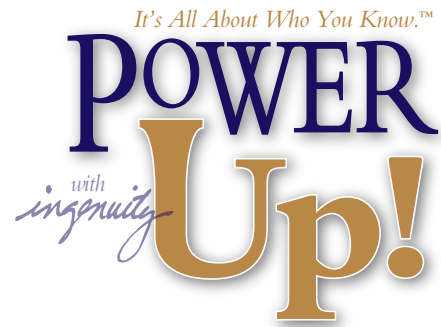


## Business Development Best Practices



In the professional service professions, business development is based on long-term relationships, not quick hits. Some of the best business development people we have seen:

**Never burn bridges.** They keep in touch with former co-workers and bosses. They leave a job with everyone wishing them well because they give plenty of notice and train in their replacements.

**Speak positively.** People who complain about their work all the time or their intense schedule rarely attract new clients. Talk about the amazing work your firm does and how great the people are. Keep complaints – and there are always complaints – to close friends.

**Stay in touch.** Even through the busy periods of life – marriages, new jobs, children, continuing education – natural business development people keep in touch. A quick email, an informal lunch, or a friendly call from the car is all that is needed to stay in touch with great people over the long term.

**Let others know what they are up to.** When they add credentials, take on a new project or move to a new position, they send out the information to their contacts and to the relevant press. They send in their news to alumni magazines or groups. They let others know where they are and what they are doing.

**Have simple systems.** Many of them choose a holiday card (we recommend an unusual holiday) to send to everyone they know. Some have an annual party at a certain time of year. Some go to conferences in their area regularly. They do a few things so that they can keep track of lots of contacts for a long time.

**Keep a prospect list.** It can be in a CRM system or on an envelope, but great business developers keep in front of their prospects in a systematic way.

**Discern who they need to know.** Smart business developers have criteria for the kinds of people who make good clients. Keeping track of the whole world is tough; keeping track of a select group is manageable.

**Discern who they like to know.** The long-term nature of professional service business development takes time. Choose your relationships not only on who you “need” to know, but on who you trust, like and want to do business with. These are much more productive over the long term.