



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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On Track/Off Track. With half a year left to meet your goals, now is a good time for a self-assessment. Consider these questions which relate to standard warning signs of risk factors to help determine whether you have cause for concern for 2012:

- Y/N** Is over 75 percent of your work derived from a few clients?
- Y/N** Are you consumed by a major matter which may conclude in 2012?
- Y/N** Is a major client about to retire without your knowing his or her successor well?
- Y/N** Have key firm allies retired or left the firm?
- Y/N** Have your originations declined from last year?
- Y/N** Is the volume of work in your practice area generally declining?
- Y/N** Have you lost a major matter recently?
- Y/N** Has competition caused rates in your practice area to decline?
- Y/N** Have your billable hours declined from last year?
- Y/N** Has your firm's management questioned your hours or revenues?
- Y/N** Has the rate—or quality—of new referrals declined?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, it is critical to go back and consider what impact your answer will have on your success in 2012. What are the consequences if you ignore the situations described in each question you answered in the affirmative? If you are feeling vulnerable, do not ignore the feeling and hope it will go away. Ask for help from all sources in addressing these risk factors. Be candid if your business is soft. Meet with your support group: practice group leaders; the marketing staff; your mentors in the firm; your best referral sources; and other similarly situated lawyers in the firm who need help. Consider which of your old strategies are working and add some new strategies. Take advantage of the summer months when you probably have some breathing room because so many people are on vacation.

If you are facing uncertainty in your current situation, do not rush to consider changing firms; lateral moves made when your prospects are shaky are even higher risk than lateral moves generally.

Are you focused on preparing for the contingencies you identified in the answers to these questions? If being secure in an insecure world is a priority, making use of the lighter workload of summer to do some planning for the rest of the year is time well-spent.