



Good new business people are a multi-faceted resource

Good new business people are a precious resource that all marketing agencies want to acquire, retain and develop. What makes them so valuable?

There are a number of reasons for this beyond the obvious. A by-product of their particular skill and nature is the continual testing and expansion of your commercial horizons. Additionally, they bring energy, belief, and a positive force to help underpin your mission from within and help your staff prepare for the necessary changes any organisation experiences as it grows. They are often your best ambassadors in both the formal and informal channels of internal dialogue. But where we have seen them many times add the greatest value is in the fact that they are a multi-faceted resource.

As when a pawn reaches the other side of the chessboard and is converted to a queen, so the humble new business executive often has the potential to quickly become a lynchpin asset for your business. This is because good new business people offer flexibility and options that are mouldable to other functions. Thus they make ideal account people because they know how to communicate value, to overcome objections, fend-off competitors, up and cross sell, and improve the profitability of accounts. They make excellent marketers, as they constantly test the proposition, probing the boundary of supply and demand to determine the right messages that need to be communicated tactically. And for marketing strategies, it's all refreshingly empirical. In time they progress to new business director or account director, moving seamlessly between these roles, as the agency requires. And as the company grows they move up to head business units, ultimately joining the board to contribute in the many areas their broad commercial skills are appropriate.

With the right reward and promotion structure, such high-value human resources grow organically from within, reducing requirement for risky, expensive, often wasteful (always experimental) external hires. It means the agency is more likely to achieve the unified culture so important to long-term success. It may also be more able to reward independent thinking via an internal meritocracy - the holy grail of staff loyalty.

To take advantage of this perspective, Blossom clients are not only using us to find and train ideal new business people to do the basic job; they also have one eye on the strategic development of their workforce - to bring flexible, capable, commercial talent to their business. This talent is deployable in any profitable direction but has the critical experience of having pitched the agency's brand to the market, and in the process, becoming familiar with every detail of the brand, the culture and the proposition. His or her knowledge of your agency's capabilities, strengths and weaknesses, and the work done will rival anyone's in the agency. We have seen how useful this knowledge is for making informed business decisions.

Though much of what we do is to train new business executives, acquiring good new business people is also about developing already experienced agency professionals. Examples of clients where we've done this include: Fluent Interaction, 400 Communications, Specialmoves and The Core. Though commercial development is usually their primary role, they may also be pitch specialists, marketing deployment specialists, great face-to-face performers, and heavily involved in client services and account handling. These individuals add a much wider value right from day one.

Proportionally speaking, a lot of the agencies we meet are quite small, so investment in new business HR is a tough decision for them. Many of these feel that what is best for them is a meeting-making robot that in a small team won't rock the boat or put noses out of joint. Their thinking is set around the idea that they should invest £40 to £50K in a new business person, where the only ROI expected is sales. This two-dimensional approach is problematic, especially for these smaller / lower turnover businesses; we have found they benefit hugely from converting a meeting robot pawn into a business building queen. In fact with better-motivated staff, they receive superior and sustainable sales results, in addition to the large range of other benefits already discussed here.

In the short-term, yes Blossom finds you the resources to win new business. But in the longer-term we help put the high value pieces on the chessboard that you need to win the game.