

## Techniques to stimulate business in your small law firm

- ❑ Present seminars - ideally, in your office - to small, informal groups on subjects of interest. For instance, a real estate seminar might be titled "Dealing With Commission Disputes" or "Update on Land and Environment Law". For small business clients, you might try "Legal Tips for Employers". The themes are endless. **Always** evaluate - use an evaluation or feedback form.
- ❑ Pursue opportunities to raise profile as an expert.
- ❑ Introduce yourself to other professionals in the area and explain your special skills and how these may benefit their clients: accountants, financial planners, bank and building society staff, medical practitioners, counsellors, etcetera.
- ❑ Offer presentations on general legal themes to local community groups: a few ideas include "Neighbours and the Law", "Know your Rights", "Ten Things Every Citizen Should Know", "The Police and the Law".
- ❑ Create close community identification on your letterhead and business cards - by incorporating a local slogan, image, or other characterisations.
- ❑ When a new lawyer or key support staff member joins your firm, send a letter of introduction to all established clients and referral sources.
- ❑ Reinforce your identification with the local community in your reception area and offices: frame copies of press clippings, awards, support certificates and relevant pictures. Current aerial photographs and historic photographs are always of special interest.
- ❑ Closing for lunch is rarely a good idea - use alternatives to covering lunchtimes like staggering staff breaks.
- ❑ Offer your services to the local secondary school for their mooting competition (when parents will be present).
- ❑ Offer to speak at local secondary school careers nights (again, when parents will be present).
- ❑ Try "out of the blue" phone calls to clients one to three months after matter completion to check how things are going.
- ❑ Visit business clients at their offices and facilities - you'll learn lots, and often come away with a new matter.
- ❑ Offer low-cost, fixed-fee "Legal Health Checks" to targeted prospective and established clients.
- ❑ If you send Christmas greeting cards, ensure that you personalise each with a handwritten salutation, message, and signature.

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- Implement routine end-of-file surveys for matters: customise questionnaires for key areas such as conveyancing, estate planning, family law, personal injuries.
- Do business with your clients: always give them an opportunity to supply or quote for business and important personal purchases.
- Provide information sheets on key areas to community legal centre, neighbourhood advice bureau, local council, and similar sources of possible referrals.
- Client Service Charter: develop, promulgate and promote a positive set of service standards on which your clients can rely.
- Send surveys to previous and current clients seeking assessment of satisfaction and identification of current and likely future needs, and requesting referrals.
- Encourage periodic (say three to five year) reviews of Wills in light of changing circumstances - mailshot a few clients each week or month.
- Join the local Chamber of Commerce or Retailers Association to network with local business people
- Pursue firm profile raising activities.
- Write a Problem or Question & Answer column in your local newspaper.
- Encourage e-mail links with clients.
- Offer an "initial consultation at no charge" service - and publicise it.
- Wallet Cards: Put useful information on one side - for instance "what to do if you're arrested" or "what to do if you're involved in a traffic accident", with firm contact details on other side.