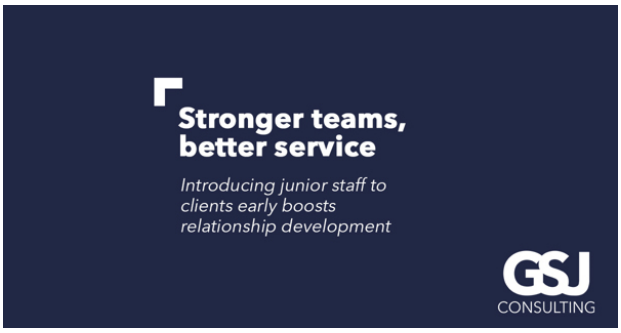


Strengthen client loyalty and staff development by introducing junior team members early

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During a recent client listening feedback session we ran, the client wanted to point out the excellent work a junior member of the law firm's team had done. Unfortunately, other than via email and telephone, the client had not met the lawyer in question and so was unable to tell them face-to-face what a great job they had done. So, they went out of their way to make a point of telling us how well this junior lawyer had done.

This isn't a standalone example. We often hear feedback that clients wish they had the chance to meet all the professionals on the team. But, as anyone who has worked in professional services can tell you, client relationships are carefully cultivated and often closely guarded by senior partners and/or client relationship partners.

Historically, this might have been understandable. Trust, rapport and credibility are critical to client retention and satisfaction. A junior lawyer can lose all of that in less than 5 minutes! Worse, they could actually do really well at this, convince the client they are a credible option and then leave your firm/team – taking the client with them!

But we're here to tell you this old way of thinking can unintentionally hinder both your team's development, your firm's service and your clients' experience.

So here's why early exposure to clients should be the norm, not the exception.

You build trust through transparency

> Clients value openness and honesty. When a firm introduces junior team members early in the relationship, it signals confidence, transparency and stability. It shows that your firm is not reliant on a single individual, but has built a capable team ready to support that client's

needs [Hit by a bus mitigation example].

Introducing junior staff also sets realistic expectations. Clients understand that senior people can't do everything, and they don't want them to – it's too expensive.

When juniors are introduced early, the client becomes comfortable with who does what and learns to trust the broader team. This approach strengthens the relationship by creating more points of contact and deepening the sense of continuity.

It strengthens the client relationship beyond one person

In most professional services firms, client relationships are overly dependent on one or two senior individuals. While this might work in the short term, it creates significant risk if that person becomes unavailable, changes roles or leaves the firm (lateral hire).

By introducing junior staff early, clients develop familiarity with a broader team. Over time, clients feel connected not just to one person, but to your firm as a whole. That connection increases client stickiness and reduces disruption if team changes occur.

It accelerates junior staff development

Nothing accelerates learning quite like real-world exposure. When junior staff are brought into client interactions early, they learn faster, develop better commercial judgment and become more confident in their roles.

Crucially, they also gain an understanding of the client's business, preferences and communication style. They hear how senior lawyers respond to challenges, how trust is built and how to handle difficult conversations. Over time, they begin to contribute meaningfully, which improves their job satisfaction and retention.

It enables better client service and responsiveness

Clients often need quick responses to routine matters. If junior team members are already familiar with the client and the project context, they can respond faster and more effectively, without having to wait for a senior to get up to speed or approve everything.

Clients benefit from having more accessible points of contact. Juniors can handle many requests directly, freeing up senior time and improving responsiveness. This increases

overall service quality while helping to manage costs more effectively.

Also, diversity of thought is important. Including junior team members often results in fresh thinking and curiosity. They may spot things others have overlooked or ask questions that lead to better outcomes.

It demonstrates a long-term commitment to the client

Introducing junior staff signals that your firm is investing in a long-term relationship. It shows succession planning, depth and stability. Clients appreciate knowing that your team will grow alongside them.

It also allows clients to play a role in shaping the team that serves them. Many clients enjoy mentoring or providing feedback to junior staff. This creates a sense of partnership and shared investment in success.

Clients are also reassured to see that your firm is developing talent, particularly in sectors where longevity, continuity and institutional knowledge are highly valued (such as major construction projects which can last up to 20 years).

Making it work: best practices for introducing junior staff to clients

To introduce junior staff effectively, you need to be intentional. Simply adding names to emails isn't enough.

Here are a few strategies to make it work:

Set expectations with clients. Let them know who will be involved, what their roles are, and how they contribute to the work.

Coach junior staff before client meetings. Help them prepare, understand the agenda and know when to speak and when to listen.

Give them meaningful roles. Avoid treating them as "note takers." Let them own part of the work and follow through on client tasks.

Debrief after meetings. Provide feedback and reflect on what went well and what could be improved.

Celebrate progress. When juniors contribute positively, let them know. Recognise their efforts and reinforce the team dynamic.

Final thoughts

Bringing junior staff into client relationships early isn't just a developmental tool, it's a strategic advantage. It strengthens client loyalty, improves responsiveness, fosters team resilience and builds the next generation of trusted advisors.

Importantly, in an industry with high attrition rates and low numbers of qualified talent, making it extremely difficult to recruit replacements for people who leave your firm, it enhances staff stickiness. So rather than seeing it as the risk it has historically been viewed as, progressive firms recognise it as a hallmark of quality, maturity and future-readiness.

Tip: The sooner you start introducing junior staff to clients, the sooner you'll reap the benefits for your team, your firm and, critically, your clients!

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