



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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You Don't Have to Reinvent the Wheel. You don't have to reinvent the wheel to get a quick start on business development for 2012 if you are ready to get serious and make a commitment to it. You have probably created several plans over the last few years that are ready to be dusted off and put in action. For example, you could start with the most recent self-evaluation that you submitted for your annual review where you listed clients you said you hoped to bring in. Even if they haven't materialized yet, there was presumably a good basis for your aspirations. Also look at any practice group plans you helped create, or just your random notes. Make a list of all the people whom you have previously identified as good prospects, including clients, former clients and others and then do the following:

- From the list, pick five priority prospects based on the quality of your relationships and whether they are in a position to send you work.
- Create a specific strategy for each priority prospect; a strategy is more than one lunch.
- Research other firms your prospects use and seek information on the other firms' results for them. You are looking for areas in which the prospects are not well served by current counsel.
- Find out who else in the firm has relationships at the same companies and consider teaming up.
- Resume each relationship if it has gone stale. It is not too late to send a New Year's greeting.
- Focus on what your best prospects may need, not on what you would like to sell them.

The beginning of the year is a good time for a reality check. Now is a good time to ask yourself if you were really serious about the potential business you said you could and would pursue.

Example: To jump start business development for the year, you help organize a meeting of the local partners in your practice group. You ask the practice group leader to distribute the most recent practice group marketing plan so everyone has it in hand for the meeting. You also suggest that each partner bring a list of the prospects they included in their recent self-evaluations. The group quickly eliminates a few prospects because the partners who knew them best have left the firm. In one case, the group decides to compete for the client with the departed client relationship partner. In another situation, you know that you need help from a partner in another office so you arrange in advance to call that partner when the discussion turns to the particular prospect. After the meeting, your local group reports to the practice group as a whole, thereby creating momentum and a challenge to others in the practice group to do the same.

What simple steps, using plans you have already created, can you launch at the beginning of the year to create a sense of momentum and to show your colleagues you are serious about success in 2012?