

Listen to your inner voice

Having coached thousands of lawyers, I have noticed a subtle, negative force that often creeps into their minds, a force made up of faulty beliefs and opinions relating to cross-selling. As in other aspects of life, since thoughts drive decisions, and decisions drive behavior, you need the right thoughts in place to activate the right behaviors.

Your inner voice acts as a gatekeeper, armed with checkpoints – beliefs – that determine how you will proceed. For our purposes, I care only about the quality of your cross-selling beliefs to see whether you allow yourself to go full out, or whether you hold back and play smaller than you could.

With some introspection, you can learn whether you possess self-sabotaging thoughts. To test whether such obstacles exist, ask yourself two major questions:

- 1) What do I say to myself about cross-selling?
- 2) Do any of these beliefs get in my way?

You can begin by conducting a personal mental scan. Some examples of potentially disruptive internal dialogue include:

- “I can’t because ...”
- “It won’t work because ...”
- “There’s nothing in it for me.”
- “The compensation system doesn’t reward me for this behavior.”
- “My firm doesn’t ...”
- “My partners won’t ...”
- “It’s not in our culture to ...”
- “That’s not how we do things around here.”
- “The market is bad.”
- “All the good clients are taken.”

If these, or other similar knee-jerk beliefs show up, test them for their veracity. If they are absolutely true, then you have viable reasons for not moving forward. If, however, they don’t hold up to deeper inquiry, get rid of them. Exorcise them. Allow your more reasoned voice to escort these rogues out of your mind. Once you make yourself aware of any dysfunctional tendencies, you can replace them with thoughts, decisions, and actions that will lead to greater success.