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To Develop Business, Just Remember One Word

Several years ago I conducted a half-day workshop on Business Development at the firm retreat of an AmLaw 100 firm. I closed by saying the following: “If you don’t remember anything we have discussed in the last three hours, then just remember one word”. Then I printed it on the flip chart – and explained what it stood for.

Since then, whenever I have been with an attorney – partner or associate – who was at that retreat, he or she never fails to bring up that word and say something like, “As you can tell, I’ve never forgotten that. It really works.”

What was the word? PALER! And what does it stand for?

Plan how you’re going to approach the client or prospect.

Ask questions. What are the problems they are dealing with? What are the issues they are facing and what are their plans for addressing these issues?

Listen to their answers.

Educate them on how you could help solve their problems or assist them in achieving their plans. Don’t try to sell.

Request the business. In your own words and in your own way, “ask for the order.”

Needless to say, ever since then, whenever I discuss Business Development with attorneys, I tell them it’s not complicated. Just remember one word.

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