



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 5, Issue 3

January 31, 2011

The Importance of Peers. In the interest of broadening their networks of potential clients, many lawyers seek out business or industry groups to join instead of bar groups. But maintaining a presence in professional circles is critical to accomplish many important marketing goals, including:

- Developing a reputation among peers for thought leadership
- Referrals from competitors when they have conflicts
- Staying current with new ideas in your specialties
- Being seen by clients and prospective clients as respected by significant peers
- References from other lawyers when clients seek validation of your selection

Selecting the right group is important. Are the other professionals in the group your peers? Does the group address issues of importance to you? Does the group provide an environment which promotes building relationships? Does the group provide a platform for you to speak, write and shine? If the right group does not exist, consider creating one.

Example: A small group of lawyers in Los Angeles who specialized in business litigation decided 40 years ago that the litigation section of the local county bar association was too general for their purposes and formed a new group they called the Association of Business Trial Lawyers to meet their needs. The group was small to begin with and took on several characteristics. Since it was started by a group of star trial lawyers who enjoyed seeing each other in action, they made great trial demonstrations a feature of their programming. The trials became one of the hallmarks of the group. The group also invited judicial leaders to participate to stimulate a dialogue between bench and bar relating to business litigation issues. The group then had added value because it allowed lawyers to develop more familiarity with the judges which enhanced the lawyers' effectiveness in court. The group also kept a balance between plaintiffs and defense lawyers to avoid any appearance of impropriety and promote collaboration and civility. In recent years, the group grew, expanding all over California and including new generations of star trial lawyers in its leadership.

Similarly, a group of labor and employment lawyers who saw the growing trend of employment litigation in the early 90's carved out a new niche for themselves in the ABA Tort and Insurance Practice section. Some had been active in the ABA Labor Law Section or the labor and employment-related committees of the Litigation Section but establishing a new trial-oriented employment law committee in the TIPS Section of the ABA gave them a new platform on which to operate.

If you have not found a group involving peers which supports your practice, are you willing to consider creating a new group, tailored to your interests, which may provide a better platform for meeting your objectives?