



MBD^{insight} #51

Are You a Strategic Business Leader?

Many individuals with this title bring a working, personal relationship with the senior management of organizations being pursued. There are a lot of individuals with this basic profile who declare they are strategic business development professionals. However, in reality, they are not.

To be a true **Strategic Business Leader** who is innovative, creative, and successful, you must be able to innately apply the following seven critical concepts.

First you must exhibit the **hunter** profile, always pursuing the next best strategic opportunities for your company and crafting those opportunities before competitors recognize them.

Second, it's critical that you understand the **goal and purpose** of business development. You should understand that the purpose of your role is to help organizations understand their real issues, challenges or concerns, and identify their pain.

Third, you must have a developed knowledge of psychology ... understanding how and why people behave. The application of **people knowledge** is what motivates a prospect to trust an individual and share information.

The fourth concept is the capacity to develop behavioral characteristics of an **intelligence-gatherer**. This is the critical ability to know what information is important to gather early on, and then who to gather it from, and how.

The fifth important aspect of the strategic business leader is the ability and courage to **disqualify opportunities** early and efficiently. That means let go, close the door, walk away and move on to a better opportunity.

The sixth must-have is the skill to quickly build both a short and long-term **pipeline**. To do this you must develop and hone the thinking, have the character and be educated or re-educated in the role of professional business development.

The last quality is the ego drive to continually pursue new opportunities as an **alpha-wolf**. With their heightened sixth sense they have the ability to see leverage points and make connections that others fail to make.

Are Strategic Business Leaders born with the BD gene, or can they be developed in this role? From three decades in this business, the simple answer is that it's a little of both. Few bring it all. That's where professional development and mastery education come into the strategic BD equation.

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