

PAUL PHILLIPS

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Training workshop – How to build strong client relationships

All agencies depend on building strong client relationships but in practice this is often quite challenging. Some relationships click, some don't. This workshop offers a very rigorous analysis of all the ingredients that build a robust, deep, long-term connection with clients.

Who it's aimed at

Client-facing staff, at any level, in any type of communication agency.

The approach taken

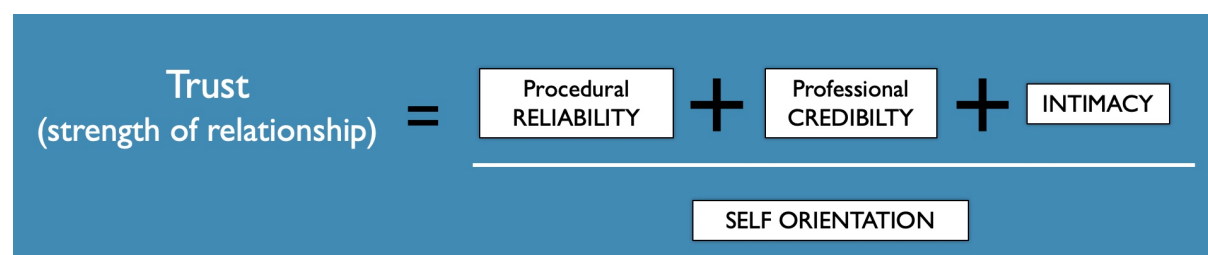
Developing your antennae – doing an audit

One of the key themes of the workshop is around developing your 'antennae'. Successful client-service managers may have different styles, but they all have antennae, sharply-tuned to any little detail that could affect the relationship.

During the workshop participants audit the strengths and weaknesses in specific client relationships and develop a plan to strengthen them.

Breaking down the elements of the relationships

The workshop uses the Trust Equation, which was developed by David Maister to analyse all the ingredients of the relationship.



PROCEDURAL RELIABILITY – Delivering when you say you will. The processes and admin.
PROFESSIONAL CREDIBILITY – The quality of the services you provide (creative, strategy etc). Your knowledge of the client's world and business.

INTIMACY – The connection you make with the client. This is the most complex of the ingredients and the one I spend most time on. It covers the importance of 'active listening' plus insights and behaviours that can build trust to help the agency become a partner rather than a supplier, and ensure the relationship is collaborative and not transactional. I also cover mapping the client organisation; building intimacy at all levels.

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SELF-ORIENTATION – All of the above are undermined if the client feels the agency’s work is for its own benefit, so here it is about noting any watch-outs e.g. forcing a process or approach on a client, not listening, not following feedback, not providing enough resource, using a photographer or technique to win awards etc. Self-orientation is the exact opposite of intimacy.

Example pages from the Client Relationship Audit

PROCEDURAL RELIABILITY
Assess the processes and procedures on the account from yours and the client's perspective.
How could they be improved or better fit with the client's needs?

PROFESSIONAL CREDIBILITY (I) - UNDERSTANDING YOUR CLIENT'S BUSINESS
What could you do to improve your knowledge of the client's world?
Suggested options - Desk Research/Google alerts, Analyse competitors or related companies,
Meet staff from other departments, Shadow sales reps, Factory Visits, Service/Call Centres, Meet digital development staff
Work experience at the client

How well do you know your client's world?
Their Market
Their Target
Their Competitors
The environment they operate in

BUILDING INTIMACY - MAPPING THE CLIENT RELATIONSHIP

	List the clients. (Day-to-day, decision makers, influencers)	Who is marking them at the agency?	How strong is each relationship? Where could improvements be made and how?
1			
2			
3			
4			

Logistics

Although it can be run via Zoom, this workshop works better in-person. It lasts 4 hours and can accommodate up to 12 people.

If attendees all work on separate accounts, they can each audit their own client and then everyone shares their ideas within the group. Or if several attendees work on the same client, they can work in a group, during the breakouts, and audit that client as a team.

Background on trainer

I spent many years working in advertising and marketing in the UK and US: -

Ogilvy (12 years) – From graduate to Board Director

FCB San Francisco (4 years) – Senior Vice President

VCCP (6 years) – Partner

VCCP Health (8 years) – Founder and Managing Director

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During that time, I worked with clients, from a wide range of sectors, including Levi's, P&G, GSK, McCain, Nestle, Jordans Cereals, Coca-Cola, Dept of Health, Price Waterhouse, O2 and Sega.

Testimonials

I have run this workshop for the IPA for several years, with staff attending from over 40 agencies including – Mother, Abbott Mead Vickers, VCCP, Havas, Tribal DDB, Carat, MediaCom and TBWA. I've also run it directly with a number of agencies in London and Scandinavia.

Thank you so much for the session yesterday. We had a little team pub outing afterwards and everyone was really raving about it - really appreciated your perspective and style. We're all set to apply this methodology to the other clients on our roster - lots of work still to be done.

Jasmine Portman, Account Director, Creature

The structure of the audit has already pinpointed areas for improvement that my colleagues and I are discussing.

Account Director, Wunderman Thompson, via IPA Training

Really informative and useful with lots of takeaways, which I'm looking forward to implementing.

Account Manager, Mother via IPA Training

Thanks for the very inspirational session. It kick-started many thoughts and ideas on how to approach the way we work with our clients internally, and how we can use it to utilise our client potential. I will definitely start to implement some of the tools from the 'Antennae audit' into my work

Client Director, Everland Copenhagen

Paul Phillips