

Globalising your practice – opportunities and challenges

Working with “Big Law” (and all law firms)

Sunday 30 October - Miami

Nurturing law firm relationships

- Why bother? Important “indirect” providers of work (and other benefits)
- Promote your firm to the right firms not randomly
- Have a plan based on where “work” currently comes from/investment into your country
- Responsiveness; responsiveness; responsiveness;
- Regular conversations – Proactive and reactive
- Join a “network”? Exclusive v Non-Exclusive?
- Join the IBA!

Working with 'Big Law': ten tips for getting it right

1. Can you act?

Conflicts must be cleared immediately; you cannot embarrass the law firm.

2. Be clear from the outset on the following:

- scope
- fees (and who pays)

3. Responsiveness

- reply promptly no matter what
- agree timing for deliverables

Working with 'Big Law': ten tips for getting it right

4. **Create an open and effective dialogue – be a team!**
 - identify partner/associate contact points in both firms
 - provide and participate in regular updates
 - proactive not reactive
 - identify any issues/risks/road blocks early
 - factor in time zones

NB You may be dealing with a very junior person – be aware!

Working with 'Big Law': ten tips for getting it right

5. And the 'big law' firm should:

- treat local lawyers as equals and make sure they feel part of the team
- involve the local team throughout the transaction to ensure a joined up team for maximum client service benefits.

Prompt them if necessary!

6. Think about how you communicate

- pick up the phone and speak rather than sending a lengthy email
- use jargon free, direct language in all communications, meetings, calls and emails

Working with 'Big Law': ten tips for getting it right

7. Be understanding and sensitive to differences (as should 'big law')

- do not assume that everyone does things in the way you are used to
- there will be differences in legal systems and rules
- be alert to different business cultures and approaches
- time zones; try and accommodate

Prompt them if necessary!

Working with 'Big Law': ten tips for getting it right

8. Tracking and reporting

- timetables
- fees/budgeting updates
- update calls/emails

9. Look out for resourcing issues

- public holidays and annual leave
- resourcing constraints

Working with 'Big Law': ten tips for getting it right

10. Be clear and commercial

- ensure the advice the ultimate client receives is well presented with

consistency in materiality and relevance as well as style and format – ask about 'forms/style'

- think about goals and solutions not just the narrow questions

Provide advice not just answers

And after the job do some follow up and ask for feedback

And remember, not all 'Big Law' is the same!

Working with 'Big Law': Discussion points

We need to deliver seamless, high quality advice, cost effectively – how can we best achieve this for our clients?

What are the barriers to achieving this goal?

What should international law firms do differently?

Develop opportunities together

- Build trust and understanding – have regular calls for updates on what is going on in each other’s respective markets
- Introductions to colleagues in other areas builds a better knowledge of your firm
- Look out for opportunities in your market where you can work together with ‘Big Law’ and its clients
- Joint pitching
- Joint presentations/seminars to clients

Develop the relationship

- Secondments
- Know how 'exchange'
- General assistance – just ask
- Be careful what you refer to which firm - Do they want it?
 - Will it be reciprocated?

Thank You

stephenrevell@makingchange happen.com