

The Maraia Minutes

If you go into trial unprepared the result is losing. If you go into a business development meeting unprepared the result is rejection. The better your preparation, the less chance of rejection.

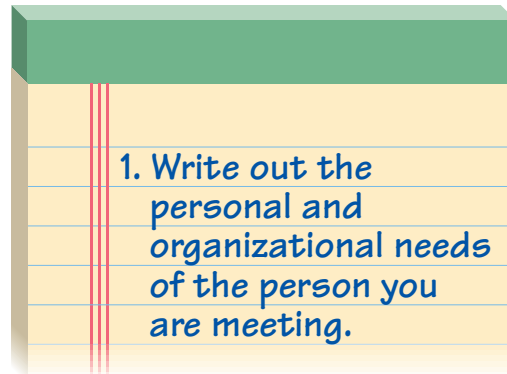
Contrary to popular belief, telling is not selling.

Mark M. Maraia Associates is a Denver-based relationship development coaching and training firm which helps law firms build skills one lawyer at a time and in groups. To be added to or removed from this list e-mail us at "mmaraia@compuserve.com" or call Janice Crowley at 303-791-1042. Fax: 303-791-1071. Our mailing address is 2154 Terrace Drive, Highlands Ranch, Colorado 80126.

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Lunch, from page 1

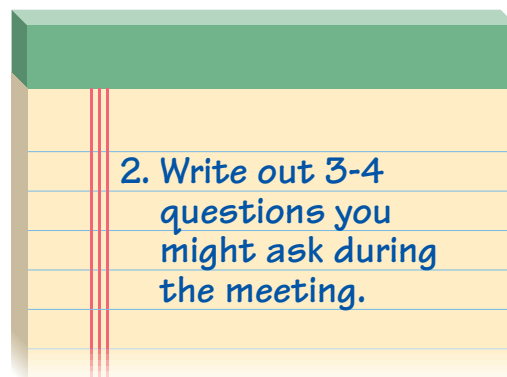


1. Write out the personal and organizational needs of the person you are meeting.

When I ask lawyers what they think the prospect needs, most start telling me what THEY NEED. Big mistake. The more empathy you are able to demonstrate the better the meeting. Here are some personal needs you might write down on your blank page:

- Control;
- Looking good to the boss;
- Minimal time spent supervising the case;
- Avoiding surprises.

Consult with a partner or your firm's marketing director if you are having difficulty thinking of needs. Remember the needs of general counsel are going to be different from the needs of the CEO. Many top flight lawyers get a cold shoulder from the general counsel on an idea that would have been very well received by the CEO or CFO.



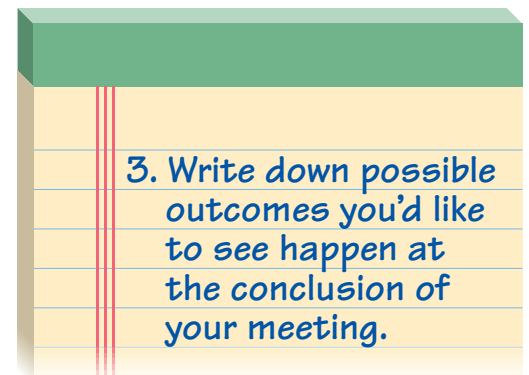
2. Write out 3-4 questions you might ask during the meeting.

How many of you who are litigators wrote out the questions you intended to ask at your first trial? I'll bet all of you did. That's because if you go into trial unprepared the

result is losing. If you go into a business development meeting unprepared the result is rejection. The better your preparation, the less chance of rejection. This point may seem obvious, but I find too many lawyers have no idea what it means to go into a business development meeting fully prepared.

The fact that most lawyers do not prepare a list of questions is a source of constant amazement to me. One lawyer I coached agreed to fax me a list of questions he intended to ask during an upcoming meeting. When I received the fax it didn't contain a single question only talking points.

I asked him to convert every "point" into a question. Contrary to popular belief, telling is not selling.



3. Write down possible outcomes you'd like to see happen at the conclusion of your meeting.

An unacceptable outcome might be "build the relationship" or the client says, "I'll call you." An acceptable outcome might be "I want you to meet with the president on Thursday or Friday of next week." or "I want you to meet with the general counsel when he comes to town on April 4th."

If you do anything less than all three when preparing for a meeting it is, in my opinion, a "Random Act of Lunch."