

Match Your Biz Dev Plan to Your Personality

Oftentimes when I am working with business professionals to achieve their business development goals, I learn that they have incorporated tactics and initiatives into their [business development plans](#) that do not match their personalities, attitudes, experiences and – worst of all – areas of interest. For an added degree of difficulty, their business development goals are too ambitious and unrealistic. The result is that the professional faces an overwhelming task that causes dread and discouragement, so the plan gets pushed to the back burner.

I have also learned that professionals think their plans need to be “be-all and end-all,” where they have to have 15 balls in the air when in reality, they can barely juggle two. The reality is that there is nothing wrong with having an uber focus on just one or two initiatives for an entire plan period. In fact, that’s when you begin to see tangible results. If you don’t narrow the focus, you risk causing yourself unnecessary stress and anxiety, which deters you from wanting to do marketing in the first place.

In short, when plans are an ill fit for an individual, they cause undo stress. This stress leads to procrastination, which results in an ineffective marketing and business development plan and effort. This is why it is so critical that business development professionals make sure the strategies they help develop match the skills and personalities of the professionals they advise.

To help you avoid spinning your wheels to little effect, I have identified a couple of personality traits that have a significant impact on marketing and business development strategies. When reading this, think of the professionals at your firm, or yourself if you are one of these professionals, and question whether you might be trying to fit a square peg into a round hole.

The Master Networker

Are you this guy? You know the one: the colleague who seems to be able to work the room and be the master of small talk naturally (or maybe I should say unnaturally). This is the master networker. When I speak with professionals about networking, I think the first vision they have is one of this person. Truth be known, most believe this person to be intrusive and overbearing, and we have a fear of coming across the same way if we were to insert ourselves into social and networking situations.

The reality is you don’t have to be this person. There are numerous and [better ways to network](#). However, if you are painfully uncomfortable with social situations, and that impedes you more than propels you in making introductions, then do not include networking in your plan. It’s not that you are incapable of forming relationships. To the



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contrary, you're probably excellent in one-on-one interactions. [Effective networking](#) can certainly be learned with practice; however, for some, it causes counterproductive anxiety. Instead, focus on other tactics to integrate into your business development plan, since there are many other ways to go about building your book of business.

The Alternative

Instead of trying to be the Master Networker, free your calendar of after-hours events and cocktail socials, and focus on your current clients and relationships as sources for new introductions and potential clients. To do this, take inventory of your current relationships. From there, cull a list of people who would be ideal to speak with about your business development goals. For instance, seek people who also provide professional services and who rely on referrals and word of mouth just as you do. Also, consider the strength of your relationships when determining who makes your list. You must have a strong relationship that includes confidence and trust in each other.

Once you have your list, create an outreach plan for each person, and schedule meetings with them. Remember not only to receive but to plan to give as well. For instance, before your meeting, review your network, and determine who would be a good connection to share. When you meet, brainstorm about how you can help each other, and be sure to describe your "ideal client" to each other so introductions that result are more likely to be fruitful. Continue to learn about their business so you can confidently refer your contacts to them.

The Glossophobic

Every one of my intake interviews with professional service providers seeking [business development coaching](#) includes a discussion about what they *don't* want to do. This is their opportunity to remove the tactics they dread from the toolbox, as well as one they haven't had success with in their past marketing efforts.

From my experience, one of the most-dreaded tactics is public speaking. Yet, most every professional I consult with includes this tactic in their plan.

It's been said that 75% of people say they would rather die than give a speech. Jerry Seinfeld once said, "In other words, at a funeral, the average person would rather be in the casket than giving the eulogy." If you have glossophobia – the clinical name for this fear – or some form of it, why continue to put yourself through the agony of public speaking?

The Alternative

Instead, aim to create more opportunities where you provide trainings and consultations to your clients, association groups and professional peers. We all enjoy teaching and helping each other, and oddly enough, when we are teaching or training, it doesn't *feel* like public speaking.

Still, there are those who are most comfortable and confident being totally behind the scenes. These are the "worker bees" and writers, and they are just as important to business development by serving as subject matter experts and thought leaders. For

these professionals, there is a sweet spot between their proficiencies, experiences and credibility and their potential clients' concerns, opportunities and challenges.

If you are one of these behind-the-scenes professionals, you can establish yourself as a subject matter expert within this sweet spot by studying, researching and writing (e.g., blogging, articles, white papers, etc.) about a particular topic. Also, gain hands-on experience in your area of interest by taking on new matters, even if it involves doing **pro bono work**. Once you've established yourself as a subject matter expert, consider working with a marketer or publicist to develop and launch a **thought leadership campaign to build your reputation** in that role.

Find that Perfect Fit

Whatever business development plan you decide on, please do yourself a favor and remove the tactics that do not fit your personality, strengths and experiences. In fact, design your plan to target and obtain the exact type of work you like best and excel in. Seek the types of clients you relate to and desire to help. Do this and marketing will not seem like a chore that you'd rather put off.

For questions and discussions about creating a plan that is the perfect match for you, contact **Glennie Green** at ggreen@jaffepr.com.