



## HOW CAN YOU **NOT** FIND THE TIME FOR A CLIENT BRAINSTORM?

The power of the brainstorm has been experienced by many of the clients at TIERNEY Coaching & Consulting, Inc. As a group of professionals sit around a table, shifting their focus from themselves and each other to the client and his/her/their concerns, additional opportunities for the firm to add value are naturally exposed, paving the way for several new / different reasons to contact them. The average 45 minute brainstorming session will uncover 2-4 opportunities on behalf of the client. Although some of the opportunities identified may not result in any monetary gain for the CPA firm, they will likely help to solidify the client relationship like never before. Some TIERNEY clients have recognized over \$60k in new revenue from the brainstorming process. To help you get started, we offer these thought-provocative, discussion starters:

### **Questions to Ask the Group During a Client Brainstorming Session**

- How does “Joe” define success?
- What was his biggest problem during the last few years?
- What does he specifically want to accomplish over the next few years?
- What makes Joe happy in business?
- What makes Joe happy personally?
- What does he value most about us?
- What could we do for Joe that would benefit him?
- What does Joe need from someone else?
- Next steps – when / who should next see / talk to Joe?

All attendees will leave with action items for next steps – as well as time for follow-up to evaluate the success of their brainstorm. Consider documenting what was done, by whom and how, as well as all results from the exercise – such as new revenues generated, new introductions made, and the client’s reaction / feedback from this process. Share the story of the brainstorm with the entire firm.

### **Four Basic Guidelines for a Successful Brainstorming session<sup>i</sup>:**

1. Criticism is ruled out (there no stupid or wrong questions or comments).
2. Freewheeling is welcome (the wilder idea, the better).
3. Quantity of Ideas (the more ideas the better).
4. Collaboration is key (everyone should contribute and build on each other’s ideas to improve them).

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<sup>i</sup> A Review of Brainstorming Research: Six Critical Issues for inquiry – Scott G. Isaksen (1998).