



THE NEW ELLIS GROUP

Monday Monday

Connecting the Dots with Karen Kaplowitz



*Helping you create and reinforce the habits of successful career building,
gleaned from my work as a business development strategist, trainer and coach*

Volume 4, Issue 12

June 14, 2010

Recruiting: Boon or Burden? The summer law clerk season is upon us. Why is this season different from other years? With fewer summer clerks, fewer new lawyer slots, and smaller entertainment budgets, there is more urgency to size up summer clerks effectively and efficiently. There is also the usual tension, whether to avoid or welcome the opportunity to interact with summer law clerks. In evaluating whether to accept invitations to entertain law clerks, consider the following:

- Does the activity and venue lend itself to having open conversations with clerks about how they see themselves and your firm so you can fully evaluate them?
- Is the organizer someone with whom you want to spend time yourself?
- Who else is already signed up for the activity?
- To whom can you reach out to participate alongside you?
- Can you use the occasion to bring together people you have wanted to introduce?
- Could you satisfy your recruiting obligations by organizing an event which would simultaneously enable you to attract people in the firm who interest you?
- Is recruiting an activity on which you can show leadership and be noticed?

Example: One of your firm's summer law clerks is from your alma mater. You made a point of welcoming the student and learned that you share one favorite law professor in common with the law clerk. You know you are expected to do some summer entertaining and offer to organize an evening for the student from your law school. Your firm has tickets to the local Major League Baseball franchise. You ask the recruiting coordinator for tickets to an evening game against the team from the city where your law school is located. You invite another lawyer in the firm who is a fellow alum to join you.

You ask the summer clerk if there is anyone he would like to invite to join you. You are impressed at the law clerk's initiative in suggesting that you reach out to the law professor you both like to see if she will be in town for the ball game. You also use the occasion to reach out to a fellow law school alum who has become a successful investment banker. It is an easy and natural excuse to reach out to the investment banker. If he accepts, you also invite your cousin who is at the same investment banking firm who you have been hoping would help you network at the firm. If the investment banker is not available, you set up coffee or lunch as an alternative. When you report to the head of the recruiting committee that it was a very successful evening which you will be glad to repeat next year, she invites you to make a presentation to the recruiting committee.

Are you able and willing to convert obligatory recruiting activities into opportunities to spend time with people who matter to you? Are you using entertainment events to assess which summer clerks show initiative and are likely to become rainmakers in your firm?