



*Being The Strategic Partner
Everybody Wants To Have
- in the Board Room and On The Project*

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Building Strategic Partnerships

- The world and industry are getting smaller; we need partners more than ever
- Clients are interested in trust, services, and a true working relationship (not internal politics)
- With competition getting more fierce, we need strategic pursuits that broaden our interests
- Partnerships must be win/win for both firms



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Great Teams Beat Great Egos

When is having a partner necessary?

- Seek a partnership when:
 - We truly understand our strengths and weaknesses in a geographic area or market segment
 - We don't have all the expertise or critical services necessary
 - Stretching into a new market, project type, or service
 - For construction firms, bonding capabilities come into play
 - We are unsure what the client thinks, feels and needs

Unless It's a Slam Dunk!



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What should we seek in a partner?

- What are the characteristics of their leadership team?
 - Do they seem genuine?
 - Are they team-oriented?
 - What level of cooperation do they portray?
 - What will they do when things “go south”?
- Does their firm culture match with yours?
 - Are they client-focused?
 - Are they interested in long-term partnerships with clients?
 - Do they support and care about their employees?



What should we seek in a partner?

- Are they contractually conducive?
 - What is their profit philosophy and can you both agree on it?
 - What is their willingness to compromise?
- What are their business practices?
 - What is their risk management profile?
 - What are their client pursuit requirements?

Can you develop a unique value proposition for the partnership?



Keys to Win/Win Partnerships

- Appreciate others' strengths, but stay confident in yours
 - Successful, relevant projects
 - Relationship with the client
 - Proximity/Capacity
 - Presentation skills
 - Ability to create a winner!
- Agree who manages the client engagement
- Have a written agreement in place



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Eliminate Uncertainty

Tips for Primes

- Give your consultants the respect they deserve
 - They are specialists
 - They likely have more insight in their profession than you do
 - If they are the right choice, they can help you win
- Confirm their relative experience
- Check references

Lead, Don't Dictate!



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Tips for Consultants

- Try not to “hook up” with everybody
- Highlight your strengths early
 - Relationship with the client
 - Relevant portfolio
 - References
- Bring insight to the team’s message

Don't Sit In The Corner!



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SUMMARY

- Know when a “piece of the pie” is better than none.
- Keep ego away from the focus on hand.
- Know what the client wants.
- Be flexible.
- Trust, but verify!

Go Win This Thing!



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So Tell Me...

*How would you define
a strong client relationship?*



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What I hear from clients...

- Good listener
- Technically sound
- Talented architect
- Good designer
- Very steady
- Good communicator
- Good PIC



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What I'd also like to hear from clients...

- Very passionate
- Inspiring/captivating
- Very creative/innovative
- Always seeking something new or better
- A real joy to work with
- A great leader!



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Let's get personal!

What are clients getting?

- Customer service
- Regular prospecting
- Sameness
- Confusion
- Status quo tasks
- Product focus



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vs what they really want!

- | | | |
|-----------------------|----|-----------------------|
| • Customer service | vs | Compelling experience |
| • Regular prospecting | vs | Reciprocal loyalty |
| • Sameness | vs | Differentiation |
| • Confusion | vs | Coordination |
| • Status quo tasks | vs | Innovative force |
| • Product focus | vs | Personal focus |



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Why not?

Fundamental Differentiators

- Though expected, these simple things can help you stand out:
 - Always being a professional
 - Returning your phone calls
 - Addressing issues in person/Following up consistently
 - Doing what you say you are going to do

*Clients are experts at knowing
if they feel valued.*



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Facts are Facts!

- Clients hire us because we:
 - Possess the appropriate expertise
 - Communicated a clear understanding of their needs
 - Gained a certain level of positive chemistry
- Clients continue to hire us because you:
 - Met or exceeded their needs
 - Understood, agreed on and managed expectations well
 - Earned their trust/Made them look good
 - Gained an open rapport



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These are undisputable!

How Can You Succeed?

- Listen to your clients!
 - Know if their needs are being met...constantly...ART!
 - Share your knowledge along the way...SCIENCE!
 - Adjust your approach to their behavioral pattern.
 - Focus on helping...NOT selling!
 - After project completion, make sure it's performing.
 - Never stop sharing the unique value of your people.
 - Get to know them!!!

*Your relationship with your clients
has the most impact on future
projects and your career!*



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Relationships That Matter

- Always try to be an informer!
 - Share latest trends/technology advancements
 - Share lessons learned/on-going experiences
 - Share events/seminars/articles information
 - Introduce them to new hires
 - Ask them to engage in case study presentation/white paper
 - Ask them how they're doing/how you can help!

Be their trusted advisor!



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After Any Project

- Identify the “client manager” to develop and prepare for future opportunities
 - Project Manager
 - Project Executive/Principal in Charge
 - Business Development Leader

It's gotta be somebody!!!



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You Must Know How They Feel

- Client Feedback Surveys/Performance Reviews
 - Must be done in person
 - Must be done by someone not involved in the project
 - Client must be comfortable with the purpose and tone
 - Administrator must engage without preconceived ideas
 - Administrator must clarify sentiments and push for balance

*Get genuine thoughts and
act on them!*



You Must Know How They Feel

- Client Feedback Surveys/Performance Reviews
 - How are we listening, communicating, responding, leading?
 - Where would you rank our firm vs others?
 - How would you distinguish us vs others?
 - In what areas can we improve?
 - Would you like to comment on any individuals?
 - How do you prefer to be communicated with?

What could be more valuable information?



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Being the Leader You Need To Be

- Always maintain your passion for success, your affinity for interpersonal communication and your commitment to helping others!
- Developing trust with clients, colleagues and peers
 - ***Clients – Enlighten, don't just entertain***
 - ***Colleagues – Encourage by helping them connect with clients better***
 - ***Peers – Engage those who are timid/new and connect others***
- Be at peace by living in the present – **make today matter!**

ENGAGE – INSPIRE – LEAD ON!



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Final Thoughts

- There will always be a place for creative people, personable people and strong leaders...especially for those who are all of the above!
- Ideas transform people...if you can share how they relate!
- You don't need a reason to call a client to offer support, insight or an invitation to anything!
- You don't need a title to be a leader!



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Questions?

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