
Expert News

The Practice Building Newsletter for Expert Consultants February 2005

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MARKETING BRIEF

Stop Talking - Get More Clients

If you are not accustomed to promoting your services in personal exchanges, you can err in either of two directions – being too reticent or being obnoxious. Anyone reaching over the tray of strawberries for the chocolate dip at a buffet would become annoyed with a person at his side attempting to “sell” him on his professional acumen. At business gatherings such as Continuing Legal Education (CLE) classes you can be more overt, as networking is expected. In social settings discretion is required.

The alternate mistake to being overly aggressive is to hesitate to approach possible contacts. Shyness can even appear to be self-centeredness. When you walk into a gathering, either look for a person who looks friendly and open, or adopt a charitable attitude and approach someone who seems to be excluded from the group or a bit “under the weather” and attempt to make him feel more comfortable. The key idea is, “Don’t think about yourself; think about the other person.”

This applies to the manner in which you converse as well. A friend and former employer of mine, Art Slaton, is considered a great conversationalist. At meetings and parties he rarely volunteers information about himself. Instead, he communicates with relaxed but direct eye contact, and gentle but probing questions, which suggests he genuinely wants to get to know the other person. Also, I doubt he ever feels that someone is looking for an exit, and the other person always remembers him.

Be Interested, Not Interesting

The key is to be interested, not interesting. Encourage the person to talk about himself, and he will find you interesting! As you engage in normal social banter, ask the attorney:

What type of law do you practice? What do you enjoy about that field? Where did you attend law school? What made you decide to go into law? What has been your most interesting or challenging case?

One topic of conversation that would put you on the interviewing side and also provide valuable data would be to ask the attorney about his experiences with expert witnesses. Has he had good experiences, a particularly interesting one, or a horror story (which everyone loves to relate)?

Get over the misconception that effective selling or promotion lies in "making a business presentation." In a social setting, particularly, make the contact and be clear about what you do, but lighten up. Make your new acquaintance remember you as a friendly, interested person.

- Excerpted from *The Expert Witness Marketing Book* by Rosalie Hamilton. For more techniques of successful expert consultants, visit www.expertcommunications.com

QUOTE

"Inside every older person is a younger person -- wondering what happened."

- Cora Harvey Armstrong

TRAINING CENTER

Five Years - Can You Believe It? :)

February marks the five year anniversary of Expert Communications and we would like to invite you to share in our celebration. To show our appreciation to our consulting clients, product purchasers, conference attendees and newsletter subscribers, we are paying all shipping and handling charges for any products purchased from our website through the end of February. This offer applies to every resource you see in our online store:
<http://expertcommunications.com/Merchant2/merchant.mv>

Based on the best-sellers of 2004, you might find the following items especially helpful in the development of your practice:

Books - *The Expert Witness Marketing Book*
National Guide to Expert Witness Fees and Billing Procedures
Writing and Defending Your Expert Report

CDs - *Expert Report Writing: Effective and Defensible*
Expert Witness Website: Liability or Asset?

We value all of our readers and associates and have learned much from you in the past five years. Please continue to send us your questions, comments and feedback and let us know how we can best assist you in the development and expansion of your practice.

Thanks again for these first five fabulous years from the Expert Communications Team - Rosalie, Meredith, Lisa, Adrienne, Molly, Ron and Cindy.

EXPERT EXCERPT

What Do Attorneys Want?

When choosing an expert, whether for consulting, investigating or testifying, attorneys repeatedly mention four traits that determine which expert they select:

- Competence
- Credentials
- Communication skills
- Credibility

How do you rate in these four categories?

Competence: Are you still actively working in your field (not a full-time expert)? Are you up-to-date on the standard texts, controversies and trends in your field? Are you known and well-regarded by your peers?

Credentials: Do you have the requisite degrees and certifications expected of a leader in your field? Are your memberships and certifications current? Have you published an article or study in a well-respected publication? Have you taught a class, led a conference or made a presentation?

Communication skills: Can you write a well-organized and concise report? Do you speak clearly? Can you keep your cool when opposing counsel attacks you or your report? Can you explain complex matters in a manner understandable to triers of fact?

Credibility: Can you convey your expertise and knowledge of the subject matter in a confident but not arrogant style? Do you groom and dress professionally and appropriately when meeting with attorneys or appearing in court? Is your presentation style comfortable and believable?

Validate yourself for your strengths and work on those areas that could be improved. Be conscious of each characteristic when designing your marketing strategy. Then make the attorneys who need your services aware of your superior qualifications in these four areas and watch your practice grow.

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Expert Issues in the News

Copy and paste the following links into your browser to access the articles.

"Rare Suit Against Expert Witness Highlights Pitfall of Not Showing Up"
<http://www.law.com/jsp/tx/specials.jsp?p=pitfall>

"AMA Calls for Further Efforts to Ensure Honest Testimony"
<http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/14374.html>

SPEAKING SCHEDULE

Rosalie Hamilton, practice development strategist for expert consultants will be speaking at the following events:

February 15 - Appraisal Institute, Long Island Chapter Seminar, in Plainview, NY.

March 15 - Appraisal Institute, Metro/Minnesota Chapter Seminar, in Minneapolis, MN.

April 1 - Forensic Expert Witness Association/SEAK, Expert Witness Summit, in Newport Beach, CA.

April 28 - Appraisal Institute, Atlanta Area Chapter Seminar, in Atlanta, GA.

August 17 - Lunch & Learn Teleconference Class, LNC Resource.

September 24 - Forensic Expert Witness Association, Northern California Chapter, Marketing & Business Development Workshop, in San Francisco, CA.

LEGAL LEVITY

Is That a Question?

Attorney: When he went -- had you gone -- and had she -- if she wanted to and were able, for the time being excluding all the restraints on her not to go -- gone also -- would he have brought you -- meaning you and she -- with him to the station?

Opposing Counsel: Objection, Your Honor! That question ought to be taken out and shot!

BONUS TIP

Are Your Phone Calls Returned?

When you leave a message on voice mail or an answering machine, speak slowly and distinctly. Leave your call-back number even if it is familiar to the person, as he or she may check messages while away from the office. Repeat at least your number and possibly your name, as well as any easily misunderstood information.

EXPERT COMMUNICATIONS - EXPERT WITNESS MARKETING & TRAINING

Expert Communications provides the practice development strategies and professional assistance you need to expand your litigation consulting practice.

- Audit of Current Marketing Position and Image
- Customized Strategic Marketing Plan
- Marketing Program Implementation and Management
- CV and Fee Schedule Review and Bulletproofing
- Website Design or Update
- Directory Listing and Advertising Recommendations

- Editing and Ghostwriting
- Presentation and Publication Support
- Target Prospect Identification
- Networking Opportunities Identification and Training
- Design and Production of Printed Materials and Mail Pieces
- Training Seminars and One-on-One Communications Coaching
- Legal Marketing Liaison for Firm Business Development Directors

For more details about personalized help with legal business development, call us at 727-467-0700 or email meredith@expertcommunications.com

FEEDBACK

We issued a follow-up to last month's article about experts getting paid. The response to that email and regarding this issue has been so voluminous that we felt it is an issue that needs to be addressed further. We have compiled many of the comments we received regarding retainers, contracts and ensuring payment for expert services. If you would like a copy of this report please email meredith@expertcommunications.com with the phrase "Pay Discussion" in the subject line or body of the email.

FINE PRINT

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Find additional articles and resources for the expert consultant at:

<http://www.expertcommunications.com>

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