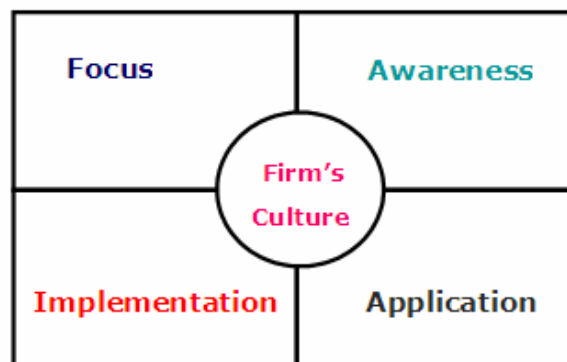


# RainPower

## Identifying Rainmakers

Many firms want to recruit and/or develop more of them. But why is it so difficult? Often it is difficult because the firm adopts a rather narrow view regarding developing rainmakers. This is also why so many organisations are still complaining that their business development is not as effective as it could be! They may have spent considerable time and money training their Partners and Directors in the necessary skills required for business development but few have turned into 'big hitting' rainmakers. Why hasn't this investment made the return that everyone hopes for?

Simple skills development in isolation rarely provides the returns required. Rainmaking is more than just skills and it certainly is **not** just personality. Rainmaking is part process, part skills, part discipline and part mindset. Based upon our extensive research and experience in the field, the diagram below illustrates the elements which need to be assessed when identifying rainmaker potential.



Before we look at the factors to assess, it is critical that we first consider the central element in the diagram – the organisation's culture. Investing in developing Partners and Directors to be better at business development may be worthless if the organisation's culture will not let them 'rain'. An organisation's culture is its personality. It tells people how to do their work. It takes its signals from leaders. It underlies motivation, morale, creativity, and marketplace success. It is the distinctive personality of the organisation. It determines how members act, how energetically they contribute to teamwork, problem solving, innovation, business development, productivity, and quality. It is an organisation's culture that makes it safe (or not safe) for a person, a group or the whole company to raise issues and solve problems, to act on new opportunities, or to move in new, creative directions. If your firm does not have a culture that recognises and/or encourages rainmakers to operate at their full potential then spending on business development training initiatives will be significantly devalued.

This also explains why many successful teams when 'hired in' to another organisation do not replicate their previous success.

If you read any surveys of best practice in managing professional firms, flick through any trade journal, attend any seminar, or read any book for professionals, then you will find metrics related to billable hours, realisation and utilisation rates, revenue per hour, etc., ad nauseam. The billable hour is the standard yardstick firms use to measure, and worse, compare with others.

All the successful rainmaker organisations we have worked with make allowances for rainmakers often giving them a lower 'billable hours' target to ensure they have enough time to 'make rain'. They have accepted that the Rainmakers value is in winning new clients and growing revenue from existing clients rather than to actually do the work. David Maister in his 1993 book "Managing the Professional Service Firm" talks about 'finders, minders and grinders' recognising that different people's skill sets should be utilised in different ways. Where organisations have proactively developed a rainmaker culture there is often a stronger team-working culture.

So, before starting to identify and develop rainmakers it is essential that you assess if you have a culture where this investment in both time and money is likely to succeed. If you would like to undertake a quick assessment of your organisation's business development culture there is a short questionnaire at [www.rainmakers.uk.com/culturalaudit](http://www.rainmakers.uk.com/culturalaudit).

This only takes a few minutes to complete and will provide you with a good starting point to assess your current rainmaker culture as well as provide some basic guidance on how to improve. If your culture is supportive then identifying Rainmaker potential is the next step. We have found that successful rainmakers are always volunteers and never conscripts; therefore the first step is to ask who would like to develop further their business development expertise. Once we have the volunteers then, referring back to diagram 1, we need to assess the 74 specific factors identified by our comprehensive research that all successful rainmakers exhibit.

Consistent **FOCUS** on the right plan and strategy (mainly knowledge based). Under this heading we need to assess:

- how well does the potential Rainmaker understand the process of building a trusting relationship with potential and existing clients?
- do they have the necessary analytical skills to be able to constantly evaluate how the relationship is developing?
- do they build, monitor, maintain and develop workable client plans?

Consistent and effective **IMPLEMENTATION** of knowledge and skills– (mainly relates to the 'how') Under this heading we need to assess:

- How good are they at setting and managing short-term objectives?
- What level are their communication and selling skills?
- How good are they at managing relationships, both short and long-term?

Consistent **AWARENESS** of individual differences to understand and react pertinently to other personalities – (the psychological aspects) Under this heading we need to assess:

- Is the Rainmaker aware of their personality 'style' and the effect this has on others?

- Can the Rainmaker adapt their style to encourage better communication and subsequently relationship development?

Consistent **APPLICATION** of the right amount of effort, in the right direction – (are they good at key activities) Under this heading we need to assess:

- Are they aware of the most effective ways of developing relationships and adding value?
- Do they manage priorities well?
- Can they mobilise others to support their relationship management and business development activities?

This type of assessment needs to be rigorous and comprehensive and typically takes two 3 hour sessions. Session 1 investigates FOCUS and AWARENESS; Session 2 IMPLEMENTATION and APPLICATION. The sessions work because they are continually referenced to real and current client situations and provide not only feedback but an element of coaching. The feedback is presented initially as a 'dashboard' to illustrate the key findings.

**CURRENT RAINMAKER DASHBOARD FOR "A. PARTNER"**

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Focus	Red	Red	Red	Orange	Yellow					
Implementation	Red	Red	Red	Orange	Yellow	Light Green				
Awareness	Red	Red	Red	Orange	Yellow	Light Green	Light Green			
Application	Red	Red	Red	Orange	Yellow					

There would also be a 'target dashboard' produced to illustrate key development areas.

**SIX MONTH TARGET RAINMAKER DASHBAORD FOR "A. PARTNER"**

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Focus	Red	Red	Red	Orange	Yellow	Light Green				
Implementation	Red	Red	Red	Orange	Yellow	Light Green	Light Green			
Awareness	Red	Red	Red	Orange	Yellow	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green		
Application	Red	Red	Red	Orange	Yellow					

From this 'dashboard' we would produce a learning, development and coaching plan for the individual. At this point we occasionally have to tell the individual and firm that because of some of the results in the **Awareness** segment that we would discourage any further investment in them as a Rainmaker.



The Rainmaker Assessment process produces a very comprehensive picture of the individual's strengths and weaknesses, which means that a very specific, highly tailored, individual plan of development can be produced. This eliminates some of the highly unproductive 'standard' training that many professionals are forced to attend. All learning, development and coaching therefore is highly focused and the reasons for any activity are extremely obvious, thereby generating additional motivation within the potential rainmaker. This virtually always leads to greater levels of income, improved profits and a higher profile for the rainmaker.

**We hope you've enjoyed reading RainPower and it has given you some useful insights and tips. If you know of a friend you think would be interested to receive it we'll happily send on your behalf.**

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