

# California Law Firm Builds a Growth Culture

In the fall of 2007, a California-based law firm with 8 offices across the state and more than 190 attorneys enlisted The Whetstone Group, Inc. to help them assess their current marketing and business development efforts and create a comprehensive growth plan for the firm.



## Phase I - Assessment

Whetstone's first step was to analyze the effectiveness of the law firm's current marketing efforts. Whetstone consultants surveyed firm personnel through email and face-to-face interviews, and thoroughly reviewed the existing firm plans and materials. This research revealed a lack of cohesion in the firm's marketing efforts. Business development projects were being initiated by practice groups, offices and individual attorneys firm-wide. Consequently, firm personnel had conflicting expectations for their marketing department and low overall confidence in their efforts.

Whetstone recommended a reorganization of the firm into focused business development teams and made suggestions to better allocate marketing resources and improve the firm's ROI.

## Phase II - Planning

Agreeing with the assessment findings, the partners engaged Whetstone to help focus the firm's activities going forward and provide strategic marketing advice. Whetstone consultants met with the firm's executive committee to develop a business development plan for the firm as a whole. The objective was to set goals, identify the firm's growth strategy and figure out how the firm should organize and staff for business development.

As a result of this planning, the firm organized into four business development teams focused on the market sectors representing the most opportunities for profitable growth. Then Whetstone consultants worked with each team to develop a comprehensive strategic business development plan.

## Phase III - Implementation

Throughout this process, Whetstone provided business development training to the firm's professionals to help them prepare for their roles in the firm-wide and team plans. Whetstone consultants made regular visits and trained firm management, team leaders and the market sector teams. This support helped them measure results and progress, evaluate progress with implementation, incorporate accountability into the process, work through the issues in their way of success and effectively utilize their business development staff.

Whetstone's focused strategy and ongoing support from assessment to implementation reinforced a business development culture in this law firm. Shared goals and straightforward training also encouraged more personnel to contribute to the firm's efforts. Perhaps the most immediate change within the firm was the existence of a detailed plan with partner buy-in.

**The Whetstone Group**  
*Growth Tools for a Competitive Edge*

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