

## Compelling Testimonials

By Gerry Riskin

*It's hard to deny: clients today are particularly skeptical. So, one of the most difficult challenges that each of us as professionals face, is coming up with a convincing response to one critical question: "As a prospective client, tell me please, why should I choose you (your firm or your practice group); what makes you distinctive and what added-value do you bring to my business matters . . . that I cannot get anywhere else?"*

Now, you might be able to answer that question with a bold assertion, and making a bold claim may be important to get your audience's attention. However, supporting that claim is even more critical if you want to convert attention into action. To support any assertion, proof speaks the loudest. So, when you say something about yourself, it's bragging. When other people say it about you, it's providing proof. That is the essence of any testimonial. One of the ways to prove that you have something meaningful to offer and evidence that you are better than your competition is to produce a few forceful and persuasive testimonials.

A testimonial is usually a written communication from a client that talks about what is special about you and your firm. Preferably a testimonial should describe the work undertaken, highlighting the success achieved, and include a comment that the client is happy to recommend you. The power of a testimonial or of someone endorsing your service can be the key that unlocks the doors of the subconscious mind. It is tangible evidence that allows you to showcase the specific ways you are meaningfully differentiated from competitors.

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