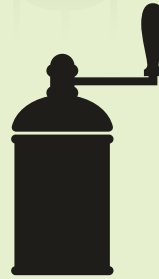


Finding new clients,
minding existing ones and
grinding growth for 2010 and beyond

A guide to cultivating ever-deeper
relationships for corporate and
financial PR agencies



The Brown Bag Lunch

Twenty years ago, several partners at a small provincial US law firm decided to instigate a weekly meeting. Each was given a brown paper bag containing a sandwich, a piece of fruit and a drink. Together they spent the next hour addressing one question:

“Are we doing everything we possibly can to help our clients?”

The institution of the Brown Bag Lunch contributed to the firm’s rapid growth and progress up the league tables. The lunch became the moment when each partner’s individual priorities were momentarily put aside.

Focus on the client

In its place there was an opportunity to discuss issues of the day and focus on what constituted the best possible advice to clients. Suggestions were made, ideas flourished and new business campaigns conceived.

As well as directly assisting in the development of client relationships, these Brown Bag Lunches acted as a catalyst to bond the firm’s senior partners and helped to turn a collection of individuals into a team.

Rewards and success

Working inside a corporate and financial PR agency and providing the best possible advice for your clients can be intensely rewarding. This is especially the case when clients see that your work has boosted their reputations and has been integral to the effective management of their profiles.

Success means that people will want to align themselves with your client: fund managers may decide to invest in your client, star salespeople may choose to work for it, new customers may seek to use its services, providers to supply to it and legislators to regulate in its favour.

But are you doing absolutely everything you possibly can to enhance your relationships with these contacts and clients?

Bladonmore has established a reputation as a trusted adviser to many corporate and financial PR agencies throughout Europe, the Middle East and Africa – plus a number from the United States.

With this Bladonmore white paper, we want you to think differently about your clients. We want you to look on them as a series of individual relationships rather than as firms that pay you monthly retainers or project fees.

Manage the relationship well with one person at a client organisation and they are likely to recommend others to you, each clasping their own budget pots. What follows is a series of ideas to help you build better relationships with your clients, becoming ever more of a trusted adviser.

Ideas for existing clients

Media training for your clients

To ensure your clients get the best preparation possible, Bladonmore uses proven journalists and broadcasters who are also expert trainers. From bespoke one-to-one CEO interview preparation to large-scale team training, we work with you to ensure the client experience is second to none and gets your messages across clearly. That is why Bladonmore is a trusted training partner with a majority of the leading financial PR firms.

Agencies we deliver this service to include:
Finsbury

Make your client's annual results presentation effective and interesting

Analysts', journalists' and shareholders' minds can be changed with a good investor presentation. With a few hours of expert coaching, even the dullest FD can become an expert at communicating the company's investment proposition and key messages. Yet all of this can be let down by a PowerPoint presentation that looks like it was put together in a primary school's computer class. Bladonmore regularly redesigns our clients' presentations to maximise the effectiveness of the content.

Agencies we deliver this service to include:
Buchanan

Country Manager Communication Plan

Your largest clients have operations across many countries. The country managers in these businesses are akin to mini CEOs. They might have breakfast with a regulator, lunch with an NGO and dinner with a local news editor. They can enhance the local and international reputation you have helped to build – or not. This requires world-class communications skills. The Bladonmore Country Manager Communications Plan addresses these issues.

Agencies we deliver this service to include:
Waggener Edstrom

Bring alive a client's annual report and take it online

Annual reports must communicate clearly and work for a growing number of stakeholders seeking out different sources of information. Recently, we have been working with many of our clients to improve their shareholder communications and get more out of their CSR initiatives by shifting all or part of their reporting online. What really excites them about reporting online is the potential to measure, evaluate and improve their communications in these crucial fields. At the same time, it is essential that the expert knowledge of the PR adviser is used to support the message development of the report. We work closely with you to ensure these key messages and the client's strategy are reflected therein.

Agencies we deliver this service to include:
Redleaf

Develop a thought leadership programme

How many clients want to be thought leaders but do not actually understand the commitment that it involves? Developing and implementing a thought leadership programme can be intensive, yet exciting and incredibly rewarding. Bladonmore helps to make your clients (and you) look great.

Agencies we deliver this service to include: FD

Maximise a panel appearance or deliver a memorable keynote speech

Your client has been invited to lead an industry panel or to give a keynote speech. They are nervous about the opportunity and are looking to you for reassurance and help. Bladonmore can help to create the content and deliver the appropriate presentation coaching to raise confidence levels.

Agencies we deliver this service to include:
Kreab & Gavin Anderson

Help your client's sales team develop intelligent content

Client publications – delivered in print and online – are effective tools for organisations, investors and professional service firms to connect with existing and prospective contacts.

The ability to use engaging content to bring your clients' key messages alive is a powerful tool. Bladonmore began its life as a custom publisher – interacting with Merlin PR – for the development of a private equity firm's investor publication. Subsequently, similar relationships have been forged with a number of other agencies to create compelling and engaging content on behalf of their clients.

Agencies we deliver this service to include:
Capital MS&L



Ideas to win future clients

Boost your pipeline with a new sales plan

When was the last time you created an agency-wide networking plan and sales pipeline? Has your firm implemented a customer relationship software plan to track all the opportunities you have? We can help you to convert an individual lead into a firm-wide opportunity.

Call on the Bladonmore pitch doctor

Delivering a great pitch is critical to maintaining a healthy pace of growth for all PR agencies. Preparing in advance – using our expertise as a pitch doctor – will hold you in good stead. This service was originally developed by Bladonmore for Magic Circle law firms who were dissatisfied at their win rates. Subsequently, it has been adopted by a number of corporate and financial PR agencies, who invite Bladonmore to become their pitch partner on major projects.

It incorporates a number of component parts, but at its root the programme will ensure your message is clear, your delivery is crisp and you stand out from the competition. A modular approach is taken: for some we may be the editor or designer of the document; for others the people to source video testimonials; and, for some, the people who organise the presentation coaching in advance. Fundamentally, the pitch doctor will help you to increase your win rate.

Film client testimonials to boost your next pitch

Video testimonials can be a very effective way of showcasing your agency's expertise in an engaging fashion. Just say "Don't take our word for it...", then press 'play' to see key figures from your client base talking about your work and how it helped their businesses. This is a proven device that contributes to communications agencies winning more pitches.

Support growth in the Middle East

With a base in Abu Dhabi, Bladonmore is supporting a number of corporate and financial PR agencies on the ground with a white-labelled selection of services that can be delivered to their clients. Tender requirements and briefs in the region are invariably packed with demands that often stretch beyond even the most full-service provider. Consequently, Bladonmore is able to collaborate with agencies to deliver areas of core competence to shared clients and to work together on winning new pitches.

Conduct a Leadership Communications Audit

A rigorous audit of the communications skills of your existing or prospective clients' leaders and spokespeople, followed by a programme to improve these skills, is a clear way to get under the skin of your client. It is a tactic that is exceptionally popular when used to win new pitches.

Bladonmore delivers a number of Leadership Communications programmes for senior executives on an international basis. The following is a proprietary test Bladonmore has developed to assess the skills of leaders.

Score 1-5 points for each of the following leadership communication attributes – ie the stronger you are; the higher your score.

Leadership Communication Attributes and Skills	Measure	Score (1 to 5) You	Score (1 to 5) Team
Authority	Can you lead the team? Do you command respect?		
Energy	Do you demonstrate enthusiasm and are your energies properly directed?		
Engagement	How skilled are you at connecting with and getting the best out of your people?		
Clarity	Can you get the message across clearly and effectively?		
Resolution	Will you stick with it through the tough times?		
Courage	Will you confront a challenge head on?		
Decisiveness	Will tough decisions be deferred?		
Self-confidence	Do you have confidence in your own ideas and abilities?		
Assertiveness	Can you win the arguments? Do you speak up when you disagree?		
Trustworthiness	Are your life savings safe? Do you keep promises?		
Total		/50	/50

Ideas for your team

Develop your own training academy

The war for talent is over. Talent won. Now you must ensure there is an exciting environment inside your own agency that encourages development, by continually improving technical, analytical and communication skills. Bladonmore can create a bespoke training programme focused on boosting the knowledge and skill levels of your team members. This will impress and excite your existing consultants and act as a magnet for new talent.



Pelham & Bladonmore: working together to fuel an emerging brand

“The Pelham Academy has made a difference to how we look at the training and development of our team.

“We have grown rapidly from nine people to nearly 50 in less than three years, and have also completed acquisitions during that time. The Pelham PR Academy has helped us bind our people together and boost the skills of our team.”

James Henderson
Founder

Pelham Public Relations was founded by James Henderson in 2004, and has become one of Europe’s fastest-growing corporate and financial PR agencies.

James spent 15 years at College Hill Associates, where he used Bladonmore to provide expert media and presentation coaching to his clients before press and investor roadshows.

Bladonmore has continued to support Pelham’s clients with these coaching services. But over four years, the relationship has developed into a strategic service. What began as a simple handshake to deliver a training course for a client has evolved into an effective partnership that is helping to develop the Pelham PR business.

This support has included the creation of the **Pelham Academy**, a dedicated internal training programme, set up to provide the necessary skills for all members of the team. The Academy has become a key tool in distinguishing Pelham from its rivals, and makes the firm particularly attractive to prospective recruits in this competitive market for talent.

Bladonmore has also worked closely with Pelham to create annual reports and annual reviews on behalf of clients. It is not surprising that clients look to their trusted advisers to provide them with guidance on how to create this signature document.

Advising the advisers



Buchanan

Capital MS&L

College Hill



FINSBURY



KREAB & GAVIN ANDERSON
WORLDWIDE

LANSONS
communications

M: strategic
communications
for market leaders

maitland

merlin Corporate Reputation
Management

PELHAM PUBLIC RELATIONS



W WAGGENER EDSTROM
WORLDWIDE

Abchurch

Media and presentation coaching services to its clients followed by the development of the Abchurch Academy.

Buchanan Communications

Board-level coaching for clients in Abu Dhabi and Bahrain.

Capital MS&L

Media training for clients in Beirut, Dubai and London.

College Hill

Film services for clients.

FD

Launched LQ magazine on behalf of its client, Linklaters.

Finsbury

Presentation training for partners and associates; presentation and media coaching for clients, including Beazley and Friends Provident.

Hogarth Partnership

Client media training for Volkswagen and Carluccio's.

Kreab & Gavin Anderson

Media training for clients, including NASDAQ, Camco and Windsave.

Lansons Communications

Research projects for Foreign & Colonial Investment Trust.

M:Communications

Partnership to develop strategic communications services to Aldar in Abu Dhabi. Board-level coaching for Crédit Agricole, Kone, Virgin and Statoil Hydro.

Maitland

Client media training for ArcelorMittal and Rightmove.

Merlin

Presentation training for Merlin partners and associates.

Pelham

Developed the Pelham Academy.

Redleaf

Created annual reports for many Redleaf clients.

Waggener Edstrom

Media training for Microsoft.

Bladonmore provides strategic communications advice and implementation services to organisations, their leaders and executives. Driven by our desire to address our clients' challenges and opportunities, Bladonmore brings a unique combination of expertise and services in print, online, on screen and in spoken communications.

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