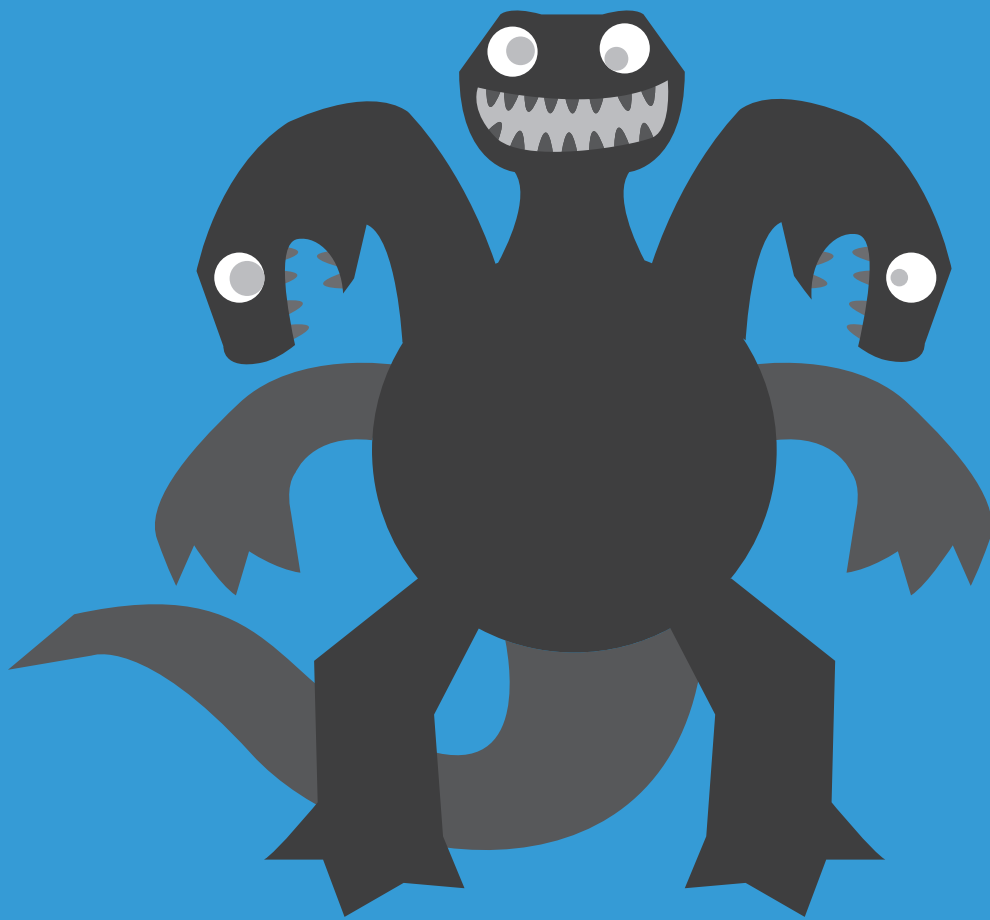


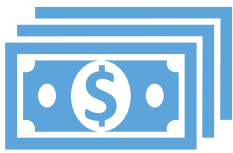
7 DEADLY MISTAKES That Prevent Law Practice **SUCCESS**



Law Firm Suites

IT FEELS JUST LIKE A LAW FIRM ...BUT HAPPIER.

Law Firm Suites' shared law office space
...helps attorneys solve the challenges of small firm practice.



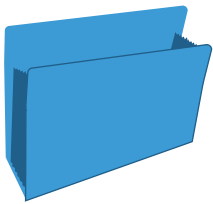
CLIENT REFERRALS

Receive client referrals for no other reason than showing up to work and being nice.



OFFICE RENTALS

Office options ideal for solos, small firm attorneys and out-of-town firms.



COMMUNITY

Lawyers are most successful when they work collaboratively with other successful attorneys.



VIRTUAL OFFICES

Premium commercial office services offered on a low-cost, a la carte basis.



BUILT-IN NETWORKING

Keep your network active even when you get too busy to leave the office.



CONFERENCE ROOMS

Conference rooms rentals in a facility that feels like a working law office, not a sterile hotel business center.

A note about your Ethical Responsibilities

This eBook provides advice on the best practices for success. It is for information purposes only and does not constitute legal counsel, guidance or an opinion about how to practice law within the bounds of the ethical rules governing your jurisdiction. Compliance therewith is solely your responsibility and adherence to those rules should take precedence over the points discussed in this eBook.



About the Author

In July 2002, I was laid off from my second associate job in six months. The fall-out of the first dot-com bubble combined with the September 11th disaster resulted in a job market unsuitable for any attorney except for bankruptcy practitioners, which I was not.

I decided to put my professional fate into my own hands and I began practicing as a solo corporate and securities lawyer. Only as a self-employed lawyer could I build the practice that I wanted to build, work with the clients I wanted to work with, and work when, where and how I wanted to work.

That was 11 years ago and it was the best decision I made in my career.

Being self-employed opened the door to professional and personal opportunities that I couldn't have imagined possible in July 2002. My journey hasn't been perfect, and yours won't be either.

Along the way, I learned important lessons about common mistakes that make it difficult for self employed attorneys to achieve their entrepreneurial dreams. My hope is that this eBook will save you a sleepless night or two.

If you've already made the transition to self-employment, you know this already. If you are considering the transition, please know: However things shake out, this experience will be one of the highlights of your career.



-Stephen Furnari
Founder, Law Firm Suites



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“WHAT HAPPENED?”

I worked 50+ hour weeks all month and my practice seems to be going nowhere ?”

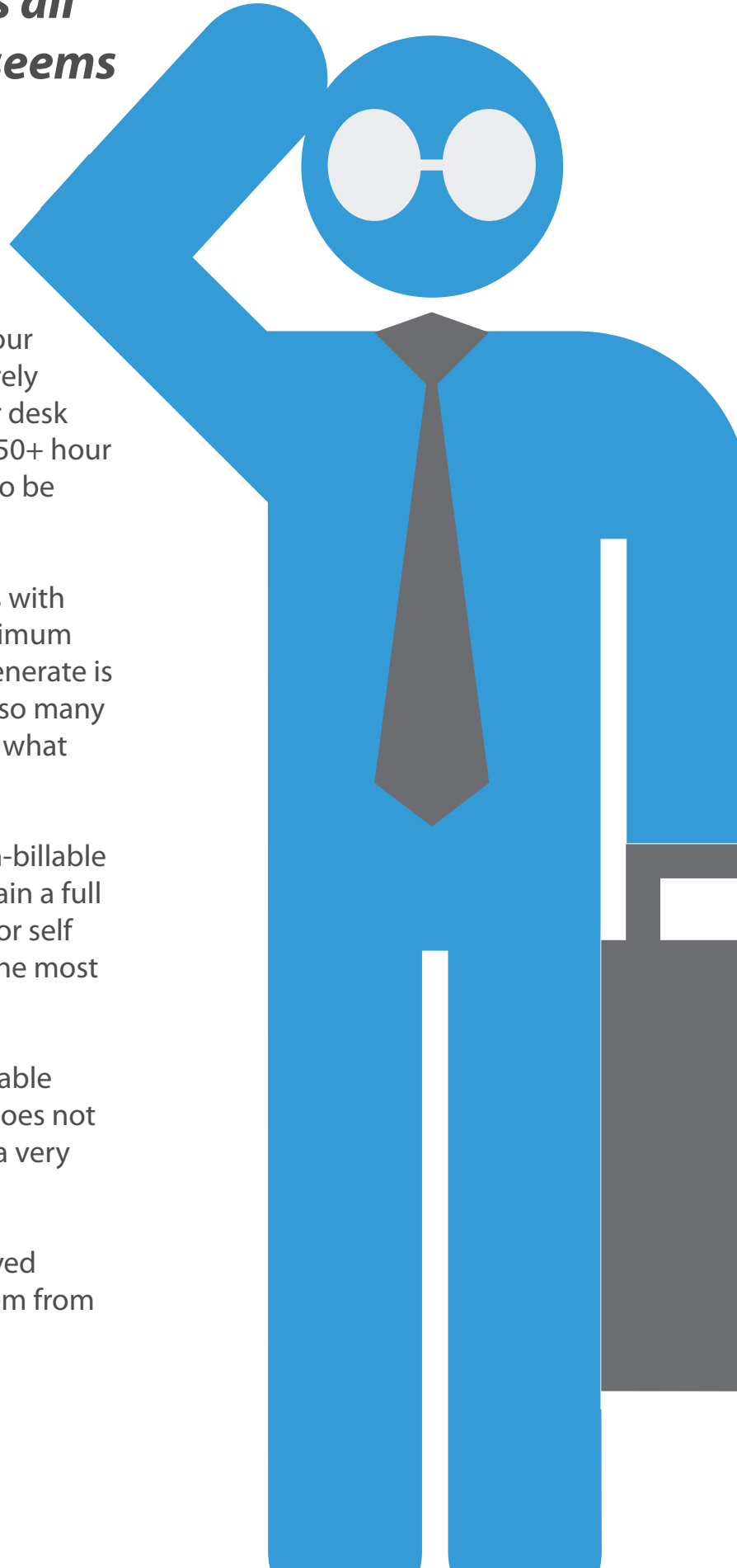
Have you ever looked at the balance in your operating account only to find there’s barely enough to cover the stack of bills on your desk and wonder: “What happened? I worked 50+ hour weeks all month and my practice seems to be going nowhere”?

For all lawyers, except litigation attorneys with high value contingency matters, the maximum amount of revenue you can personally generate is a mathematical certainty. There are only so many hours in a day to bill and there’s a limit to what your clients are willing to pay per hour.

Factor in the considerable amount of non-billable marketing time that’s necessary to maintain a full pipeline of cases and it becomes critical for self employed attorneys to use their time in the most efficient and strategic ways possible.

The good news is that, at our average billable rate, the typical self-employed attorney does not need to bill many hours in a year to earn a very substantial living.

Following are seven mistakes self-employed lawyers frequently make that prevent them from reaching their full income potential.



Mistake No. 1

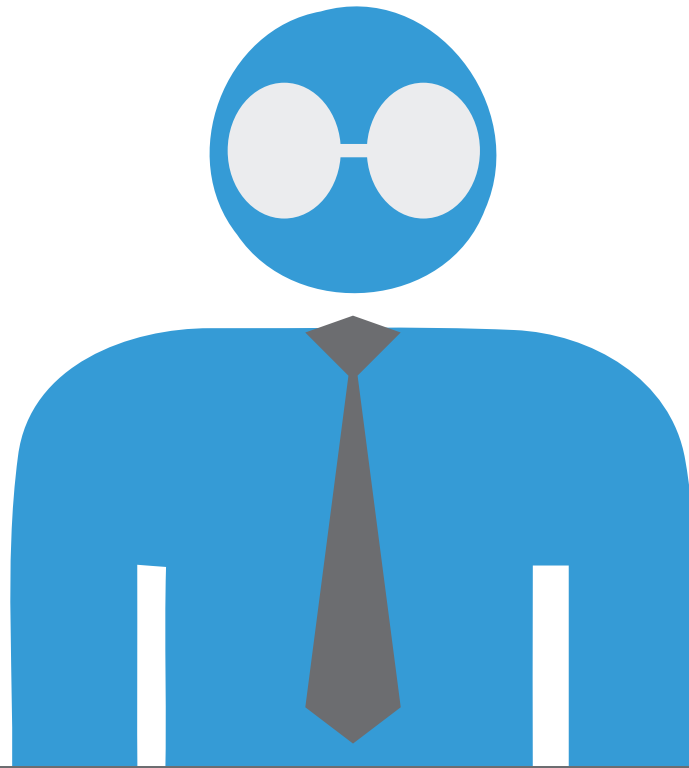


WASTING TIME ON BUSY WORK THAT CAN BE DELEGATED OR OUTSOURCED

Lawyers who start practices are often amazed at how much administrative work is involved in running a practice, especially if their last job was at a firm where these tasks were handled for them. It can be downright intimidating.

Practices require billing systems, accounting systems, case management systems, malpractice insurance, worker's comp insurance, general liability insurance, health insurance, website maintenance, email maintenance, IT maintenance, search engine optimization, phones, faxes, brokers, bankers and printers. That's just a partial list.

The temptation is to try to do everything on your own to save money, especially if you're starting a practice on a shoe-string budget.



How we lie to ourselves by doing busy work

Let's be honest. If business is slow, how much time do we devote to simple tasks like admin work because we want to feel busy? Feeling busy is our security blanket when we encounter a shortfall in billable hours. But feeling busy rarely increase the balance of our operating accounts. This is a common trap that lawyers fall into, particularly when a practice first gets started, when a big case ends or a significant deal closes. You know the feeling. First you're relieved to have some free time, but then you realize that the phone isn't ringing with new work. You occupy your time with busy work to mitigate the panic that creeps into your head. Every self-employed lawyer has been there.

If instead you are prepared to proactively invest down time building marketing systems or networking, you can break the feast-or-famine revenue cycle many of us experience. Your practice will certainly grow faster and your revenues will be more consistent.

THE BENEFIT OF BEING A SLAVE TO THE CLOCK

We often view the billable hour as the curse of our profession. We're slaves to the clock.

But despite all its faults, one benefit of our profession's business model is that there is no mistaking the value of our

time. **WASTE JUST 15%**

OF YOUR TIME dealing with delegable administrative tasks and you will lose 24 hours a month.

For the majority of us who are billing north of \$250/hour, that's at least \$6,000/month you're losing.

At those rates, there's a compelling argument for not doing anything other than billing clients or "pounding the pavement" to find paying clients.



DON'T BE A CONTROL FREAK



Delegating won't (likely) get you disbarred. The reality is, other than tasks that can get you disbarred if mistakes are made (like managing your trust account), there is no administrative task in your practice that can't be delegated to someone else who can do it cheaper and faster than you.

For some lawyers with a strong book of business (\$250,000 or more a year), there are vendors like the professionals at **NexFirm** who can run the entire "back office" of your firm for around \$2,000/month.

You may wince at this level of monthly spending, but if you look at the numbers, it's significantly less than the expense of a poorly skilled administrative assistant. If you recoup just 10 billable hours a month by offloading billing and bank account reconciliation alone, the return on investment for most lawyers is more than 100%.

For lawyers starting a private practice, a \$2,000 monthly admin retainer may not be an option. Nevertheless, you can start offloading admin work in chunks as your practice can sustain the expense.

“How do I start offloading admin work?”



START WITH BOOKKEEPING

Quickbooks (or its numerical cousins) will suck the life out of you. Dozens of hours of a month will be wasted entering expense receipts, recording invoices, balancing bank accounts and paying vendors. A quality bookkeeper can be retained for between \$25 and \$50/hour. Most bookkeepers prefer to work remotely, so you can take advantage of lower rates in different parts of the country, or even out of the country.

For a \$350 monthly investment—less than two billable hours for most attorneys—you can recoup 10 or more hours of billable time per month. **For a lawyer billing at \$300/hour, you can potentially bill an extra \$2,650 a month.**

For a \$350 MONTHLY investment—less than two billable hours for most attorneys—you can recoup 10 or more hours of billable time per month.



Get a Virtual Assistant

A virtual assistant, or VA, is a professional administrative assistant who works from outside your office.

They usually work for multiple professionals at a time on a part-time basis. Just get them an email address for your firm domain and remote access to your network, and they are at your disposal same as any other administrative assistant.

Have your VA manage your contacts and mailing lists, upload copy into your firm newsletter and send it out, schedule and confirm appointments, type and mail prospecting letters, post blog articles, do internet research, deal with vendors or any other task that you would give to a capable in-house administrative assistant.

Virtual assistants can be hired for between \$25 and \$65/hour depending on their skill and experience level, less if you hire someone from outside the country. Don't know where to start, check out this [BLOG ARTICLE](#).

Virtual assistants can be hired for between \$25 and \$65/hour

Hire a Part-Time Student Law Clerk.

The Secret
to Hiring an
Awesome
Student Law
Clerk

[CLICK HERE](#)



Despite the bad press American law schools get for churning out a never-ending supply of graduates who will never all be absorbed by the profession, the smart practitioner will use this labor glut to his or her advantage. Student law clerks are willing to work on the cheap and will do just about anything. The best thing of all is when you can train clerks to do billable work, turning them from an expense into a small profit center.

Assign your clerk all mundane legal research that can't be billed to clients. Have them research and write articles for your blog or newsletter. Teach them how to do some of the repetitive tasks in your practice that you hate doing.

Also get your law clerk involved in the administrative tasks of running a practice. These are skills that are just as valuable as lawyering skills. You'll be doing them a big favor. If they want to practice after graduation, hanging a shingle may be their only career option and having the skills to manage a practice will give them a leg up on their peers.

Here's a little secret, when you hire a law clerk it will force you to be more organized. You'll need work for the clerk to do so you're not paying for them to surf their personal Facebook page. With your enhanced efficiency, you will likely see a significant boost in revenues.

NO CLEAR MARKETING STRATEGY

In the previous section we admitted to ourselves that, sometimes when business is slow, we have a tendency to occupy ourselves with mindless admin work to make ourselves feel busy. However, if you have a clear marketing strategy, that downtime could be filled with more productive marketing work. In fact, with a good plan, you may actually learn look forward to times when your practice is slow.

Often, the lawyers who fall into the "busy-work trap" are the ones with no defined plan. When down-time comes, they don't know how to effectively use their time for marketing. It can be paralyzing. Invest some time and develop a marketing plan. When you find yourself with extra time, you can go back to the plan for additional marketing activities.

"With a marketing plan, you won't find yourself 'spinning your wheels' when you have downtime. You'll know exactly how to make the best use of your time."

Mistake No. 2



A marketing plan for a small firm practice should not be complicated, and creating one is not difficult. A simple plan should HAVE

SEVEN (7) ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1.

Your revenue goal for the year and metrics on how to achieve it.

Once you determine your revenue goal, you can reverse engineer what you will need to do to achieve it.

Follow this exercise:

- | | | |
|----|---|----------|
| A. | Your annual revenue goal: | \$ _____ |
| B. | Your billable rate/hour: | \$ _____ |
| C. | Compute billed hours/year (A/B): | \$ _____ |
| D. | Compute billed hours/week (C/48*) | \$ _____ |
| E. | Repeat revenue from current clients: | \$ _____ |
| F. | Revenue from new clients required (A-F): | \$ _____ |
| G. | Your average client matter amount: | \$ _____ |
| H. | Compute number of new clients required (F/G) | \$ _____ |
| I. | Average number of meetings needed to get a new client: | \$ _____ |
| J. | Compute number of meetings needed to meet revenue goal (HxI). | \$ _____ |

*Assumes four weeks of vacation per year.

2.

What services do you offer and what makes you better than the competition?

Get clear about the services you offer and what makes you the authority on these services. This forms the basis of all of your marketing communication. Marketers call this your unique selling proposition, or USP.

Who are you providing these services for?

Carefully define your target client. What are their fears? What are their challenges? How do your services resolve those fears or challenges? To the extent that you can educate your client about ways to solve their problems, you provide them a considerable amount of value. This increases the likelihood that you will get hired over the competition.

3.

4.

How will you get in front of your potential clients?

Think about where your clients hang out, or what kinds of other professionals are regularly in touch with prospective clients. Formulate a plan to be in these places and/or in front of these referral sources on a regular basis.



5.

What strategies will you use to stay in front of potential clients and how often will you do it?

Marketing is not an event, but about frequent and consistent contact with prospective clients. In his book *The Ultimate Sales Machine*, sales expert Chet Holmes explains that, of the entire universe of your prospective clients, only a very small percentage is ready to buy now (less than 3%). A slightly larger percentage may be looking to change their current service providers (about 10%). This leaves 87% of your entire target market who are not currently buying.

Your task is to get in front of the entire universe of clients on a consistent enough basis so that those ready to buy will check you out, and those who buy down the road will take a look at you down the road.

There are a number of techniques that can be employed to reach prospective clients on a consistent basis. Chet Holmes recommends a marketing strategy based on client education. The goal is to educate your prospects about a problem universal to them all, where your service is part of the solution.

When it comes down to it, there are only seven possible ways to market a law practice. Experts recommend picking no more than two strategies at any given time, and not move on to a new strategy until you can systematize it to run on its own (see Mistake No. 4 below about automating marketing activities). Once you pick the strategy, schedule your tasks in your calendar and execute.



6.

Do you need to acquire additional skills or tools to execute your strategy?

You may not yet have the skills needed to carry out your marketing strategies. That's OK. Marketing is a learned skill, just like learning how to take a deposition, negotiate a lease or close a corporate finance transaction. The good news is that it's much easier to learn (and often more fun) than lawyering skills. Plus if you make a mistake, you don't have to submit a claim to your malpractice carrier!

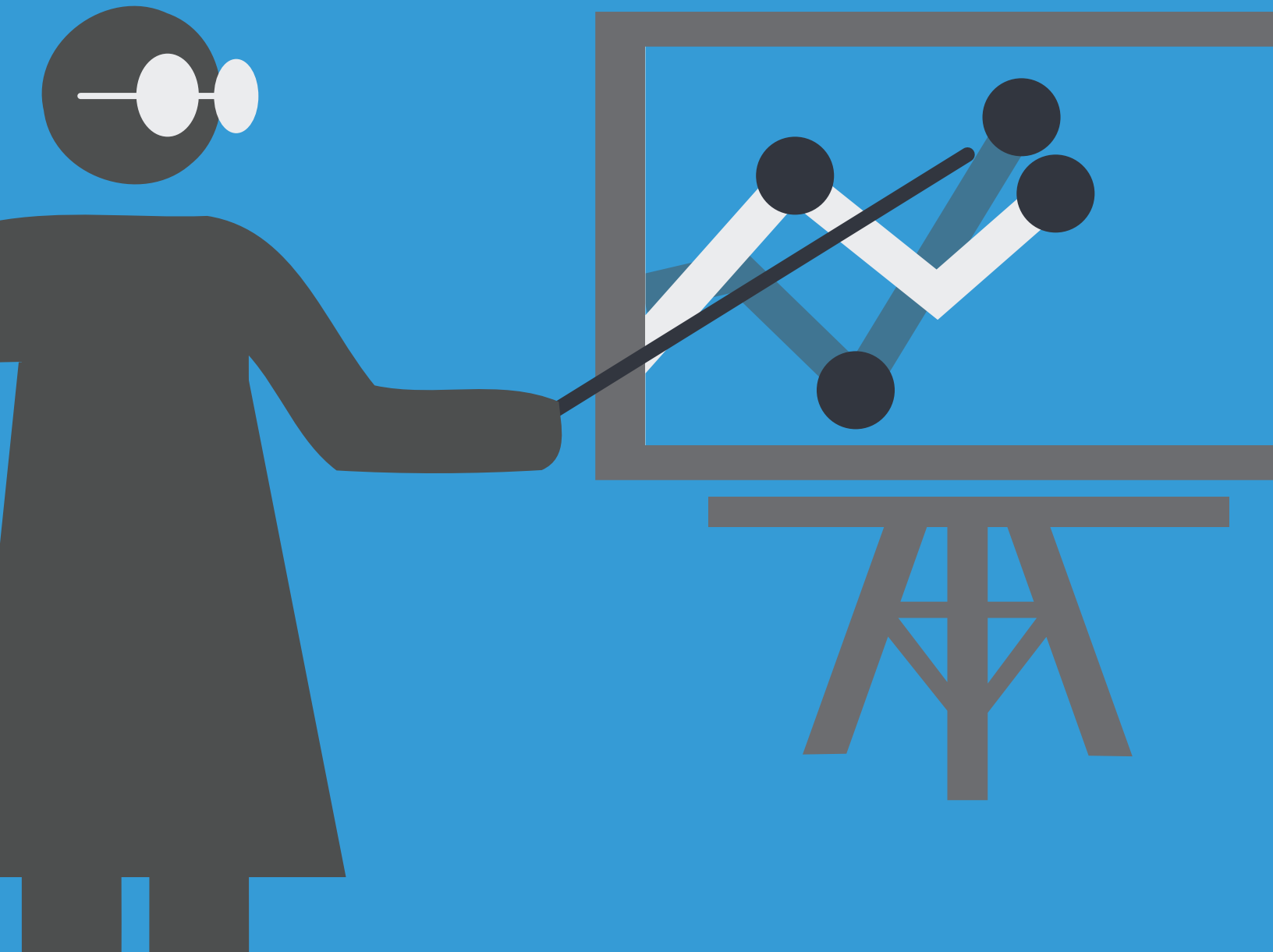
There are a number of resources available to improve your marketing skills, from workshops, to coaches to books and blogs. Here are some great resources:

- David Ward's [The Attorney Marketing Center](#) – blog and e-courses.
- Stephen Fairley's [Rainmaker Retreat](#) – workshop.
- Chet Holmes' [The Ultimate Sales Machine](#) – book.
- Blog [Legal Marketing Reader](#) – list of attorney marketing blogs.
- Allison Shields [LegalEase Consulting, Inc.](#) – coaching, blog.

How will you track results?

The last piece of your plan is a strategy to track the results of your efforts. What you focus on expands. Monitor your monthly numbers to see if you are on track to achieve your goals. If not, look carefully about why you are off and make an adjustment for the next month.

7.



Mistake No. 3

NOT NARROWING YOUR PRACTICE FOCUS

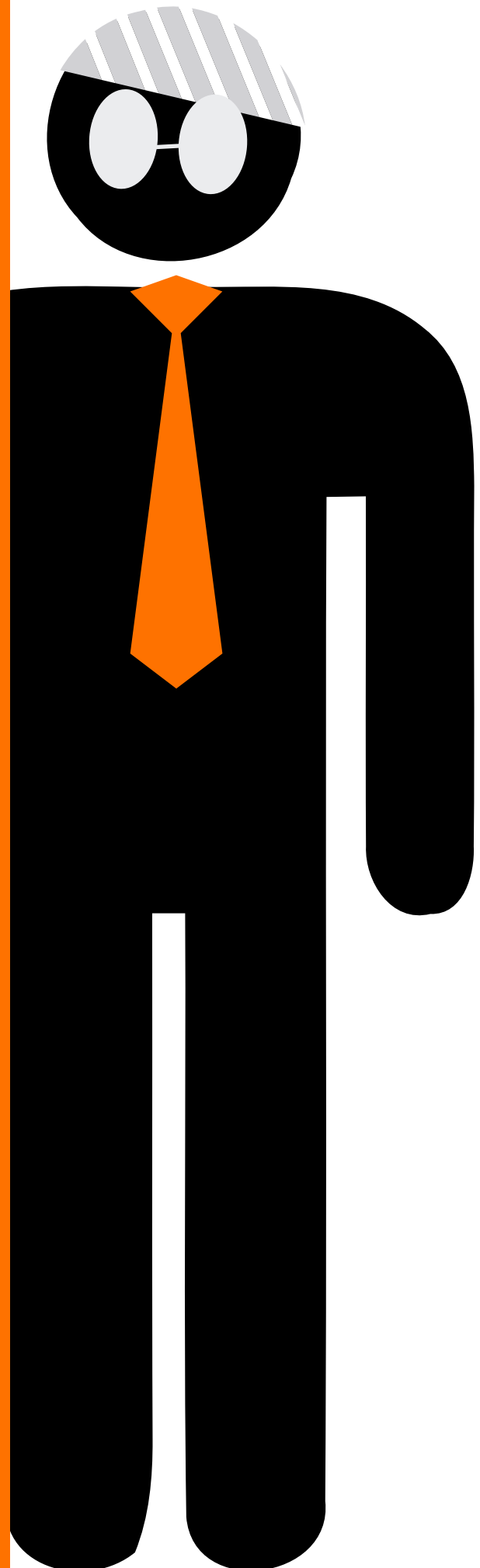
These days, if you're a restaurateur in New York City, it's not enough to be just an "Italian" restaurant. To make it in Manhattan, your menu must be Northern Italian, specifically, focusing on Piedmont region freshwater fish and eel dishes. That level of specialty goes for lawyers too.



A personal injury lawyer for Albanian construction workers with catastrophic brain injuries.

The small firm attorney needs to pay careful attention not only to their area of legal expertise, for example, commercial litigation, bankruptcy or real estate, but also their “vertical market” focus. That is, who, specifically, are the clients you service. The more narrow the focus, the better.

It's no longer enough to be an employment lawyer who focuses on defense work. You now need to be an employment lawyer who focuses on defense work for staffing industry firms in Northern New Jersey. Or be a corporate attorney who focuses on corporate finance deals for food manufacturers in the Bronx. Or be a divorce attorney focusing on male clients working exclusively for derivatives trading houses in Manhattan. You get the idea.



Going narrow and deep gets you more “bang” for your marketing buck.



Concentrating on a small niche of clients may at first seem risky. If you are the employment lawyer who focuses on defense work, can you competently handle cases for not only staffing firms, but software firms, and manufacturing firms and consulting firms? Of course. The problem is, as a small firm attorney with limited time and financial resources to put behind marketing, how can you effectively market in multiple industries or to multiple groups? You can't.

By focusing your marketing efforts in the narrowest way, it allows you to become more well-known in a target market faster and with less money. It will also allow you to quickly understand the unique challenges your clients face within a particular industry or group, making you more valuable to prospective clients in that group.

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Referral partners will remember you.



Plus, as you network with other professionals, it will be easier for them to remember what you do if your “elevator pitch” is narrowly focused. Other professionals have limited bandwidth when it comes to remembering what you do. It’s easier for them to remember that you are the guy (or gal) who practices asylum immigration cases for Nigerian clients as opposed to the lawyer who merely does immigration and family law.



Focused marketing doesn't mean turning down cases

If a case lands on your doorstep that is in your area of legal expertise but is not in your marketing niche, do you reject it? Of course not. What we are emphasizing here is where your limited time and cash gets allocated in terms of marketing. If a case falls in your lap that you can handle, when the retainer check clears, you do the work.

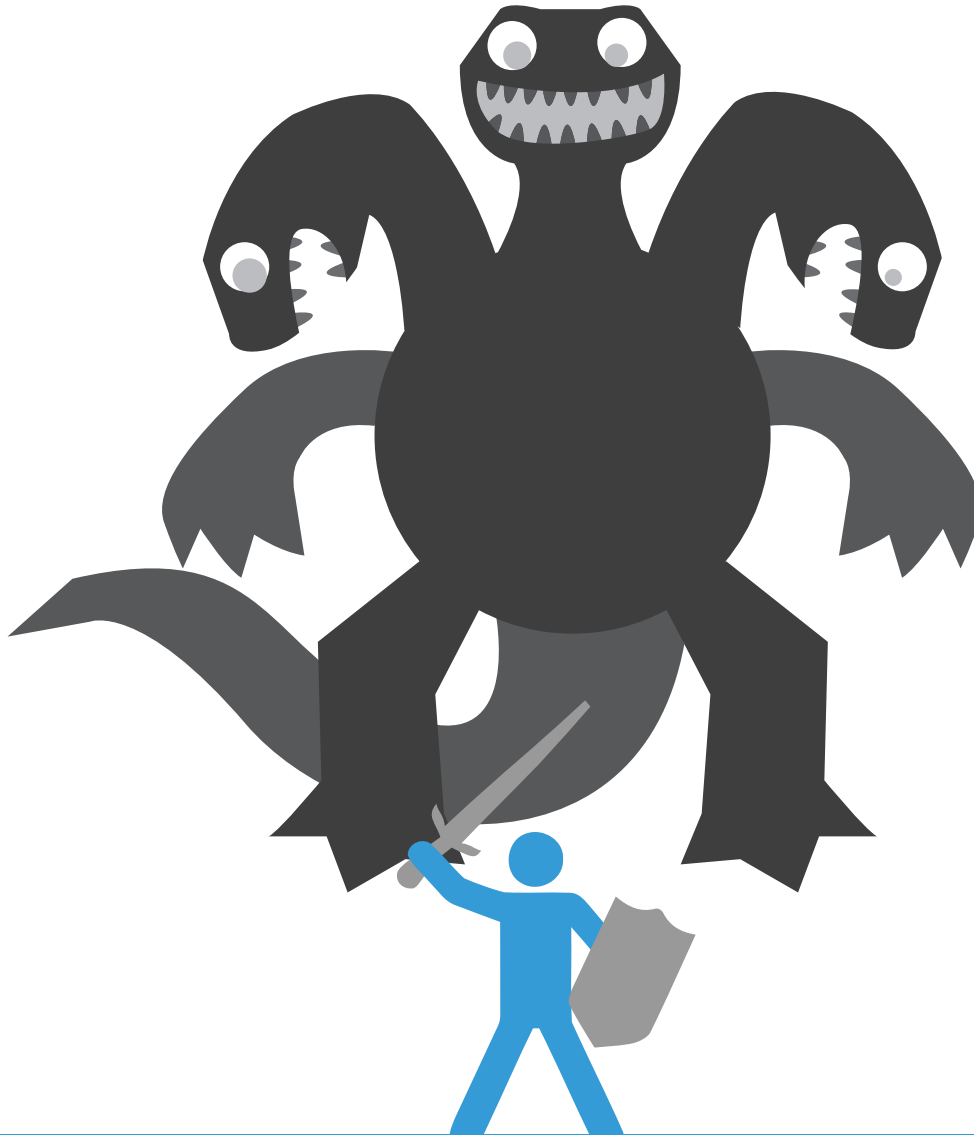
Mistake No. 4

Failing to Automate Marketing

The reality of small firm practice is you can go from very little business to completely overwhelmed with work in a very short period of time. For many practices, this can happen by landing one good case or deal.



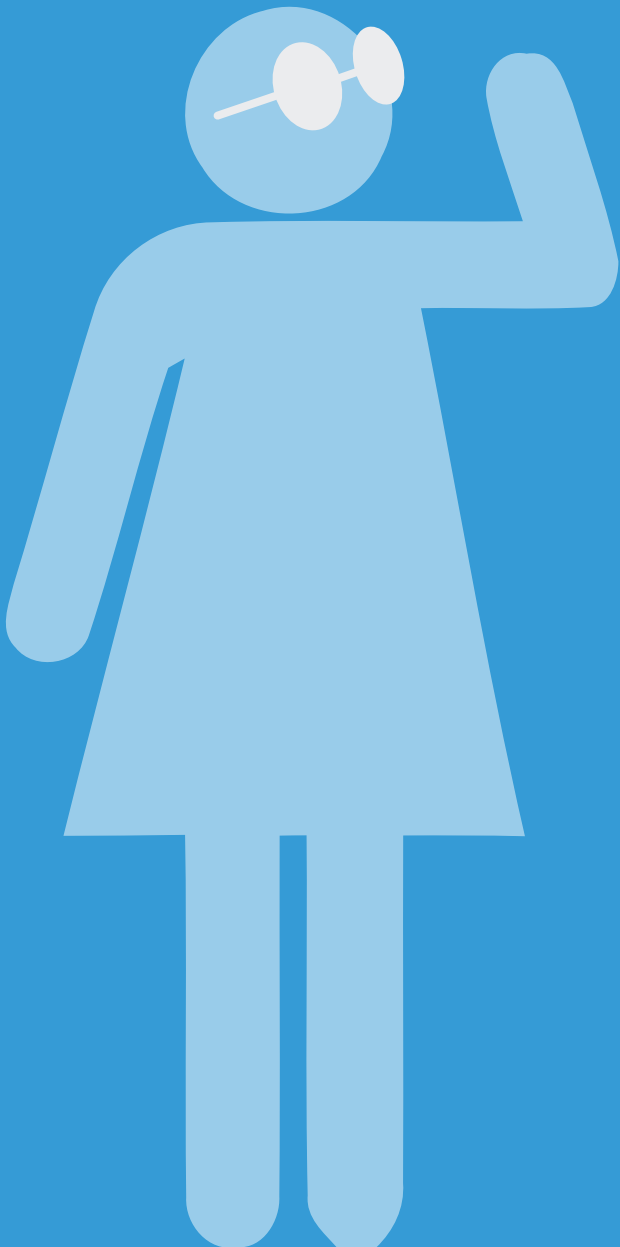
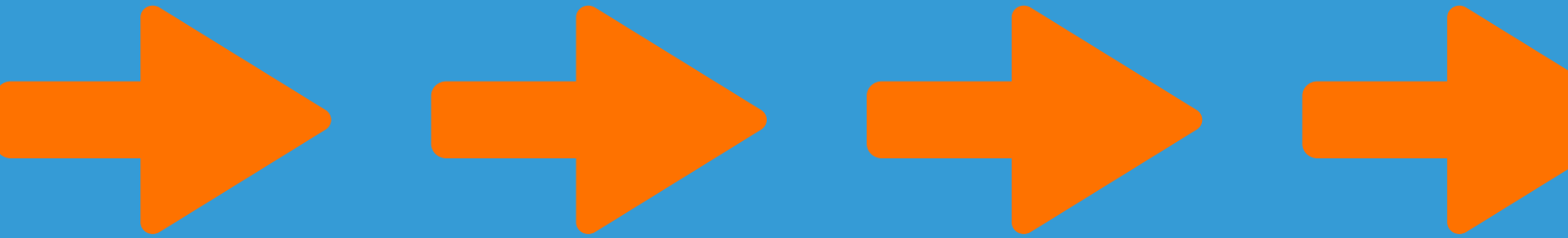
BATTLING THE THREE-HEADED MONSTER OF SMALL FIRM PRACTICE.



For the small firm practitioner, there is a constant battle with the Three-Headed Monster of small firm practice: servicing clients, marketing and firm admin. If a few months go by without engaging in any meaningful marketing activities because you've been too busy, you may find yourself with a dry pipeline when the big matter you've been working on closes or settles. It could take months to refill the pipeline with viable prospective clients, and you may find yourself in a precarious financial situation by that time.

We've all heard it before; the time to market is when you are most busy with legal work. We know this in our heads to be true, but after you've worked three 80 hour weeks in a row prepping for trial, going to a networking event at the Bar is the last thing you want to do.

Marketing success is about frequency and consistency



The most successful attorneys are the ones who get their marketing message in front of prospective clients frequently and consistently. However, this does not necessarily mean that the lawyer has to personally be the messenger.

By setting up marketing systems that can be executed automatically, for example by leveraging technology or admin staff, the attorney's marketing message continues to reach prospective clients even when the attorney is too busy to do it on his or her own.

1.

Turn your office into an automatic referral network.

One example is to set up a wide network of referral partners who are looking for cases for you, even when you're too busy to do it yourself. There are a number of ways to do this.

An easy way is to set up your referral network right in your office. Pick an office location for your practice similar to what is offered at Law Firm Suites - where you share space with attorneys in complementary practice areas who can refer business to you, and to whom you can refer business that you won't service yourself.

The only time consuming part of building a referral network is maintaining it, which is merely as simple as keeping in touch. If your best referral partners are steps away from your office, staying in touch is as simple as showing up to work and being nice.

Plus, when you're busy with legal work, chances are that the opportunity to refer cases out to other lawyers increases. Keep your referral partners in mind as you hear of cases that come up that are not in your practice area. Remember, when it comes to referrals, you have to give before you receive.

Download Referral Technique
that we teach to our clients

[**CLICK HERE**](#)

Utilize blogs to automatically attract customers.

A blog is a beautiful marketing tool for the small firm practitioner. It's easy to set up, and even easier maintain. If you can handle a Gmail account, you've got the skills to be a blogger.

In its simplest form, with a blog you publish short "articles" about your practice area on the Internet. Take every question you've ever been asked by a prospective client and write one blog article about each question. Write the question exactly how your client asks it ("How can I divorce my two-timing bastard of a husband?"), and write the answer using language your client will understand. Simple, plain English writing is best here. Think small town newspaper, not The Harvard Law Review.

You can write articles when you have free time, or dictate questions and answers for an assistant to write and post. Write several articles at a time and have an assistant publish them throughout the course of the month.

When prospective clients search the Internet for answers to their legal problems, your articles will show up in searches automatically. The shelf-life for articles can be months, if not years.

2.

"If you can handle a Gmail account, you've got the skills to be a blogger."



3.

Shake the “money tree” with a monthly newsletter.

There are few marketing techniques as effective as a monthly newsletter when it comes to staying in front of old clients who can send you repeat business or reminding referral sources that you are still out there. Each newsletter email blast is like a brisk shake of the money tree.

It’s easy to overthink a newsletter. Lawyers get hung up on picking the best article topic, obsessing about how long it needs to be, finding the perfect design and writing the most ideal copy.

The reality is, the ideal result you want from your newsletter blast is where an old client sees your name in their inbox, is reminded about that nagging legal issue they’ve been meaning to get in touch with you about, and they pick up the phone (or better yet, hit the reply button on your email). In all likelihood, they won’t even read the contents of the newsletter. That’s OK. A newsletter is merely a consistent reminder to the people who send you business that you are still out there.

Since you are going to be a fervent blogger, the easiest way to get a newsletter out every month is to re-package blog articles. Your newsletter will merely consist of three or four blog headlines with a digest and a hyperlink back to the full articles in your blog.

It takes no more than 30 minutes to set up and mail a newsletter on any email utility (like Constant Contact or Mail Chimp), and it is a task your virtual assistant should be doing for you.



WEAK FOLLOW-UP WITH LEADS AND REFERRAL SOURCES

Take any sales training course and you will learn four or five core principles that apply to any industry. The most important of these is “the eight contact rule.”

Any time you try to land a client, expect that it can take as many as eight (8) contacts with that person from the time they become aware that you exist until they retain your firm (or decide not to). Sometimes your prospective client is ready to buy immediately and it may only take one or two contacts. But if you go into every initial consult with the understanding that it may take seven more contacts before a person buys, it’s actually kind of liberating.

Mistake No. 5



Share this eBook





When it comes to follow-up, your competition is lazy too.

Many lawyers lose money because they give up on prospective clients after one or two touches. However, the great news is that your competition is likely doing the same thing, which creates a lot of opportunity to land more clients than your competition - just be more persistent than your peers.



Landing Clients is like catching subway trains.



Think of landing clients like catching subway trains. If every time you take the train you walk briskly to the subway platform with your fully stocked Metrocard in hand before you get to the turnstiles, over time, you will catch more trains and be on time for more appointments. Apply this same discipline to keeping in touch with prospective client leads and, over time you, will land more business than the competition.

Don't forget about your referral partners.

The same applies to potential referral sources. In your networking, you may meet a professional who, on paper, should be able to send you a lot of business. However, it's more likely that you'll see a case from a new potential referral source who you have taken the time to nurture. Expect to make at least eight contacts with prospective referral partners before you see any new business from them. Referring a piece of business to them first helps a lot too.

To get a copy of the Excel Spreadsheet Law Firm Suites gives to our clients to help them manage their sales leads,

[CLICK HERE](#)

Use a tool to consistently manage your follow up.

Managing touches to prospective clients and referrals sources is something that needs to be a consistent part of every lawyer's practice. Time should be devoted no less than weekly to review leads and schedule follow up action items for each lead or referral partner.

Even if a prospective client retains someone else, keep them on your newsletter list. You'd be surprised how many times a client picks an attorney who ends up being a bad fit, and they come back to you down the road.

There are complex software packages designed to manage sales leads, including Salesforce, SugarCRM and ACT!. Although these are powerful software programs, they can take weeks to fully master. You must decide if it is necessary, or if it will become just another excuse to "feel busy". For most lawyers, a simple Excel spreadsheet is more than adequate.



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Mistake No. 6

Without leveraging the labor of others, the maximum amount you can earn as a lawyer is a mathematical certainty.

FAILING TO ANTICIPATE THE SMALL FIRM INCOME PLATEAU

Except for lawyers with contingency based litigation practices, for the lawyer who trades time for money, the maximum amount of money they will ever make on their own without leveraging the labor of other people is mathematical certainty.

For most self-employed lawyers, by the time they reach somewhere between **\$350,000 AND \$500,000 IN GROSS REVENUES**, they will have maxed out on how much gross revenue they can sustain. This is the small firm income plateau.



At this point, unless you start to manage your practice differently, you will begin to

LOSE THE BATTLE

with the
**THREE-HEADED
MONSTER**

(servicing clients, marketing and firm admin) and complete burn out won't be far off.

The downside of success.



It starts with not turning work around fast enough. Then it takes longer than it should to return calls or emails. Finally, there will be days where you just don't have the energy to show up. At that point, the freedom and fun of being self-employed may begin to feel like a noose around your neck.

Lawyers in this position who want to remain self-employed have two options: scale back and stay small, or leverage the labor of others.

The difficulty with leveraging labor is the expense. For the lawyer trapped in feast-or-famine economics, it's hard to commit to the steady payroll of a paralegal or associate. Whether your practice makes money or not, staffers will still need to be paid.



Leveraging labor is not about how, but when.

There are as many creative ways to bridge this gap as there are ambitious self-employed lawyers. Some of the solutions employed by lawyers at Law Firm Suites have included contract partners, of counsel relationships, per diem associates, paralegals, per diem paralegals and more.

How you start to apply leverage in your practice is less important than recognizing when you are about to reach the income plateau. Your goal is to start to put a plan in place to solve the problem before burn-out starts to set in.



Flexibility and persistence are the keys to success.

Keep in mind that whatever solution you employ to leverage labor, be committed to being flexible. The first solution may not work out for you. The first three may not work out for you. But know that as you start to leverage up, applying additional leverage gets easier.

Ask any lawyer who has built a firm of 25 lawyers or more and they'll tell you, getting from five lawyers to 25 is much easier than going from one lawyer to five.

NOT HAVING PASSION FOR WHAT YOU DO.

Don't be afraid to make a change

There are few things worse in life than working in a job or profession that you are not passionate about. This is especially true for attorneys.

Just stating the obvious - we work more hours than the average professional. The work is intellectually demanding and adversarial in nature, which in and of itself creates a lot of stress.

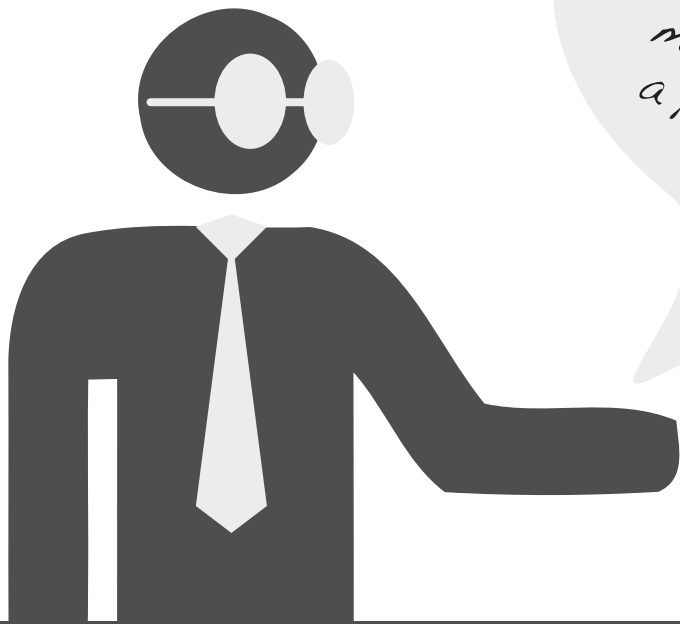
Then, factor in that the quality of our work is backed up by the risk of losing our personal assets, and you could easily deduce that there are far easier ways to earn a living.

In this context, you best be sure that you are passionate about your work if you aspire to be a well-adjusted, happy person.

Mistake No. 7



Personal fulfillment is why we are self-employed in the first place.



If your current practice area doesn't get you excited enough to jump out of bed in the morning, then you should find a practice area that does.

For many of us, personal fulfillment is a big reason why we chose the path of self-employment. We were unhappy being employed by someone else, so we left. Or, we were unhappy being employed by someone else, it was reflected in our work product, and we were asked to leave.

But choosing the path of self-employment is only the beginning.

Because you were a commercial litigator in your last job doesn't necessarily mean that you should be doing that as a self-employed lawyer. If being a commercial litigator doesn't get you excited to get out of bed in the morning and be in the office at 7:00AM, then you should find a practice area that does.

If the thought of speaking to your clients makes you cringe when the phone rings, then you need to represent different people.

If you are *uninspired*
by your practice,
you will
SELF-SABOTAGE
your way to
financial ruin.



In the end, you will have more success pursuing a practice as a self-employed lawyer in a practice area that you are passionate about than one that you do because you have the most skills. Pursue the latter and you will self-sabotage your career until you inevitably make a change or put yourself out of business.



Be courageous.

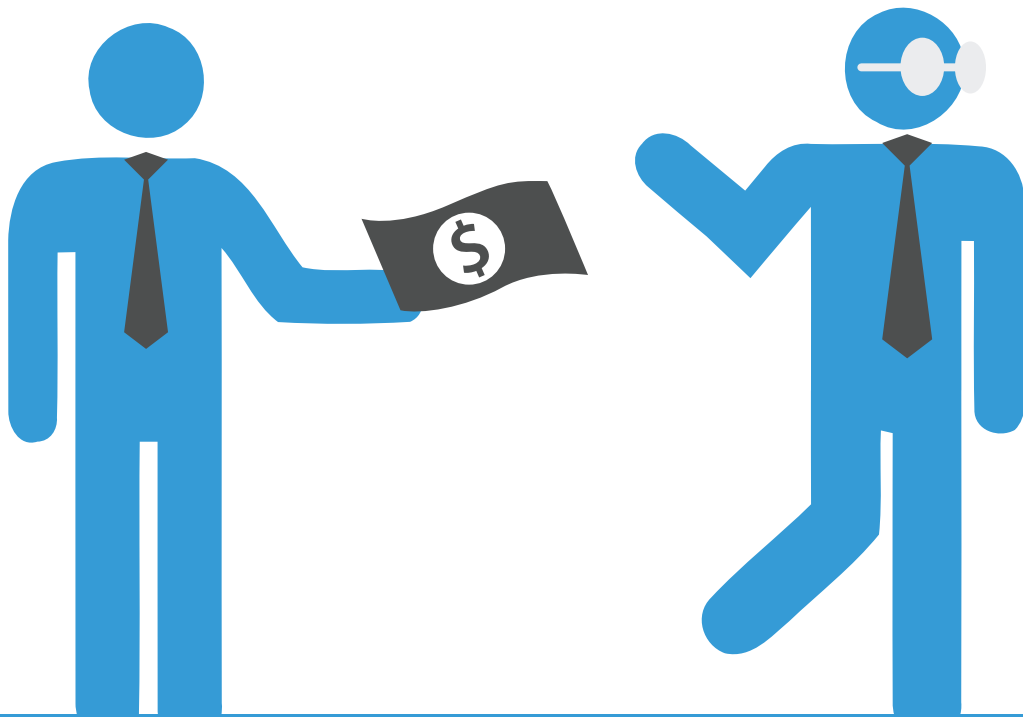
Finding your passion and then pursuing it requires self-reflection, honesty and courage. Sometimes it requires time. For some lawyers, they are so excited about working on their own that the practice area they start with doesn't matter (at first). For some it may take time outside the context of firm practice to explore different practice areas and clientele that they may enjoy working with in the long term.

The beauty of our profession is that it is a marathon, not a sprint. Your career may take many forms over several decades. As long as your brain still functions and your mouth still works, you can practice well into the winter of your life.

At Law Firm Suites, we've celebrated more than one 80th birthday with practicing attorneys. When asked whether they have considered retiring, the most common answer is: "My phone keeps ringing with new business, so I keep showing up."

For some, they may find that their passion may not be in the practice at all. That's OK too. The decision to be self-employed will open the door to opportunities that may not even be in the practice. Take comfort with the knowledge that will always have the practice to fall back on if you need it one day.

Making money is not a factor for you.



The true pursuit of discovering your professional passion should never be about money. However, in the real world, there are bills to pay.


As attorneys, we are fortunate in that, no matter the practice area we chose, the potential to earn a considerable income is always there. In this regard, there should be nothing holding you back from exploring a new practice area, other than your own fear of being happy.

Of course, that's the topic for a much different eBook!

THANK YOU FOR READING!



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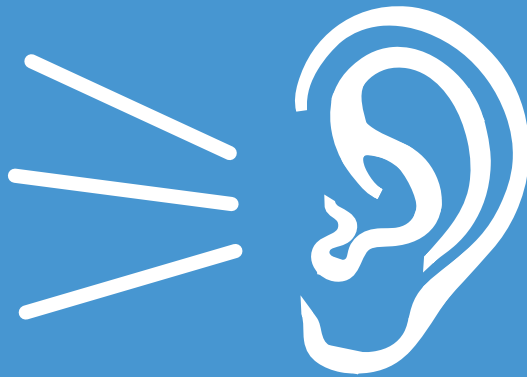
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