David McCombs, Eugene Goryunov, Dina Blikshteyn, Elizabeth Elliott, Mira Park, Author Bloomberg Law Article ‘Understanding Law Firm Resources’

By David L. McCombs, Dina Blikshteyn | August 24, 2021

Success in the practice of law is gauged by the strength of client relationships and quality of service, but lawyers are not alone in this effort. Teams of talented professionals in a variety of disciplines are there to help maximize efficiencies and outcomes, and a key to success is learning, preferably early on, how to best utilize a firm's business development, marketing and media, and legal support resources.

Business Development

Business Development (BD) teams help lawyers build connections and identify new revenue streams to sustain and grow their practice over time. These jacks-of-all-trades can help lawyers build their own personal brand, which includes analyzing a lawyer's practice and identifying subject matter expertise or niche practice elements that distinguish that lawyer from others. BD teams may then convey these strengths to the industry as well as current and potential clients by helping lawyers prepare content for firm web bios and social media profiles, and by securing leadership positions on business groups, board appointments, and other networking entities.

However, designing a personal brand is only the beginning. Selling the brand to clients to generate business for the lawyer and the law firm is a more involved process. BD teams assist lawyers in understanding their clients’ businesses and needs, which can help lawyers see the big picture from their client's point of view, and better structure their advice and work for a client. For example, there may be no need to conduct a scorched earth discovery fight when a client is simply seeking to gain leverage to secure a reasonable and swift business solution to a dispute. Understanding the big picture also helps prepare more relevant and targeted pitches for new work, and may help identify new opportunities for cross-selling other law firm practice areas.

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