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## HOW TO PREPARE TO GROW YOUR CLIENT BASE ©

Many law firms want to grow their client bases, and eventually their practices, without developing a strategic plan. You must be sure to continue to give each client outstanding service, not only to attract new clients but also to retain current clients. Retaining current clients is as important, if not more so, than attracting new ones. I have seen many firms whose client bases consisted of a plethora of “one hit wonders.” They represent a client once, do not satisfy the client in service or in results, and never see the client again and, worse yet, never obtain a referral.

Developing a strategic plan on how you will handle new business is as important as your marketing plan. Once your marketing plan starts yielding a return, you must be sure you are prepared to handle the business.

When client development and marketing strategies do come to fruition, and new business comes to the firm, you must consider the sustainability of the new business. Do not run out and add an attorney and additional staff to handle the influx of new business until it has been sustainable for six to twelve months. Wait until you really get that busy that you are stretched to the point at which you cannot provide good service to your clients without adding someone to the firm’s payroll.

Even then, before hiring a new full-time associate to whom you will have to pay a salary and benefits, try to find an independent contractor to help with the overflow from an influx of new work.

When you do make the decision that it is time to add new staff to handle the work, add what you need, as you need it. Hiring one attorney to start and another legal assistant makes more financial sense than hiring half dozen additional employees if there is not yet that much work.

If this is a new area of law to the firm, strongly consider hiring someone with experience in that area of law because even an associate and paralegal with similar experience will be very advantageous.

The new business must generate the revenues to cover the added expense of additional staff for the firm to continue to be profitable.

Because the management of the practice of law is a business, an uncomplicated business strategy aimed at expanding your client base and growing your firm will go a long way. Preparing for success will help you achieve it!

Register today for the *Lawyer to Law Firm* workshop where you’ll learn everything you need to know about starting your own small law firm and making it a success!