



“Twelve Strategies for Becoming a Rainmaker”

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One of a series of papers featuring highlights from presentations made during a recent David Carrie LLC seminar “How to be a Rainmaker.” This paper summarizes key points addressed.

1. You have to want to be a rainmaker

- No one brings in millions of dollars of business by accident.
- Being a rainmaker requires initiating and nurturing relationships, developing skills, planning, and follow-through. All of this requires time and that’s usually in addition to your daily workload.

2. Get out there and talk to people

- Attend social and professional functions, meet with people who are relevant to your firm’s practice areas, reconnect with former colleagues who now work in government or in the private sector.
- Practice and develop your communication skills — communicators are made, not born. (Churchill constantly worked and reworked his material and delivery.)
- Be a good listener; ask questions; uncover people’s issues and concerns.

3. Set goals

- Set daily, weekly, even yearly goals. For example, promise that you’ll make at least three calls every day with current or potential clients, with colleagues and friends.
- Know how much business you bring in and decide how much you want to bring in next year.
- Make a wish list of clients and/or types of matters you want to be working on within the year.

4. Increase your exposure

- Writing, lecturing, and media appearances can heighten your exposure, reinforce your reputation, introduce you to new clients and colleagues, and remind current clients why they hired you.
- Writing needs to be surgical — it can be very labor-intensive so you need to choose your topics, intended audience, and publication carefully. It’s a waste of time to spend 10 hours writing an article on securities law if it doesn’t reach those who need to know about securities law developments.
- Lecturing at conferences and law schools also provides exposure, but again try to make sure the return on your investment of time and effort is adequate.
- Consider hiring a P.R. firm to help you get into the media spotlight — the more you are consulted as an expert, the more likely a reporter will contact you in the future for comment.

5. Become an expert but don’t get typecast

- Develop your practice and skills, but don’t get shoe-horned into such a tiny area of the law that potential clients will only think of you in a narrow capacity.



6. Invest in cross-marketing

- Think about introducing partners from other practice groups in your firm to your clients. Big corporations often use several different law firms for different needs e.g., litigation, corporate law, tax, intellectual property, etc. If you have clients at big corporations who use other law firms, pitch your colleagues to your clients.
- Use methods that benefit the clients/potential clients. For example, arrange in-house CLE seminars on specific topics and use these seminars to introduce new partners to your clients.

7. Be a connector

- Bring others together. If you know two or three people in various fields and you think they should get to know one another, invite everyone to meet for drinks after work. (Lunch dates are increasingly difficult, but meeting for drinks for half an hour or an hour is easier to arrange.)

8. Don't burn any bridges

- You never know when you'll see a former adversary/boss/underling again and in what context.

9. Do your homework

- Research people and companies before meetings — “Google” them; find out what their issues and concerns are; communicate how you can address those issues and concerns in a clear and compelling way.

10. Follow-up on everything

- Follow-up on phone calls you've made, on people you run into at social or professional events, on promises you've made to introduce someone to someone else.
- Following-up on all your efforts to build your network and develop relationships is probably the single most important part of being a rainmaker.
- Take the long view — rainmakers often invest years in cultivating relationships before there is a return; an unsuccessful pitch shouldn't be viewed as the end of a relationship; luck is when preparation meets opportunity.

11. Use the resources available to you

- Use your firm's marketing department: have reprints made of your articles; ask your marketing department to make sure your firm sponsors important conferences and/or gets you a speaking opportunity; work with the marketing department to plan CLE seminars for clients and potential clients and to plan social events, e.g., cocktail party for alumnae of the firm who now work elsewhere.

12. Spread the blessing

- Rainmakers should spread the work they bring in and the opportunities they create throughout the firm; open doors and cultivate rising talent.