



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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How Age Factors Into Business Development. Some people think they are too young to become rainmakers and others think they are too old. Age is often a factor but does not have to be a barrier in business development. If you are a young professional, you are right to assume that you will not have the same credibility as a seasoned professional and may not be able to attract business from older decision-makers. Consider these strategies to help you get in the game:

- Build a network of your own contemporaries among clients, in other law firms and in businesses who will be able to help you as they get more authority in their own realms.
- Be a resource to everyone you know to identify lawyers who can help them, even if it is not you.
- Team with senior lawyers in your firm and help them adapt to your generation's social media.
- Do not hold back on building relationships with people who may be good sources of business because they are older; you can still find common ground with them.
- Show confidence but stay humble; do not overcompensate by assuming you have to know it all.

If you are an older lawyer, especially one whose clients have started to retire, do not assume that you no longer have a role in attracting new clients. Consider these strategies:

- Develop relationships with clients and prospects that are younger than you.
- Team with younger lawyers in your firm if you need to do so.
- Be conscious of the many skills and contacts that you have to offer younger people.
- Anticipate the changing of the guard when clients are retiring. [Click here to read more.](#)

It is fine to take age into account as long as you don't let it stop you from effective strategies at any age.

Example: A young lawyer in a big firm had the good fortune to be assigned to work with a partner who encouraged him to build relationships with the junior people in their clients' law departments. When there was an opportunity for the firm to send someone to take the place of an in-house lawyer who had a medical leave of absence for six months, the partner encouraged the young lawyer to take the opportunity to cement relationships with a major client. The partner also encouraged the young lawyer to maintain those relationships afterwards. The strategy was rewarded when one of the young lawyer's in-house peers left that company and became general counsel of another company and retained the firm. That new business insured a favorable partnership decision for the lawyer when he was up for partnership.

When the same lawyer left his big firm to start his own firm, he was very successful. When he hit his early fifties, he consciously decided that he needed to build a pipeline of business that would not peter out when he hit his sixties. He then set out to build relationships with 40 year olds who would still be generating work for him as he got older.

Are you taking age into account in your business development strategy but not letting it stand in your way?

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