

Six Techniques to Prosper in 2010

By **Larry Bodine**, a business development advisor based in Tucson and Chicago. For the last 19 years, he has helped law firms nationwide attract new clients and generate new business by using strategy, business development training and individual attorney coaching. See www.LarryBodine.com. He can be reached at 630.942.0977 and Lbodine@LawMarketing.com.



Larry Bodine

The law firms that prosper in 2010 will be the firms that employ these six techniques:

1. **Offer clients fee arrangements they want** (that is, not based on the billable hour). Predictability is the key element that clients seek.
2. **Emphasize efficiency** to save clients money, boost their business, and entice them to become continuing “customers.” For example, a firm could hire a private investigator instead of using multiple depositions to learn the facts of a matter.
3. **Generate referrals because of superior client service.** The best source of new business is a referral from a client. Clients might not have the background to judge whether one lawyer is more skilled than another, but they immediately recognize prompt communications. Smart lawyers will make sure they are easily reachable, return calls within 24 hours, and have a backup person to handle calls when they are occupied. According to the Small Business Success Index published by Network Solutions, more than three out of four small businesses (such as law firms) will rely on the strategy of offering superior customer service to succeed in the recovery economy.
4. **Practice preventive law.** This means anticipating a client’s needs before the client does – or recognizing a recurring problem the client faces – and helping a client reduce risk. For example, if a business client is repeatedly facing employment discrimination claims, a smart lawyer will offer to train the company’s middle managers to develop better practices. This illustrates the approach of looking for new services to meet client needs.
5. **Use creativity as a strategy for success.** Lawyers should adapt now and not wait for change to ambush them. The leading sources of ideas to grow a small business are, in order: clients, newsletters and trade journals, competitors, employees, suppliers, conferences, books, and consultants, according to the Small Business Success Index.
6. **Market vigorously,** using face-to-face meetings and online social networking. Remember that no one likes being sold to; “pitching” a prospective client by reciting your credentials, honors, and admissions will not attract new business. Instead, the better approach is to treat a new-business meeting as an *interview*, and ask questions

about business or personal problems that you can solve with legal services. Online, lawyers should position themselves as informative sources of new developments.

For a more detailed article on this topic, please visit the LawMarketing Portal at <http://alturl.com/efng>

For more on this topic, call:

Larry Bodine, Esq.

Business Development Advisor

Tel: 630.942.0977

E-mail: Lbodine@LawMarketing.com

Web: <http://www.LarryBodine.com>

Assisting law firms for 20 years:

- Training lawyers at firm retreats.
- Coaching lawyers to develop their personal marketing plans.
- Developing business development strategies.
- Using technology to market a practice.

