



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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Internal Marketing: The Value of Proximity and Easy Access. Do you have resources for new business right down the hall from your office that you are not taking advantage of? Law firm partners are generally not like family; you can't take for granted that your partners will support your marketing efforts. But if you are looking for relative ease of access, it is hard to beat colleagues whose offices are in the same building, who attend the same firm gatherings you do and whose assistants' names and phone numbers you have on a list. If other lawyers in your firm have clients who do not use your firm for the kind of work you do, they are potentially great sources of new work for you. But getting colleagues to devote attention to your agenda requires the same kind of careful and persistent strategic planning as external sources of work. Consider taking these concrete steps to generate work in your area from other lawyers in your firm:

- Identify specific partners who have clients that interest you; do not rely on just making a presentation about your specialty to another practice group and hoping that people will call.
- Ask those partners which of their clients may need help in your area and who does the work now. If they don't know, ask them to find out or ask your marketing department to help.
- Make it easy for them to introduce you to their clients by providing a description of your expertise, including other clients and successes.
- Offer a range of ways they can help you such as inviting clients to programs; setting up presentations at the clients; making introductions when the clients are in the office; and bringing you to events where the clients will be so you can meet them.
- Make it clear that you will be persistent in following through with them.
- Enlist the help of their assistants from the outset.
- Be prepared to offer to reciprocate with introductions to specific clients of yours.

Example: A young partner successfully completed a small matter for a client whose work was concentrated in another practice group. The partner then asked the client relationship partner if he would arrange for her to speak at a practice group meeting about the matter and similar work she could do for their clients. Before the practice group meeting, the partner obtained from the marketing department a list of the practice group's major clients, whether the firm had done work in her area for each client and the relationship partner for each one. At the practice group meeting, the young partner explained the type of work she did that might be relevant to the practice group's clients. She handed out a one page bio that listed representative clients and successful matters she had handled. She also approached several specific relationship partners and asked if they would be interested in jointly pursuing work in her area from their clients. Several lawyers said "sure". For each one, she asked them to set a time for her to come by their office to follow up. For the ones who said they did not have their calendars with them, she promised to follow up with their assistants to set a time and did so promptly.

Are you treating partners in your law firm who can provide you access to potential clients the same way you would treat someone external to your firm? Are you taking advantage of their proximity and that of their assistants to follow through effectively?