Increase Referrals by Locating Attorneys in Adjacent Practice Areas

Russ Korins

Russ Korins Consulting LLC

rkorins@russkorinsconsulting.com

Lawyers often receive great client referrals from other attorneys. By locating and cultivating relationships with attorneys in practice areas adjacent to yours, you can multiply these referrals and attract quality clients.

An adjacent practice area is one that consistently precipitates a need for work in yours. Attorneys in these related practice areas are likely to have clients needing your services. For example, matrimonial lawyers often receive referrals from trusts and estates lawyers. This is not a coincidence: it happens because both kinds of attorneys are involved in a family's legal matters. Another example pairing is commercial real estate and corporate law. As a business grows, it needs attorneys to handle its business filings and transactions as well as its office space.

Every attorney can identify adjacent practice areas by answering some key questions. Have you noticed a pattern of referrals from attorneys in a specific area? Have you referred clients to anyone or worked on multiple deals with certain kinds of lawyers? Where do other lawyers in your practice area get their best referrals? The answers to these questions indicate those practice areas adjacent to yours, in which attorneys do work that could precipitate a need for your services.

Once you have identified these key attorneys, consider a number of ways to broaden your relationship with them. Think of trusted contacts or friends you know working in those areas. Call or meet with them and ask what kinds of matters they are working on—you might uncover a need for work in your area. Be sure to tell them about the work you do and the kinds of clients you represent. Keep these attorneys posted with regular and tailored contact and communication. As you attend events and workshops and meet other attorneys, pay particular attention to those in your adjacent areas, and make them a higher priority for relationship cultivation.

In summary, attorneys in adjacent practice areas can serve as a pipeline for work. Locating these attorneys can save you time and increase high-quality referrals, even for work needed immediately. You also bring value to these attorneys since referrals can pass in both directions. Identifying adjacent practice areas, and staying in touch with attorneys in them, can lay a secure foundation for rewarding clients.