

In 2016, Winston & Strawn partnered with Ackert Inc. to deliver a long-term business development training initiative intended to develop a learning culture, raise the firm's profile externally across five key industry verticals, measure and improve lawyer BD productivity, and increase origination activity.

The Objective

Winston & Strawn identified a group of partners with the potential to grow their practices by 25-100%. The firm engaged Ackert Inc. coaches and licensed its Ackert's proprietary Pipeline technology for performance tracking so as to:

- Show a measurable increase business development activity among participating partners
- Driving new revenue to the firm
- Expanding business generation across five target industries

The tech/coaching initiative was a success on all fronts, providing meaningful metrics and significant profit.

Technology

Winston used the partner BD coaching initiative in conjunction with PipelinePlus. PipelinePlus enabled the partners to prioritize key opportunities and make strategic business development decisions. The dedicated mobile app, Outlook integration, regular email alerts and coaching support ensured high adoption rates (90%) among even the busiest litigators.



Coaching

The coaching engagement provided a more traditional platform to test the idea of pipeline management at the firm. The program included an application process for the lawyers and regular progress reports from the coaches. The firm's internal BD professionals played a key role in overseeing and supporting lawyer progress throughout the coaching term. The alignment of internal resources, external coaches, and pipeline technology were key factors in the success of this initiative.

The firm has launched a second class of partners for the same coaching program this year.

The Results



1. Expanded the Firm's Profile. The 22 participating partners tracked approximately 30% increase in business opportunities across five key industries.



2. Increased business development productivity. Over 20 months, Winston lawyers completed 106 strategic objectives (including the sourcing of new matters).



3. High Adoption. PipelinePlus had over 90% adoption from Winston's participating lawyers during their coaching engagements.



4. Increased Origination. The partners' combined efforts added \$12.4 million in new revenue to the firm.



5. High ROI. The \$12.4 million return on hard costs invested (\$36,500) represented a 33,900% ROI.



6. Endorsement and Renewal. The program was highly profitable, and so widely endorsed by leadership across the firm that Winston launched a second class in 2018.