



SALES LEADERSHIP: 7 LESSONS FROM DLA PIPER (US)

By Sue-Ella Prodonovich

In June 2013 Sue-Ella attended the Legal Sales & Service Organisation's Rain Dance Conference in Boston. The conference included a presentation from Bob Bratt, COO of global law firm DLA Piper's US operations which provided insight as to how the firm successfully revitalised its sales efforts. Here's Bob's seven ideas ...

SEVEN IDEAS FOR SALES EFFECTIVENESS

1. Institutionalise cross selling and focus on introductions from **known networks**.
2. Improve efficiency and ROI of marketing and sales team by reducing time spent on unqualified tenders / RFPs. To this end put clear bid 'gateways' in place to evaluate opportunity. Bob outlined DLA's the three gateways to clear before the firm made s significant investment in tendering.
 - Gate 1: Who called? What is the nature of relationship?; why was DLA invited?
 - Gate 2: Incumbent review / how entrenched?
 - Gate 3: Has the pricing analysis and strategy to win been articulated?
3. Invest in socialising the Sales role across the Partnership and provide training to lawyers / associates on BD foundation skills.
4. Install sales executives that 'partner' with lawyers throughout the sales process - from identifying the target to following through with the client after the first matter.

DLA hired their first sales executive in 2005. In June 2013 they had six sales specialist for 1,600 lawyers and are hiring more. Sales executives are all former lawyers with 5+ years professional service background and large personal 'rolodexes' of General Counsel and regional connections.

The firm has grown its marketing team by 30% in the past 24 months (reductions have been made to other admin functions).
5. Centralise Proposal collateral and provide a firmwide toolkit for growing revenue. DLA Piper's toolkit has resources appropriate to various levels of experience.
6. Conduct Business pipeline meetings every month.
7. Ensure the marketing team supports sales. DLA Piper's marketing and communications efforts are targeted to 'known networks' keeping DLA Piper top of mind by using though leadership, events and market knowledge. **75%+ of sales occur after the 3rd touch.**

WANT MORE?

If you'd like help with building the skills and smarts of your team email [Sue-Ella](mailto:sueella@prodonovich.com) or [get in touch](#).



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Sue-Ella is the Principal of [Prodonovich Advisory](#), a business dedicated to helping professional services firms sharpen their business development practices, and attract and retain good clients.

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