Day in the Life of a Law Firm Salesman

Monday, November 25, 2013

Who are these nutjobs (and I use that term affectionately!) who agree to sell legal services? There is no “typical” law firm salesperson, no “one-size-fits-all” description. Likewise, there is no “typical day” in legal sales. But recently, at a Lex Mundi North American Marketing and Business Development Roundtable, I attempted to describe what a sales day is like for those who are not yet familiar with what law firm salespeople do.

For openers, I am convinced that most professional services salespeople would prefer to have an orderly, predictable schedule, dealing with, as Stephen Covey would put it, “important, but not urgent, projects.”

But the reality is that reality is that salespeople must cope with the unexpected and unplanned on virtually a daily basis. In practice, interruptions are as—or even more—important than the scheduled activities because each interruption provides an opportunity to initiate, advance and monetize a relationship. But each interruption typically requires research and preparation. Simply put, it takes a lot of time to do this job right.

So what does a typical day look like for a legal salesperson? Let’s examine an actual day from my recent calendar. This was, admittedly, an extraordinary day, but it shows what is possible, and what sometimes happens.

- 4 a.m.—Wake up in a panic. Think about upcoming proposals, sales meetings and target lists.
- 7 a.m.—Turn on computer to check e-mail. Look at calendar for upcoming day. Address emergencies that have cropped up overnight. Shower.
- 8 a.m.—Morning networking event with FCEDA.
- 10 a.m.—Arrive at office and begin creating FCEDA follow-ups, responding to e-mails from clients, vendors, peers, contacts and co-workers.
- 10:01 a.m.—Interruption! A firm partner calls with question about new internet-commerce client. Make calls and do online research to find an answer.
- 10:31 a.m.—Resume routine work, including first conflicts checks of the day, plus MBWA, Merger Market, Manzama, perusing WMACCA e-newsletter for possible connections, and reviewing attendee list for NVTC event tonight.
- 11:30 a.m.—Depart for lunch with referral source AH&T Insurance.
- 1:30 p.m.—Phone call with in-house team to discuss RFP response to major North American bank. Fire off follow-up e-mail to lunch colleague while on the phone.
- 2:01 p.m.—Interruption! Phone call from attorney asking for advice for $200 million tech company pursuit.
- 2:30 p.m.—Cold calls - yes, cold calls, a welcome relief from the frenzy of the day - and client service e-mail.
- 2:45 p.m.—Gym. Stationary bike ride, but reading something work-related or using iPhone while exercising.
- 3:20 p.m.—Second conflicts check review of day.
- 3:46 p.m.—Starving. Scrounge for leftovers from lunch meeting in conference room. Talk to attorney who also is grazing in the kitchen about service issue at existing part-commercial/part not-for-profit client while building a snack plate.
- 3:55 p.m.—Interruption! Attorney in Atlanta asks which Womble Carlyle Charleston litigator he should refer to.
to grocery retailer for South Carolina case.

- 4:10 p.m.—Work on target lists, sales strategy, department budgets, etc.
- 5 p.m.—Plow through e-mails that have accumulated throughout day.
- 6 p.m.—Attend NVTC reception.
- 7 p.m.—Leave for home. Use hands-free cell to return phone calls.
- 8 p.m.—In recliner watching TV, but monitoring “the action” via iPhone. NVTC Reception follow-up e-mails.
- 11 p.m.—Final check of e-mail before bed.
- 4 a.m.—Wake up in a panic....

There is a huge trade-off between the frenzy of days like this, and the potential to calmly reflect and strategize. Both approaches have their merits. But for those with sales in their DNA, this is a great, though tiring, way to invest a career.

Copyright © 2019 Womble Bond Dickinson (US) LLP All Rights Reserved.

Source URL: https://www.natlawreview.com/article/day-life-law-firm-salesman