



Have You Fallen into the Solo Attorney Trap?

How to Avoid the Three Pitfalls that Keep You from Enjoying the Success you Deserve

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Published by DLorenzo Business Advisors of Florida, Inc.

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Many solo attorneys become victims of what I call the “solo attorney trap”. This means they get caught up in **ONLY** speaking with and learning from other attorneys about building their law firm. This is so common that when someone with a different perspective comes along, the new guy, with the fresh ideas, is often considered an oddball. After all, how can HE understand what YOU are going through? He is not an attorney.

Don’t get me wrong—there is value in participating in a peer advisory group. Having discussions with folks who are in similar situations can definitely provide some comfort. But limiting yourself (even subconsciously) to learning only from other solo attorneys can be the death of your law firm.

Building a law firm that enables your lifestyle requires that you attract clients who understand the value you provide. These clients work with you because they trust you. They are interested in the quality of your service because they find you to be different from every other attorney. They work with you because they believe that you can achieve the desired outcome. Fees are a low-level priority for them.

This type of client relationship is developed from clearly differentiating your firm from all the others. This differentiation begins on a personal level. You must think and act differently. The easiest way to facilitate that process is by surrounding yourself with successful business people and trying some of the things that work for them.

Here are three reasons why you need to widen your circle of advisors beyond other attorneys:

1. Doing what everyone else does is a surefire way to get the same results as everyone else.

This is not good.

You want *better* results than the other solo attorneys.

The average solo attorney (depending upon which survey you believe) makes somewhere between \$85,000 and \$125,000 per year by his or her third year in a solo practice. This would be good money, if not for the fact that you probably owe at least that much in school loans and you probably also have a family to feed and a mortgage to pay.

My supposition is that you don't want to be average. You don't want to be like everyone else. You want to make more money. You want to attract great clients. You want to work on matters that challenge you.

You can make more money and pick and choose your clients, but to do so you need to be the EXCEPTION to the rule. You must break free of the status quo. That means doing things differently than 95% of the other solo attorneys that are practicing today.

2. Surrounding yourself with other attorneys promotes gripe sessions and not productive dialogue.

“Poor me. My life is so hard. I don't have enough (insert noun here: time, money, clients, friends).”

You need someone to slap you and tell you to cut the crap. Other solos are less likely to do that because they feel the same thing. The group empathy will not help get you out of the rut your lack of business activity has gotten you into.

Snap out of it!

Lose the friends and advisors who are bringing you down. Plenty of solo attorneys are making great money today—even in a recession. They are doing so by taking aggressive action. The one thing I guarantee they are not doing is sitting in Starbucks complaining about their situation. Get away from that mentality and start surrounding yourself with business owners who work outside of the law.

You want successful business owners in your circle of influence. Find out what they are doing to promote their services, and try it—something, anything. Listening to different people is a good thing. It helps you clarify your message to your target client group. A clear message is one that cuts through the clutter.

3. Most attorneys don't think like business owners.

If you are a solo attorney, you need to think like a business owner because you are running a business. Successful business owners develop and promote a clear competitive advantage. If you don't have one, you are not giving your clients a reason to choose your firm over your competition. Successful business owners don't just handle the current matter—they focus on client lifetime value.

They ask the client the all-important question:

“What else do you need help with?”

Then they figure out how to provide that support for their client.

Successful business owners are committed to continuous learning in the area of business development. They work on ways to grow their business, and they do not limit their education to technical aspects of their work.

This is just a start.

I promise you, the toughest hurdle you have to overcome is breaking the mental block that “only another solo attorney can feel my pain.”

You own a business. Focus on offering your services to business owners in language they understand and they will respond. Common language and shared goals will help you win over the hearts and minds of these prospective clients. Once you have won their hearts and minds, their business will follow.

Dave Lorenzo teaches attorneys how to make **MORE MONEY** with **LESS EFFORT**. To learn how to build a big roster of clients with little marketing dollars and get **FREE** access to **Millions of Dollars of Practice Building Strategies at no cost to you**, go to <http://www.rainmakerlawyer.com/site/register> or call Dave Lorenzo toll-free at 1-888-692-5531.