



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*

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Patience. Are you disappointed every time a meeting with a prospective client does not result in immediate assignments? Do you consider yourself a failure when a client invites you to a beauty contest and does not pick you? Are you setting unrealistic goals for seeing results from your marketing efforts? Patience on the marketing front is in short supply in many quarters. To create more reasonable expectations for marketing initiatives, take these factors into account:

- How well developed is your relationship with the potential client?
- How long have you known the decision makers and have they seen you in action?
- How much do you know about their business and their current internal and external legal staffing?
- Is there a good level of trust between you and them?
- Is the client actively in the market for new counsel? If so, do you know why?

If you set unreasonable expectations for yourself, you may cut off development of promising relationships by treating early rejections as an end game when they are in fact just the beginning of a process. And if you don't have enough potential clients in your pipeline, you may put too much pressure on yourself to make every time at bat a home run.

Example: At a conference in her practice area, a lawyer met an in house lawyer with whom she had excellent chemistry. She followed up after the conference and was delighted when the in house lawyer called a few months later about a potential matter in her jurisdiction. The in house lawyer explained that the company had a preferred provider list of law firms but that he had been favorably impressed with the lawyer and wanted to give her a chance to be considered for the matter. The lawyer prepared an extensive submission outlining her relevant experience and her firm's. She assumed she had an inside track under the circumstances and was devastated when she heard they were not selected.

The lawyer sheepishly reported to her firm that they had not gotten the matter but then called her contact and asked why. Her contact explained that the company stuck with a firm on their preferred provider list. The lawyer then asked how her firm could get on the preferred provider list. Her contact said they couldn't be considered for another 18 months because the list was set for several years at a time. He promised to invite the firm to compete to be on the preferred provider list and gave her some guidance on how to be successful. He said competing for this matter was step one in the process because it helped him raise the firm's visibility in the law department.

Are you giving new relationships enough time to mature and evaluating initial rejections in their proper light? Are you walking away from good prospects because the new work did not materialize instantaneously? Are you expanding your pipeline of prospective clients so each opportunity is not a life or death situation?