

# Planning your BD

## 10 tips for work-winning results



# 10 BD planning tips for work-winning results

*The more successful professionals periodically schedule in a 'time out' to step back and review their BD performance.*

*This is indeed time well spent as it helps them to take stock of the BD activities they've undertaken and the results they have achieved. It can prevent continuing on paths which bring only limited new work opportunities, or which prove to be increasingly frustrating and time-intensive.*

*In this guide we've collated some 'best practice' tips to help you to think about your BD approach for the months ahead. In doing so we've signposted areas which often lead to a stronger return from a small but regular BD investment. The intention is not for you to try to achieve all 10, but instead to cherry-pick those most relevant to your situation.*

*I hope you find the ideas and insights valuable 'food for thought'. There are more tips, insight and support on our website [www.winningbusiness.net](http://www.winningbusiness.net) or via The Results Consultancy team – tel. 020 7488 4419.*

*Wishing you success in your BD activities.*

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Managing Director

**For more tips, ideas and support for your BD efforts visit [www.winningbusiness.net](http://www.winningbusiness.net)**

**or see our daily tips on Twitter / [bdacademy](https://twitter.com/bdacademy)**

**or download our BD Tip of The Day app**

## BD Planning Tips

### 1. Allocate time

20% of your BD activity will often lead to 80% of your results. So when you are planning your approach be ruthless with how you prioritise and apportion your time. Reflect on those contacts you need to really focus on and support more actively. For those who command too much of your time for little return, consider delegating elements of their relationship management to others in your team or scaling back the attention you give them.

### 2. Focus your efforts

A warm referral is much more likely to lead to new business than a cold call; so become more comfortable asking for referrals amongst your contacts. Use LinkedIn to see which of your contacts are connected to the people you want to target. Can they broker an introduction for you or do you need to help them in some way first to enlist their willing support?

### 3. Enhance your reputation

Adding value to clients and contacts is a proven way to enhance your reputation and stimulate further work. The key is to deliver value that is important to that contact – and this means investing time to get to know them. Differentiate yourself and your approach by understanding their opportunities, markets and problems better than others.

### 4. Broaden your relationships

Broaden your contacts at a client organisation so your relationship doesn't rest on just one or a few individuals. Find out which senior people can influence whether your firm is used and get to know them. Build a reputation amongst those individuals for work undertaken to a high standard and delivered in the time frame and budget parameters. Strive to actively support their business and personal goals wherever you can. It strengthens the bond. Think about both deep and wide relationships.





### 5. Protect your clients

Your best clients are your competitors' target clients. Consider then your competitors and what would it take for them to win over one of your clients? Use this time to step back and reflect on any weak areas in your approach that need shoring up. Are you seen as a supplier or a trusted business partner by this client? To become the latter, familiarise yourself with your client's market and strategic issues and identify opportunities to support them now and in the long-term.

### 6. Encourage referrals from colleagues

Identify time-effective ways in which you can guide colleagues on how to build you into their client relationships. Which colleagues could you get together with to brainstorm how you can help each other's clients and share your contacts? Think about those in your firm who could refer more to you. Take the top 3 names from your list and meet with them to explore opportunities and possibilities. It will pay dividends. When you have done that find three more colleagues and do the same.

### 7. Improve your pitch success

Consider your pitch success-rate over the last six months. If you're disappointed with your win/loss ratio it might be time to revisit your bid/no bid evaluation criteria. What factors influenced your success and loss rate in recent pitches? Draw on client feedback to improve your approach and, perhaps, be more selective in which pitches you go for.

### 8. Become a Go-To professional

People always opt for those advisers who are easy or comfortable to work with and are particularly impressed by those who add real value through insights, ideas and new perspectives. Could you delegate more or organise your days differently to ensure that you have the time to add real value to your clients and contacts?

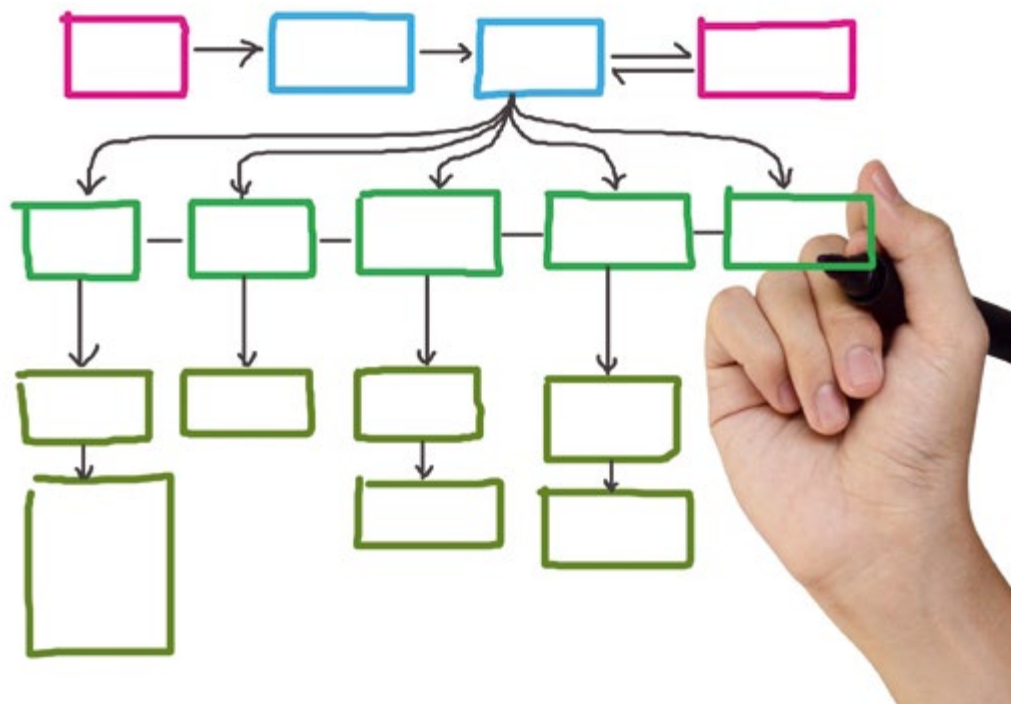
### 9. Expand your network

When did you last review your network? Has it got the potential to supply you with enough work in the future? If not, it's time to start making changes. Focus on contacts in organisations or sectors which genuinely interest you or point to your strengths and experience. What can you bring to such contacts that they will find particularly valuable? You also want to concentrate on those individuals where the 'chemistry' is right... don't try to push water uphill unless you have to. See our point about focusing your efforts (2) and encouraging your contacts to introduce you.

### 10. Diarise review points and keep to them

The chances are the next few months will bring the usual frantic activity and you may find it challenging to maintain a steady commitment to your BD plan. The best results are generated through a small but regular amount of BD activity. So set review points (say once every 3 weeks) where you review your progress and keep these dates ring-fenced in the diary. It will help you to maintain control over your BD and keep it on your to-do list.

We often overestimate what we can do in a short time but underestimate what can be done in the long term. Each day when you take the small business development actions that move you closer to winning the work that you want, it makes you better positioned than the day before. It takes effort (and it's not always apparent that you are making progress), but taking such daily consistent actions are the secret to success in producing the results you want.



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