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Know Your Client, and Build the Partnership!

Begin building the partnership with your clients—the simple, 4-step plan:

Get on the same page: embrace your client's concerns with this 4-step strategy:

LOOK:

Be well versed in your client's situation—their company, their industry, and any current developments—before you walk in the door. When visiting a client, look around and take stock: what is new, what seems to be buzzing, and what seems to be lacking.

ASK:

Make sure you know what the client's primary concern is right now, and what is coming down the pike for them. You are visiting/calling on the client about a specific, very current need or opportunity. During the conversation, ask about their other current or upcoming needs, based on what you've observed, or based on industry developments.

LISTEN:

When the client answers your questions, simply listen fully to what they say. Listen to what they leave out from the story, and then ask more questions and, again, listen thoughtfully. Offer relevant solutions to their concerns. Do you have any new products to offer to meet these industry developments? Which solutions, in addition to your basic offering, have helped your other clients grow in the current environment? Use these parables to illustrate your ideas.

GROW:

Grow with the client: let the client know that you are their most reliable partner by continuing to look, ask and listen. You'll both move forward and grow when you make a practice of "always be helping": acknowledging the client's concerns, and offering relevant and timely solutions.

Then, stay on the same page:

This proactive approach will help you both, and you'll build a solid partnership!