

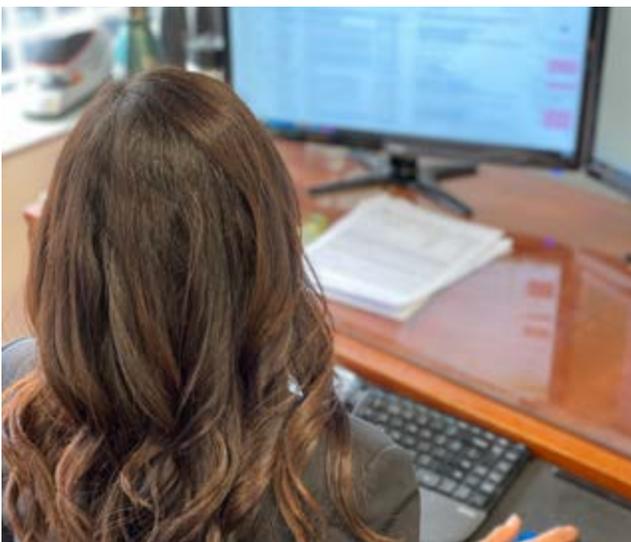
# Event Recap

## HOW TO BUILD YOUR BOOK OF BUSINESS

The Professional Advancement Committee welcomed speaker Mary Robberson, Higgs Fletcher & Mack LLP partner, at its January lunch meeting. Robberson emphasized the power of leveraging your true self and genuine interests to build a sustainable and successful practice. She also shared her top ten strategies for building a practice and growing a book of business.

“When I became a lawyer over 20 years ago,” Robberson explained, “women lawyers were all taking golf lessons, trying to network just like the guys.”

But that approach did not align with Robberson’s interests – so she went hunting for something that did and developed a strategy for building her book of business that would incorporate her genuine interest in meeting new people and building relationships. She excelled at making connections at conferences, as well as networking at social events. That was the start of Robberson’s decision to “go on tour” with the organizations she enjoyed, attending conferences throughout the country over the span of a few years. This strategy allowed Robberson to not only find her “marketing niche” but also meet friends, colleagues, and eventual clients all over the world. Today, Robberson’s practice, which focuses on commercial and cross-border litigation, is booming, giving Robberson peace of mind and the power to control her life and her practice. “If you have a book of business,” Robberson implored, “you control your own trajectory, both at work and in life.”



Robberson offered ten strategies for building your book of business:

- 1. Embrace Your True Self.** Find what you enjoy, be yourself, and incorporate that into your marketing;
- 2. Invest in Developing Relationships.** Spend quality time and take initiative in developing both new and existing relationships;
- 3. Actively Listen.** Connect with people by being an active listener – ask questions that elicit feelings rather than facts;
- 4. Be Responsive.** Be highly responsive to clients and potential clients, or someone else will;
- 5. Solve Problems.** Be the point of contact for all things for your client – help them solve their problems and be their go-to person;
- 6. Diversify.** Diversify your practice to lessen the impact of recessions and leaner times;
- 7. Keep Planting Seeds.** Plant as many seeds as you can – work the room, sit on panels, or write articles – and remember to showcase your lawyerly self (Robberson reminded members to “be the person they call for both drinks and legal work”);
- 8. Maintain Your Value.** Know your value and enforce it by securing a deposit and payment from your client on time – emphasis the value you add to avoid working for free and to ensure returning business is profitable;
- 9. Always Be Marketing.** Never stop marketing because you cannot predict what might happen down the road; and
- 10. Have Fun.** You are more interesting and likeable when there is more to life than your practice – foster that depth and the work will come.

If you would like more information about the Professional Advancement Committee, please contact co-chairs Maggie E. Schroedter at [schroedterm@higgslaw.com](mailto:schroedterm@higgslaw.com) or Winnie Weil at [WWeil@sheppardmullin.com](mailto:WWeil@sheppardmullin.com).

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