



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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Taking the Easy Road. The holidays remind us of the pleasure and ease of old friends and family. It is just easier to be with people who know you, trust you and care about you. Client relationships are the same. It is easier to do business with people with whom you share history and trust. As you review your business plan for 2011—or create one if you don't have one, make a central feature of your 2011 plan to review your existing and recent client and referral relationships. Ask yourself these questions:

- Have you put a premium on meeting new people at the expense of mining your existing relationships?
- Which recent clients or referral sources could direct more business your way?
- For which clients over the last five years have you obtained the best results?
- Have you lost touch with any significant clients or referral sources?
- Have you developed, scheduled and started to implement a strategy for each of your most promising sources to connect, maintain contact, and enhance the relationship in a purposeful and consistent way?

Example: The general counsel of one of your clients retired in 2010. One of the deputy general counsel to whom you are close was a candidate to become general counsel but lost out to an outside candidate. You are concerned that the fact that the new general counsel is from a law firm may jeopardize your business. Your friend has not said that she is under pressure to leave the company but you know that it can be awkward to work for a new leader after competing for the job.

When you are asked by a recruiter for suggestions for a GC search he is handling, you discretely reach out to the deputy general counsel and inquire whether she would be interested in the opportunity. She is thrilled to have your help in being introduced to the recruiter and offers reciprocally to arrange a meeting for you and your firm with the new general counsel of her company, with an endorsement from her about your effectiveness.

You quickly take advantage of her help in establishing a relationship with the new general counsel knowing that your advocate may not be there long to fight for you.

In mining existing relationships, are you paying close attention to the needs of the clients who have a high regard for your services? Are you sufficiently vigilant about doors you can open which will provide career advancement to clients who are your fans and new opportunities for you? Happy New Year!

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