



Below are “nuggets of wisdom” mined by TAGLaw members at the Dublin conference, as well as descriptions of some of the benefits gained from attending.

All work schedule programs (full or part time) are a reflection of values – firms must be comprised of people with compatible value

Ensure that the “other side” doesn’t distract you from negotiating the money issues by shifting the focus and emphasis to an ancillary issue

We need to consider terminating clients who are too difficult, demanding and/or constantly complaining about fees

Two-thirds of clients leave because they think we do not care – one factor showing importance of building client relation skills.

Midsized firms need to be known for being different in order to survive.

TAGLaw continues to expand its membership through increasing the value of the organization to members.

Openness to the customs of others and the relationship preferences of different clients

The many factors to be considered in attracting and keeping good clients and good lawyers

Not to be defeated by initial failure – Denis O’Brien

Invest in the relationship with your client – even (especially) when they are ‘down’ (Denis O’Brien)

Development of relationships and exchange of ideas with leading lawyers globally

Empathy, not sympathy, for clients

Discover and cater to respective strengths (hunters and farmers)

Business development as a core element of firm culture

Creating a relationship with your client is business development.

Marketing must become a part of the culture of a law firm.

Discussion of joint venture/joint representation in matter with another TAGLaw member.

EU restrictions and consequences on termination of sales agent – useful “take away” for international clients

One major way to develop business is to grow business with existing clients through cross-selling – which will require helping many of the “relationship managers” to learn how to do it and get them comfortable with “sharing” their clients with others in the firm.

You cannot get rid of a European sales agent without paying “compensation” except for serious negligence of the agent.

On a personal and business level, how warm hearted and beneficial a professional network can be if you attend frequently and get to know everyone (otherwise it won't work).

On a business level, how much you learn every conference from speeches and discussions about level and non-level issues, viewed at from different cultures and different jurisdictions.

In business divorces, it is better to negotiate than to expose your companies' secrets to the public (excellent and timely advice from Harvey Feuerstein).

Stay loyal to clients – they may become billionaires and take you along for the ride (profound from Denis O'Brien).

Five year strategic plans do not work, the market is in constant change (great advice from Peter Fleming).

Develop client trust by talking about personal aspects, not just business.

Clients value lawyers they trust.

Employees value flexible work environments.

Denis O'Brien talk re-emphasized for me what clients are like – and how they differ from attorneys in their willingness to take and accept risk.

Despite (or perhaps because of) the proliferation of technology, in person communication is more important than ever. All of us need to keep nurturing and feeding clients on a personal basis, not just by email.

The world is a shrinking place. This is the third conference I've attended and it seems our law practices have more and more in common. Practicing law in India is not very different from practicing it in the US.

In the UK, 1200 billable hours is considered full performance.

Importance of a measurement standard for Business Development efforts.

Contacts with the firm from India to whom I will refer a client pursuing a business venture

In a relationship with a client, it is important they know they may rely on you at the darkest moment.

The importance to nurture “soft skills” in lawyers to retain clients.

I learned to open up a client personal relationship in the first session. It opened my mind.

In the second session, I picked up a great line from a member: “If we are only a little better [than your other firm], don’t use us, but if we are much better...”

The debate provided real insights into alternative work styles. I have to open up in this area.

Introduction to Abu-Gazaleh Legal. I have immediate need for their services – and vice versa.

Statistics show most clients change firms because they feel the firm is not interested in them.

Do more for internal training of young lawyers.

Do more for intercultural understanding.

Do more for understanding of individual client’s needs

To go home and get our marketing department involved with our clients.

To instill in all of our attorneys the importance of empathy in their client communications.

It is a luxury to refuse to permit part time work. I’m convinced my firm doesn’t have such a luxury. We must remain flexible and resilient.

The battle will be fought over the new young lawyers.

You can’t keep a good man down (from Denis O’Brien) – insight is look after your clients, even if/especially if their business /venture fails.

Believe you can win business by “punching above your weight.” (LK Shields attribute).

Keep the sugar bowl on your side of the table and make millions.

Ideas discussed in the “less than full firm” panel debate will be useful in the debate going on in our firm.

Broad and extended networking opportunities are very good – keep the large open time between sessions.

I thought the business development session was very good – simple, direct, straight forward and applied to all firms/members.

I was able to compare efforts with other regional groups and see what has worked or not worked for them and apply to our regional sessions.

Use the concept of the “Door of Reconciliation” for St. Patrick’s Cathedral in Mediation.

Put more empathy on mentoring your young people in Business Development skills.

Use more entrepreneurial concepts in our Business Development approach.

Don’t confuse relationship building with the legal side of the practice of law. They don’t teach relationships in law school. Build commitments to long term by investing in the relationships over time.

The fundamentals of developing business are worldwide – what I heard about fundamentals in Europe are essentially the same as in the U.S.

Business ideas from one continent do not necessarily transfer to another. (I think Dublin needs a Texas BBQ Restaurant).

Added value tips from presentations and discussions will add value to client work.

I love Ed’s opening/welcome comments that his firm regularly “punches above our weight.” Given the size of TAGLaw firms (relative to other firm’s in their community) I suspect this phrase applied to most of our firms and I intend to use it!

I thought the emphasis in the first panel discussion about spending time learning the client’s business was insightful and I intend to spend more time in this area.

Clients judge their lawyers not with their competence but with their responsiveness/care for clients (Session 1: Psychology of Client Relations).

You make your worst decisions when you’re exhausted (debate).

Always issue your first report in draft for further amendments/change (expert testimony).

Clients rule!

You cannot make anyone a rainmaker, or an entrepreneur.

The potato famine is definitely over!

Made valuable new contact at Boodle to replace Chris Putt

Strengthened potentially valuable personal and professional relationships with many in my specialty group

Learned a lot about work/life balance issues and gained professional respect for the panelists after working with them.

Nuts and bolts of fantastic accounting.

Developing issues on part-time practice choices.

The importance to a firm that wants to be seen as credible in its own market is having easy access to a comprehensive international legal network.

From Denis O'Brien, that 50/50 joint ventures generally don't work because someone needs to be driving the bus – an important point to bear in mind when preparing JV documentation.

Given the technology available at a competitive cost, a law firm should never attempt to host its own virtual data room.

Other TAGLaw members are interested in our individual client experiences.

Client relationships managements combined with the ideas of Peter Fleming regarding different roles of law firm's partners.

It is wonderful in the long-term to invest time in getting to know clients as people, visiting them at their home or company, sharing news about their families and so on. Clients want to be loved like anyone else.

On the other hand (!), if a relationship with a client is not working, consider reassigning them internally to a junior colleague if the arguments are about fees; and ultimately don't be afraid to let them go.

It's easy to be busy, but make sure it's being busy doing the right things.

I would like to hire Dan Polsenberg to be the entertainment at my next Firm Retreat.

Bow ties only look good on some people and Bob Sattin looks good in a hat.