognized authority is all about creating a positive expectation -- a promise to your market that positions you to own the preferred status in the mind of your client, whether that client is internal or external. It is a "trust" dialogue between you and your client.

Here are a few things to consider in positioning yourself as a leading authority inside your firm. First, in order to be successful at internal networking, you must help your partners look like a hero inside the firm and to their clients. You must be consistently thinking, "How can I make my partner a hero?" One of the easiest ways is to share client success stories. A story passed partner-to-partner will resonate within the firm.

Second, I suggest you conduct meetings with partners to understand the most relevant issues they are facing. Start conversations with strategic, open-ended questions geared to help your partners learn about how you can help them strengthen their relationship with a client. Now you're guaranteed an interested audience because you've gone out of your way to learn how you can help them. Remember, once you've begun building internal relationships, keep the momentum going and follow up.

The success to networking internally is to follow up with everyone you talk to. Set aside a time of day to follow up with the partners you've spoken to, and be sure to ask them follow-up questions from your earlier discussion. These questions should help reinforce ways you can help them succeed while potentially opening new client relationship areas. Prepare two or three questions to get the results you desire by reinforcing the partner's awareness of how you can help them succeed.

In internal networking, there are two primary challenges where many professionals fall short. First, they fail to set milestones with partners in reaching their goals. Second, professionals fail to achieve becoming known as a leading authority because they try to be all things to all people. This creates confusion, destroying any hope of being known as a leading authority within the firm.

Unless you have a laser focus, communicate with clarity, set goals and help your partners look like a hero, you will fall short of succeeding at internal networking. Internal networking is all about becoming the preferred choice and the "go-to guy" within your firm. Once you've captured the first-in-mind advantage with your partners, you are poised for success.

One way to successfully position your self as a marketer is to help the partners and professionals network with one another.

If one partner's practice area is bankruptcy, you could facilitate a meeting between him or her and the real estate professionals in your firm. You could begin the discussion by asking the real estate professionals if they could name a client that is having financial problems given the economy. In using the Socratic questioning method, you can help diagnose a problem. In order to create a sense of urgency, you can help the bankruptcy partner generate two or three questions that will

specifically identify problems. Identifying hidden problems makes the partner look good and finds additional work for the firm.

Every day, thousands of professionals unknowingly miss key opportunities to leverage their success internally. The purpose of internal networking is to build tactical relationships that you can leverage within the firm for greater success.

One final note; in order to become a successful in selling you must become an avid student of what works in selling. I developed the Revenue Warrior Selling System (TM) to give you a competitive advantage and succeed against your most challenging competition. You can find the Revenue Warrior Selling System (TM) on my site <http://www.JoeHeller.com>. Go there right now and click on the Revenue Warrior Selling System (TM) to learn more. It's a great resource from my personal library for yours.

Joe Heller, Sales Coach is available for - Individual Coaching, Team Coaching and Group Coaching in the United States and Worldwide.

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