Guide to creating your internal PR campaign

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I was talking with a senior partner in a London city law firm recently. He told me that when he was on Partner Track is scared stiff of upsetting a partner, in case this wrecked his partnership prospects.

How to use the guide

As this senior partner knew when he was on Partner Track, it takes just one person to veto your admission to the partnership, and your partnership prospects could be over at your firm. Use this guide to help you plan your internal PR campaign to make sure that when it comes to that all-important vote, you make sure that you are the one that every partner is backing.

Tips to develop positive relationships and profile with partners in your firm

- Don't spend all the time in your office or department. Challenge yourself to physically get away from your desk and part of the office to have conversations with others in the firm.
- Do turn up to firm socials and 'work the room' when you are there
- Match your communication style to the style of the partner you are talking to.
- Be positive and enthusiastic about partners' ideas and suggestions.
- Do your actions promptly after any meeting with a partner
- Maintain a dialogue with the partners after you have met. How can you help them achieve their objectives?
- Identify opportunities for partners with your network or clients. How can you find them a referral or new client?
- Ask your Mentor and Sponsoring Partner to advise you on who are the really influential partners you need to have backing you, and how to gain their advocacy.
- Go and consult with partners about your proposed Business Case. Ask them for their ideas on strategy, growing your practice or where you should be focusing your efforts.
- Remember that not every partner is created equal. There will be some partners who, if it is known they are championing you, others will naturally want to help you.
- Listen for and be aware of individual agendas and conflicting internal firm agendas.

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Stages of your PR campaign

1. Aims

This is where you decide on what you want your PR campaign to achieve. For example:

- Increase my profile within the advisory side of the practice
- Become on 'first name' terms with all the partners within the London and South East offices

2. Audit

This is where you do a stakeholder map of the partners within your firm and identify the state of your relationship with them, e.g.

- Unknown to them
- Known to them but unsure of the relationship status
- Known to them but likely to oppose my plans for partnership
- Known to them but they are neutral about me
- Known to them and they are a weak advocate
- Known to them and they are a strong advocate

3. Strategy

This is where you decide on which partners or area of the firms you need to actively focus on building your relationships, and how far you need to take the relationship. This is particularly important in a large firm you may not be able to physically meet or influence every single partner.

4. Plan

At this point you need to decide on exactly what you will do and when to help you implement your strategy and achieve the aims of your PR campaign. One of the best ways to plan is to have broken down what you are trying to achieve into milestones. Then identify a detailed 30-60-90 day plan to achieve these milestones.

5. Implementation

Do allocate tasks into your diary to maintain visibility and focus on your internal PR campaign. This is the sort of thing, which is better attempted, in small bites spread over a period of time.

6. Measure and monitor

Keep an eye on what is working, and what corrective actions you may need to change. If necessary go back to any of the previous steps in the campaign to readjust as required.

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