

# Listening and improving...

....using in-depth feedback from clients. Client surveys are not the end game, they are a means to an end – deepening team and firm wide understanding, increasing collaboration and enabling professional advisers to create and increase value with their clients.

Clients generally welcome the opportunity to share their service expectations, service experience and plans with their professional advisers – they are pleased to contribute and play their part in achieving performance and service improvement. An adviser undertaking such a direct form of collaboration clearly demonstrates its commitment to improving the service and value offered to clients.

To achieve this dialogue with Board level respondents requires senior and experienced interviewers who understand how business works. It also requires deep insight and skill in reporting back, in order to achieve the most positive results from the feedback process in your organisation. This is why we have a team with in-depth experience of the professional services sector.

## Fear of criticism?

Why does the apparently simple matter of assessing client satisfaction levels and understanding client needs (and opportunities) result in fear for many fee earners? If your management team aims to put the client at the heart of everything your firm and your people do, say, promise and deliver - you will find that client feedback is a crucial source of intelligence and a potential lever for change in the organisation. Whilst negative feedback may seem like a threat, in our experience very few firms receive such negative responses.

Most clients offer criticism in a spirit of constructive dialogue, to enhance collaboration and help them achieve their objectives more smoothly.

## Benefits

**Improve client satisfaction and loyalty** – Understand how clients talk about you, how they compare your performance with that of competitors and other advisers. Clarify how you are perceived, what perceptions (and realities) you should change, benchmarking these over time

**Identify where and how future value will be delivered with clients** – Active two-way collaboration is essential for service development, new product development and innovation. The firm that recognises key clients' demands and works with them to design service packages to meet their needs will secure client loyalty

**Measure success** – We work on the old adage 'what gets measured gets managed.' The ability to identify the key inputs and outputs to achieve increased value and loyalty with clients is crucial for ROI measurement and to build the link between client satisfaction and service team remuneration and recognition

**Refine service processes** – Like many other processes client care procedures benefit from review and refinement. An independent, external review enables a firm to probe client experience and perceptions in more specific ways than they may have done traditionally

**An effective lever for change** – Everyone within a firm has an interest in what clients have to

say and with encouragement fee earners will respond actively. Communicated effectively, research is a powerful driver for sustaining behavioural change. Motivating and embedding a client centric ethos may require a different approach to marketing and client development. To achieve this we also support key business developers and partners with coaching, mentoring and/or training.

**Techniques that work**

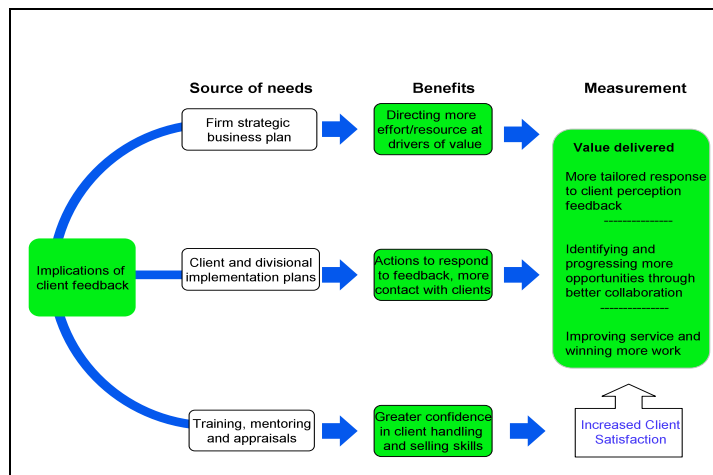
**Insightful and effective research** - Systematic and sustainable methodologies using hard and soft research techniques. Our programmes utilise: in-depth face-to-face and telephone interviews, web surveys, user panels, partner/client comparisons, etc

**Debrief post-pitch and/or major matters or assignments** – For timely and detailed feedback – speed is of the essence when remedial action is needed to address a client service problem. In a pitch situation, even if the pitch has been lost, this follow-up demonstrates your desire to do business with the organization and learn from your mistakes. This humility could ensure an invitation to bid next time round

**Value drivers** – Understanding what is important for key clients and client clusters focuses attention on what really matters. Expressing the less obvious ways in which your services will create value for the client in order to increase the client’s buy-in. Client feedback analysis and mapping will enable firm wide action plan development

**Coaching client partners and service teams** – Working within relationship and account management processes we enable client partners and client service teams to listen to and analyse feedback then prioritise follow-up action.

The following schematic demonstrates the flow and impact client feedback can have:



## Contact us

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