Clients for Life

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The Emerging Bipolarity of Client Relationship

Just as what has happened to customer support, it is likely to happen to professional services organisations.
The Strategic Advantage of Client Centric Philosophy

- Non-traditional competition
- Client relationship management
- Client transaction management
- Client outsource management

Practice Revenue

Biggest Clients

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Who Sees “Excellent Value” in Their Consultant?

- Total: 48%
- Trusted Advisor: 77%
- Expert for Hire: 46%
- Vendor: 11%

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**Segmenting Clients by Loyalty**

- **Loyalists** are both “Completely Satisfied” and believe they are “Getting Excellent Value”
- **Contented** believe one or the other
- **At Risk** believe neither

![Pie chart showing segments of clients]

- 47% Loyalist
- 31% Contented
- 22% At Risk

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Seven Issues Best Reveal Why 47% of Clients Are At Risk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues</th>
<th>Clients Who Are Loyalists</th>
<th>Clients Who Are At Risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Has the best interest of the client in mind</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does everything possible to make us successful</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makes me look good</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is a leader in his field</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adapts his experience to our circumstances</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is open to feedback to improve performance</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doesn’t work with our competitors</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Experts vs. Advisors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experts</th>
<th>Advisors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Depth of knowledge</td>
<td>Depth and breadth of knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell</td>
<td>Listen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide good answers</td>
<td>Ask great questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop professional trust</td>
<td>Develop professional and personal trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>Collaborate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide expertise</td>
<td>Provide insights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyze</td>
<td>Synthesize</td>
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</tbody>
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The Client’s Perspective of Trusted Advisor

- The really good professionals ask great questions. Often, they enable solutions rather than supply them.

- The best business advisors have a good understanding of my industry, but also breadth. Some of the best insights I have gotten have come from professionals who bring analogies from other fields.

- Good professionals are great listeners. They hear what you mean, not necessarily what you say.

- It is very tough finding ‘honest brokers’ who are unbiased and not pushing their own agenda with you. Everyone walks in here wanting something.

- Our consultants always end the session with a half-hour presentation on ‘next steps’, the execution of which cannot, of course, be accomplished without the consultants. What I really value instead are working sessions, which advance our thinking.
Value Added Activities of Trusted Advisors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HIGH</th>
<th>LOW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value Added Activities</td>
<td>Value Added Activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Experts for Hire

- Supply Information
- Provide Knowledge

Codify
- Access
- Collect
- Aggregate

Analyze
- Structure

Offer Breadth
- Synthesizes & Uses Frameworks
- Apply Judgement

Mentor
- Assess Progress
- Exercise Client Selectivity

Educate
- Offer Insight
- Trusted Advisor

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How to Become a Trusted Advisor

Listening (Empathy)

Trust (Integrity)

Detached Commitment (Selfless Independence)

Deep Generalists (Keen Observation)

Big Picture Thinking (Synthesis)

Eye for Winners (Judgement)

Powers of Conviction (Values)

Client’s Best Interests In Mind
How Empathetic Are You?

- You know what issues and concerns keep your clients awake at night.
- You do twice as much listening as talking.
- You and your clients enjoy spending time with each other, and they routinely confide in you.
Have You Developed Your Client’s Trust?

- Client’s trust in you extends beyond their belief that you will do good work; it is a deeper, broader trust based on both professional competence and personal integrity.

- There is a quality of openness to your client relationships. Both you and your clients feel free to bring up touchy or awkward subjects with each other.

- If on a rare occasion you slip up and miss a commitment, your clients are forgiving.
Do You Practice Detached Commitment (Selfless Independence)?

- You don’t hold back your opinions. If you have a point of view on an issue of importance to your clients, you find a way to communicate it.

- You know where to draw the line with clients. You are clear about the things you just won’t do or put up with.

- You have, on occasion, turned down assignments or terminated a client relationship.
Detached Commitment
(Selfless Independence)

**DEFINITION:** Maintaining a balance between dedication to the clients and at the same time detachment from them

**Example:** Thomas More, Peter Drucker

### A. Three Types of Independence (Detachment)

1. **Intellectual Independence**
   Provide independent objective perspective

2. **Emotional Independence**
   Calm and level headed through self confidence and self esteem

3. **Financial Independence**
   Cultivate a mindset of independent wealth
Are You a Deep Generalist (Keen Observer)?

- You find something interesting about everyone you meet and every situation you encounter.
- Clients ask for your advice and respect your judgment about issues that extend beyond your core professional expertise.
- You often notice things other people don’t – details in a landscape, a particular fact from a presentation, a nuance of behaviour.
Are You a Big Picture Thinker?

- You like to collect facts and analyze them, but what really motivates you is asking **WHY** and trying to understand what it means.

- You are drawn to summarize and crystallize the key issues inherent in any given client situation.

- Often, you get comments from your clients such as “Now I see”, “A ha!”, “That puts it in perspective”, “I see the relationship”, or “That’s a good way of putting it”. They will often repeat what you have said and even use your language as they explain it to others.
Do You Have Eye for Winners (Great Judgement)?

- When your clients face tough choices, they often use you as a sounding board. They share their dilemmas with you.
- You are right more than 50 percent of the time.
- You have the confidence to make judgments relatively quickly. You identify and marshal your experiences and perspectives rather than get paralyzed by analysis.
Do You Have Powers of Conviction?

- You feel a sense of mission as you pursue your career, which is a passion rather than an obligation. Your financial compensation is important to you, but it doesn’t drive your choice of work.

- If a client asks what’s important to you as an individual and as a professional, your answers are immediate and clear. You know what your core beliefs and values are.

- You communicate strongly and forcefully.

- You feel and project passion and energy when you talk.
THE TWIN PROCESSES OF CLIENT LEADERSHIP

Internal Marketing

Ideal Outcome

Poor Outcome

Trusted Advisor
In Conclusion

- Becoming a Trusted Advisor is both necessary and desirable to differentiate in the marketplace.
- The Seven Attributes of Trusted Advisors
- You must do both internal marketing as well as external client relationship for your continued success.