



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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Staying the Course. Are your files littered with marketing initiatives that you started and dropped when they did not work immediately? Or marketing initiatives that you left hanging before you even launched them because something urgent in your practice distracted you? Do you justify not devoting more time to marketing because you have concluded it is fruitless? If you have started a new initiative which is not moving quickly or hasn't gotten off the ground, consider these questions before abandoning it:

- Is it dead or just going more slowly than you hoped?
- Were your initial expectations realistic?
- Did you build in moves to make if your initial approaches failed?
- Can you get help from someone to get back on track?
- Do you need help from the start to insure continuity when predictable urgent matters arise?
- If you over-hyped expectations in your firm that you would succeed, is it better to abandon the effort or clarify internally that you need more time?

Crash marketing does not work any better than crash diets. If you look at your most successful relationships, or if you look at the most successful rainmakers in your firm, you will find that the strongest client relationships are ones which were built purposefully over a period of time.

Example: The relationship partner for a multinational client set out to expand the business his firm did for the client. He organized teams of firm lawyers from several disciplines and in several venues worldwide to meet with the client and made the introductions in person when possible. He made himself available to assist the client in selection of counsel for any matters the client had, whether the matters could be handled by his firm or not. He expanded his own relationships throughout the client's law department worldwide. When the client had emergencies, he mobilized firm lawyers to respond to the crises, including international travel on short notice.

Within several months, the volume of potential new business from the client picked up. But the volume of actual new business did not increase. The firm was consulted on an emergency which had been handled by another firm but the relationship partner encouraged the client to stick with its original counsel. The firm was asked to bid on a new matter but did not get the work.

The relationship partner was discouraged that his persistent efforts to expand the client's work had not been successful but kept up his role of being available to assist the client in selecting counsel whether the counsel were from his firm or not. In the process, he built a relationship of trust with the client. When a significant lawsuit against the client was filed in an area in which the firm had great depth and a superb track record, the relationship partner could credibly assert to the client that this was a matter on which the firm was not only a good choice, but the best choice.

Are you so discouraged or frustrated by the initial failures of your marketing initiatives that you give up before you have allowed relationships to develop?