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TEN TIPS FOR LAUNCHING HIGH-IMPACT SECTOR GROUPS IN PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FIRMS

The most successful professional services firms use sector groups to achieve three things that matter most: great clients, highly motivated people, and great margins.

When aligned to strategy and run with discipline, sector groups deepen client relationships, give professionals a sense of purpose, and concentrate expertise where it is most profitable. Too often, firms create sector groups with enthusiasm but no roadmap, and the result is predictable: inconsistent activity, unclear ownership, and little measurable impact.

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#1

BUILD THE RIGHT TEAM FROM THE START

A sector group is only as strong as the people in it.

- Include representatives from each relevant service line so the group reflects the full breadth of your firm's capability.
- Ensure a balance of seniority – senior leaders for credibility, mid-level practitioners for energy, and juniors for execution.
- Bring in someone with BD or marketing expertise to keep the group commercially focused.
- Avoid "volunteers by default." Choose people who genuinely want to contribute. I have seen so many sector group teams with too many members who were only there because they felt they had to be rather then wanted to be.

#2

APPOINT A STRONG, CREDIBLE LEADER

Leadership is the difference between a sector group that thrives and one that drifts.

- Select someone who can influence across the firm, not just within their own team.
- Look for a leader who is commercially minded and comfortable driving accountability.
- Give them a clear mandate and visible support from senior management.
- Ensure they have time carved out – not just responsibility without capacity.

#3

SET CLEAR, AMBITIOUS BUT ACHIEVABLE OBJECTIVES

Without defined outcomes, sector groups become talking shops.

- Agree on 3–5 measurable goals for the next 12 months.
- Align objectives with firm strategy – e.g., revenue growth, new client acquisition, cross-selling, or brand visibility.
- Break goals into quarterly milestones to maintain momentum.
- Make objectives visible to the whole group to reinforce shared ownership.

#4

ALLOCATE RESPONSIBILITIES EARLY

Clarity prevents duplication and ensures progress.

- Assign roles based on member's expertise and appetite to be involved such as:
  - Market intelligence lead
  - Client targeting and pipeline lead
  - Thought leadership and content lead
  - Internal communications lead
  - Events and campaigns lead
  - Website/social media lead
  - AI adoption lead
- Document responsibilities so everyone knows who owns what.
- Rotate roles as appropriate to keep energy high and develop capability.

#5

ESTABLISH A COMMUNICATION RHYTHM

Consistency is the backbone of effective collaboration.

- Set a regular meeting schedule – monthly is typical, quarterly is too infrequent.
- Use a simple agenda: progress, pipeline, insights, actions.
- Share short written updates between meetings to keep momentum.
- Create a central hub (Teams, SharePoint, etc.) for documents, plans, and resources.

#6

CREATE A CULTURE OF COLLABORATION

Sector groups work best when people feel safe to contribute.

- Encourage open discussion and challenge—avoid letting one voice dominate. I have found this to be particularly challenging in hybrid meetings where some of the group are face to face and some online.
- Use meetings to share insights from client conversations, events, or market shifts.
- Celebrate experimentation and learning, not just outcomes.
- Bring in external speakers or clients occasionally to spark new thinking and to generate referral opportunities with intermediary speakers.

#7

MOTIVATE THE TEAM WITH RECOGNITION AND REWARDS

People stay engaged when they feel their contribution matters.

- Recognise contributions publicly in internal communications.
- Ensure sector work is acknowledged in performance reviews. This can really make a difference.
- Celebrate wins – new clients, successful events, published content.
- Provide opportunities for visibility, such as speaking slots or authorship (rather than producing material that is signed off by a more senior member of the team).

#8

EQUIP THE GROUP WITH THE RIGHT TOOLS AND MARKET-FACING ASSETS

This is where many sector groups fall short.

- Case studies:
  - Develop sector-specific case studies that demonstrate credibility.
  - Keep them short, outcomes-focused, and client-approved.
- Marketing materials:
  - Create sector brochures, capability statements, and one-page summaries.
  - Ensure they are visually consistent and easy to tailor.
- Thought leadership:
  - Publish insights that speak directly to sector challenges.
  - Use a mix of formats – articles, podcasts, videos, webinars, infographics.
- Pitch templates:
  - Build sector-specific pitch decks with a menu of content to tailor content.
  - Include proof points, team bios, and relevant case studies.
- Social media and website content:
  - Maintain a dedicated sector page with fresh content.
  - Share insights regularly on LinkedIn to build visibility.
- Tailored CRM:
  - Tag clients and prospects by sector.
  - Track interactions, opportunities, and marketing touchpoints.
  - Use CRM data to identify cross-selling opportunities and warm leads.

When sector groups have the right assets, they can act quickly and confidently in the market.

#9

ENGAGE THE WIDER FIRM

A sector group cannot succeed in isolation.

- Report regularly to the firm's senior management to ensure they are aware of its successes
- Share regular updates with the whole firm – wins, insights, opportunities.
- Invite colleagues to contribute ideas or client intelligence.
- Run internal briefings to educate teams on sector trends and opportunities. This will wake it easy for others to bring sector opportunities to the group.

#10

REVIEW PROGRESS AND ADAPT

Your sector strategy should be constantly reviewed and refined.

- Hold quarterly reviews to assess progress against objectives.
- Analyse what activities generated the most commercial value.
- Refresh the plan based on market changes or new opportunities. This is particularly important in this time of rapid change.
- Use data – pipeline, conversion rates, content engagement – to guide decisions.

LET'S TURN YOUR SECTOR GROUPS INTO HIGH-PERFORMING GROWTH ENGINES

If you want your sector groups to deliver measurable commercial impact – not just activity – We can help you design and implement a structure that works.

We support firms by:

- Designing sector group frameworks that drive accountability and momentum
- Facilitating kick-off workshops to align teams and set clear objectives
- Developing sector-specific marketing assets, from case studies to pitch decks
- Building tailored CRM tagging and reporting to track real commercial outcomes
- Coaching sector leaders and team members to drive engagement and performance
- Creating 90-day action plans that turn strategy into measurable results

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IF YOU'RE READY TO TRANSFORM DEVELOP YOUR SECTOR GROUPS, NOW IS THE TIME TO ACT.

YOU CAN TAKE THE FIRST STEP BY APPROACHING US TO SEE HOW WE CAN WORK TOGETHER TO BUILD AN APPROACH THAT ACCELERATES GROWTH.

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