

# **Your Business Development Checklist For Success**

**By David C. Miller FSA, MAAA**

Are you ready to capitalize on promoting your consulting practice? Is everything in place for you to attract and convert more clients than you can handle (a great problem to have)? Do you have a systematic approach for marketing and sales that will bring clients to you? The following 10 questions provide a checklist to see if you're ready:

## **1. Do you have a clearly defined destination?**

It's not much fun to do a lot of work growing your practice only to realize that you're not happy where you've ended up. Develop a crystal clear vision and purpose for your business. For example, how many clients do you want? How much revenue do you want or need this year? What types of clients and assignments are ideal for your practice? Your goals and strategies will flow much easier from a place of clarity.

## **2. Do you know who your ideal prospect is and what solution you're offering?**

What is the profile of your ideal prospect? What problems do they have that would make them want your services? What are the solutions you can give them that exactly meets their needs? What types of prospects would you really enjoy working with? Getting clear on what you're selling and who you're selling to will make it easier for you to focus on **qualified** prospects and make it **easier for prospects to find you!**

## **3. Can you clearly establish and communicate what sets you apart?**

Get clear on what makes you different from others who do what you do. Do you have a unique approach, process or model that you utilize? Maybe you're a specialist in a particular niche. Your track record or client list may be what sets you apart. You must answer the question "Why should I hire you versus someone else?" even if your prospect doesn't explicitly ask it.

## **4. Do you have a marketing message that gets attention and interest?**

When someone asks you "What do you do?" do you answer in a way that identifies the problems you solve or the solutions you provide?

Do you engage the listener in an interactive dialogue where they want to know more rather than spouting off a rehearsed commercial?

**5. Do you have a way to keep in touch and further qualify prospects?**

Do you have a way to keep in front of your prospects on a regular basis? So much of success in business development depends on timing. Treat marketing as a **process rather than an event**. Stay visible to the prospect and continue giving them information to help them get comfortable and excited with the idea of working with you. Then when they have a need, you'll be top of mind.

A great tool is a newsletter or e-zine where you can provide valuable information. Further qualify your prospects by offering a free report. Those who request it are most likely worth following up with first.

**6. Do you have a follow-up strategy that invites them to set up an appointment?**

It's been said that "the gold is in the follow up." If you're not systematically following up with prospects, you're missing out on massive business growth. You can invite the prospect to explore working with you by phone, mail, e-mail, e-zine, etc.

**7. Do you have a method of structuring a conversation that simultaneously builds rapport and enables you to thoroughly understand their needs?**

Once the prospect is in front of you, do you have an approach to understand their needs BEFORE you present your solution? A prospect won't buy from you unless they trust you. How can they trust you if you haven't taken the time to fully understand their challenges and explored with them a desired result?

**8. Does your approach include giving them an offer they can't refuse?**

Do you give the prospect a compelling offer that motivates them to take action? I've seen countless brochures and websites that leave this part out. Along with the promise of great results, do you offer a free demo / consultation or a guarantee to reverse the risk? Think about how you can make your invitation completely irresistible!

**9. Are you providing such great service that referrals naturally flow your way?**

Are you providing extraordinary value to your clients so that they want to refer you? Do you consistently deliver great results?

**10. Do you have a winning mindset, leaving success no place to hide?**

Do you have the tenacity, persistence and wherewithal to execute your business development plan? If you do, you realize that business development takes an investment of time, energy and money. You're willing to make that investment and stay the course in the good times and the bad.

So how did you do? Are there items on the checklist that are missing from your marketing? Are there other items which need to be upgraded? A little improvement in each of these areas will significantly enhance your business development results.

*David C. Miller FSA, MAAA is a Professional Business Coach who works with consultants and sales professionals who are struggling to attract enough clients. He conducts seminars and one-on-one coaching in business development, influence, leadership and career enhancement. He can be reached at [dave@translifecoach.com](mailto:dave@translifecoach.com) or 215-968-2483 or for tips, tools and strategies about how to grow your business, go to [www.BusinessGrowthNow.com](http://www.BusinessGrowthNow.com).*