

The proper care and feeding of clients

Why?

Clients are the lifeblood of any business, good clients are worth their weight in gold

They have the best potential for repeat business and a source of referrals

Demonstrates you are customer focused and delivering exceptional service

It's not who you know, but who knows you and will you come to mind when a need comes up?

What?

Look for ways to continually provide value and create opportunities to get to know them better

Raises your awareness about the company, builds trust and develops the relationship

Know what challenges they are facing, allows you to do them a favor

You may hear of another way to potentially serve them and improve their business

You might get a chance to solve a problem or make a referral, by being an "army of one"

Who?

Put together a list of every person and company you have done work for in the last 10 years

Broaden your influence at each account – know who your economic buyer is. Key influencer?

A good contact? Who will provide introductions to other segments of the business?

Establish and follow a regular contact plan: determine the type and frequency that is appropriate for your relationship and business opportunity

Evaluate how you can upgrade your client list by dropping the bottom 10% every year or two to make room for better clients; profitable, easy to work with, enjoyable and not sensitive to fees.

How?

Think in terms of constantly moving each of your business relationships forward: Turn an acquaintance into a suspect, convert suspects into prospects, turn prospects into clients and make clients your advocates

Find reasons to stay in touch them, even asking them for help! Follow your prompting, mention "I was thinking about you" ask what's new in their world? Send an article, a hand written card, send a book, and provide industry news. Invite to breakfast, lunch, dinner, a drink or a special event.

Where?

Consider what other forms (*retainer or project fee*) or sources of revenue might be available in the future that you do not provide now? Many professional service providers are brought into new kinds of work and revenue by their clients. What have yours mentioned in the past?

Try to tying your clients in with your various membership organizations such as ACG, FEI, NACD, DPC, DAC, your country club or offer to go to events that your client attends, like a fundraiser.