

Getting more clients at a client

When you've successfully served one part of an organization, you might be able to convert that initial success into a broader footprint. Capitalize on the opportunity with this approach.

Know the company's critical issues, and the issues faced by each prospective client individual.

Start by understanding what the company views as its most critical issues, and what each prospective client views as their most critical issues. No matter what service you provide, you will greatly increase your chance of getting a hearing (and getting work) if you present yourself as part of a solution to a challenge they are already very concerned about. If an issue isn't one of their highest priorities they'll likely not get around to working on it – no matter how valuable working on it might be for them.

The company has its priorities and so do individual business leaders. Even if something is not a critical organization-wide issue, it may be very important to someone who is ready and able to spend to address it well.

Identify your client-specific value proposition

The work you've already done for the organization strengthens your value proposition for that organization. You now have company-specific knowledge – about their business, about the way that they work, about what it takes to complete an assignment there in a stellar way. You've established relationships that can make you more effective; you know your way around and know people inside who can help you do a good job on your next project for the company. Your company-specific skills and knowledge provide additional reasons to work with you instead of with your competitors (who include "do it ourselves" and "don't do anything.")

Identify your champions (and your detractors, if any)

Figure out who in the organization will be your references. You have happy clients – and you need to understand what each would say when they are asked about working with you, because they will be asked. You also should understand what any detractors might say, because they will likely be asked too or just volunteer their views.

Ask for introductions or make them yourself

It's nice when the client individual who loves your work is close to the person who needs you next, but that doesn't always happen, especially in large organizations. If your champion believes that they can make a good, warm introduction, then definitely ask them to do so. If they don't think they can or they don't want to, then figure out how you will introduce yourself to people in the organization you want to meet. You might make a phone call, or stop by their office to talk with their assistant (if you are already on site) or send them a note. You may need a strategy with several steps in order to get to the person you want to reach. Referencing your work at their company greatly strengthens your approach.

What to do this week

Look at the last three large organizations you worked with (including any where you are working now). Identify their highest priority issues overall, and the highest priority issues of each leader you might conceivably work with. Within these high priority areas, where are the opportunities for them to get the most out of working with you? Talk with your former clients and allies within those organizations about how you could approach the leaders who you could help.

What are these tips?

These monthly tips help professionals create more business and enjoy their work more. We focus on how to start relationships, how to build relationships, and how to convert those relationships into sales. Visit our [archives](#) to learn more.