



Stating Accomplishments - Your Clients and Potential Clients Need to Know

Let's start this month's tip with a little fact pattern. Karen Lindgram of Levinson and Greene PLC is a real estate attorney who has practiced for eight years. She recently completed a transaction involving a waterfront development in Rosedale, a suburb of Kansas City. The project involved the conversion of commercial space to condominiums, a recreational marina, and the construction of one of the country's largest water amusement parks. (How would you like to live next to that!) The deal involved multiple investors pooling initial funds in excess of \$350 million.

O.k. Now let's let that fact pattern sit for a while and let's talk about the importance of stating accomplishments.

As women, many of us have been taught that to tout our successes in any sort of detail or to state our accomplishments is boastful, arrogant, and sometimes downright rude. We often shy away from stating the impressive facts and figures of our experience and we sometimes even downplay our role without even realizing that we are doing so. This puts us at an immediate disadvantage when competing for business. Potential clients WANT TO KNOW what you have accomplished, how big your transactions have been, whether you have handled matters similar to theirs, and whether you have what it takes to win. They aren't going to know that unless YOU TELL THEM.

So, the first step is to remember that by stating your accomplishments, you are not bragging or showing off. Rather, you are helping the listener understand how qualified and capable you are. You are helping them put your experience into context when comparing it to competitors. (Trust me, most of the men you are competing with will not hesitate to state their accomplishments in detail.)

Once you get comfortable with the concept of stating your accomplishments, think of ways to describe what you do (without breaching client confidentiality, of course) that include facts, figures and unusual details. Here's why...

Remember that fact pattern above? (No peeking, please). Does anyone remember the name of the attorney? How about the name of the firm? How about the name of the town where the project is located? Unlikely. Yet, these are the pieces of information most of us share when we converse.

Now... does anyone remember anything about the actual project she was working on? I bet most of you remember that it involved one of the largest water amusement parks in the country. Some of us will remember that the funding was \$350 million. Most of us will remember that there was a condo conversion. Why the human brain remembers details and numbers in the context of an accomplishment but not a person's name, is beyond me. But... it happens every time.

So, the next time you are networking and someone asks you what you do. Instead of saying, "I am a real estate attorney with the law firm of such and such", consider saying, "I handle real estate transactions, for example, I just finished doing a transaction involving \$xxx million and a developer that was building yyy." The potential client may not remember your name or the name of your firm (but that's why you'll give them your business card), but s/he will remember something you have accomplished.

Go get 'em! You can do it!

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