Broadening Your Client Relationships

1 **Have broad conversations.**
Always take the *deep generalist* perspective in your client conversations, tying your particular expertise and solutions to the client's broader agenda. You limit the conversation—and the client's perspective on your capabilities—when you talk narrowly about your expertise and methodologies. You broaden the conversation—and ultimately, the relationship—when you are also able to converse about your client's most important *business issues*.

- Deep generalists build strong knowledge not just about their core specialty but also about the client as a person, his/her company and its strategy and operations, and the industry—as well as about the general business.

2 **Introduce colleagues who have other areas of expertise.**
You must obviously have to do this in a way that naturally responds to an interest or need the client has, as opposed to simply pushing different services on them.

3 **Use other clients to persuade.**
Introduce your client to another client with whom you already have a broader relationship. If your client hears another executive say that your firm has done great work in a certain area, it is far more persuasive than when you try to convince them.

4 **Show breadth through points of view.**
Invest, selectively, in building a tailored "Point of View" around other issues of interest to the client, even if they are not directly related to the immediate project.

5 **Offer a "capabilities showcase."**
Choose an issue of high importance to the client, and develop a ½ day working session between your experts and the client's own specialists in that area.

6 **Change horses.**
Replace some of your team leaders and team members in order to provide a new set of perspectives to the client from individuals with different backgrounds.

7 **Seek new buyers.**
Find new buyers and new areas of the organization to build relationships with.

8 **Always go back to your client's priorities.**
Ask implication questions, get the client to talk about linkages to strategy, and test and re-test for evolving priorities.

9 **Lower the threshold for a client meeting.**
Hold more frequent, less formal interactions with clients. By doing so, you will learn more about their needs, frustrations, and concerns.