

BTI's Annual Client Meeting Guide

The Definitive Guide to Conducting
Best-in-Class Annual Meetings with Your Clients



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BTI's Annual Client Meeting Guide is your template for planning and hosting successful meetings with clients to drive new work and stronger client relationships.

Tip  Annual client meetings take place outside the context of current work to help you:

-  Build your understanding of the client's business
-  Improve the way you meet clients' needs
-  Win new work



Annual Meeting Objectives

Annual Client Meetings are an opportunity to meet with clients face to face to identify how your firm can better serve them on an ongoing basis. From uncovering areas for service improvements to discussing how the client's business needs are changing, the most successful client meetings end with the firm:

- Addressing matters of top concern to the client
- Building a better understanding of the client's business
- Identifying the risk and complexities your client faces
- Educating the client in how to better manage and avoid risk
- Soliciting feedback on the firm's performance
- Pinpointing areas of improvement in the client relationship
- Developing a client-specific action plan
- Delivering superior client service to build bigger relationships

Meeting Logistics

Who



This is an opportunity for the client decision makers to give their feedback—be sure *not* to outnumber the client

- Relationship partner
- Firm Managing Partner (optional)

Where



Treat as a formal business meeting—*not* centered around entertainment or a meal

- Client office
- Third-party conference facilities

What



Other best practices to consider

- Take notes
- Send a formal thank-you letter
- Follow up with a concrete action plan within 2 weeks of meeting

The Agenda

5 minutes

Goals and Objectives of the Meeting

25 minutes

The Year in Review

Logistics and Facts

- Overview of matters handled and outcomes achieved
- Review hours billed and hours invested by firm (unbilled or written off)
- Articulate additional value delivered (costs and/or fines avoided, time to resolution rates, etc.)

Firm's Self-Assessment of Performance

- Introduce known issues and challenges in the client relationship
- Offer 3 specific ways you can improve the relationship and get client input

Client Feedback on Firm's Performance

- See Discussion Guide on page 8 for questions to ask your client during the Annual Client Meeting

15 minutes

Client's Business Goals for the Upcoming Year

Lead a conversation to identify what you and the client see as:

- Issues and risks on the horizon
- Potential goals and objectives
- Changing management strategies and demands

10 minutes

Next Steps

Tip



Demonstrate superior business understanding by having a list of potential risks (and strategies) to discuss with the client

Key Questions to Ask Clients

6 Questions to Better Understand Your Clients' Business and Upcoming Needs

The Annual Client Meeting provides the setting to speak about the client's business outside the context of current work. Focus on asking questions which will demonstrate you are looking at your client relationship from a big-picture, business-oriented perspective.

- 1 How do you feel the legal department is doing?
- 2 Are you facing pressure to articulate the value your department brings to your organization?
- 3 What are you hoping to achieve by this time next year?
 - What about from a career standpoint?
- 4 What do you see as your biggest challenge right now?
- 5 What steps have you taken regarding [new legal requirement/industry challenge]?
 - Have you considered [recommendation]?
- 6 How can we help facilitate your budgeting for the upcoming year?

Key Questions to Ask Clients

6 Questions to Uncover Client Perception of Your Firm's Performance

Clients expect the Annual Client Meeting to provide them with the venue to discuss how the firm's performance has measured up to their expectations and what actions the firm can take to improve the relationship.

- 1 What were the 3 most valuable activities our firm performed for you this year?
 - Why were these so valuable to you?
- 2 How did management respond to the outcomes and performance we delivered this year?
- 3 How can we deliver more value to your company moving forward?
- 4 Has our communication been what it needs to be?
 - What kinds of information or reporting could we provide to help you better communicate with others in your organization?
- 5 What would you like to see from our relationship that you don't currently see?
- 6 Was there a point where you did not have 110% confidence we would reach the outcomes you expected?

Pre-meeting Prep Strategies

The most successful Annual Client Meetings occur when the firm is able to proactively provide the client with:

- ❑ Insights into business issues on the horizon for the client’s industry or company—including direct recommendations on how to handle them
- ❑ Upcoming regulatory or compliance requirements
- ❑ Ways the firm can help the client contain costs or get more value from the firm (i.e., AFAs, different staffing mixes, process improvements, etc.)

The relationship partner and team should review the following in advance of the Annual Client Meeting:

- Annual report and SEC filings (public companies)
- Trade press
- Earnings calls
- News events involving the company and any subsidiaries
- 3-year trend in billings
- Time invested on client work
- Time billed—by staffing level
- Practice utilization

8 Ways to Trash Your Annual Client Meeting

- ▶ Meet without an agenda
- ▶ Don't provide a self-assessment of your performance
- ▶ Go golfing, to a ball game, etc.
- ▶ Talk only about legal—not business—outcomes
- ▶ Don't fess up (fail to admit what went wrong)
- ▶ (Overtly) sell, sell, sell
- ▶ Don't include the client in the planning process
- ▶ Don't follow up on action items

About BTI Consulting Group

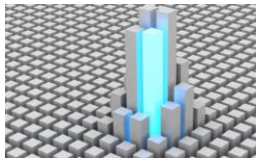
The industry leader in world-class client feedback programs, compelling research and strategic insights for more than 30 years, we've successfully helped our clients drive revenue, boost performance, attract and retain clients, and develop new and existing business by creating enduring relationships.

From in-depth independent research to one-on-one interviews with C-suite executives, top legal decision makers and market leaders, our expertise and insight will help you understand—and benchmark—how clients acquire, manage, and evaluate their professional services providers.



Client Feedback Programs

We help you reveal powerful, defining client insights you simply can't get anywhere else through innovative, world-class feedback.



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We help you and your firm catapult your business development skills, culture, and mindset, fast.



Client Service Excellence

We help you redefine how clients think about you and your firm for the short and long term.



Market Research & Insightful Client-Centric Reports

Authoritative, innovative & practical advice from our research. BTI's client service rankings, brand health assessments, market forecasts and more are the industry gold standard.

Contact Us

For questions, research inquiries and information on BTI's client feedback programs, market insight research, seminars, training, or workshops, please contact us via email or by calling: +1 617 439 0333



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