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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Make New Clients But Keep the Old. The folk song lyric, "make new friends but keep the old; one is silver and the other gold", applies directly to client relationships. Clients who got good results are the most likely people to retain you again. They know from personal experience that you are competent, they trust you, and hopefully they had a good experience with you on the way to a good result. To avoid losing contact with clients, be sure to take these steps:

- Include their personal emails and phone numbers in your data base.
- Use LinkedIn so that if they change jobs you will get a notification
- Put them on your mailing lists but only for relevant firm communications.
- Respect their privacy when sending out group emails by not revealing everyone's email address in the header.

If former clients who got good results are also in a position to refer new work to you, they deserve even more attention. You want to be top of mind and you also want to make it easy for old clients to introduce you to new colleagues if they have changed companies or jobs. Here are some strategies to help you accomplish both objectives:

- Congratulate old clients when they are promoted or make a move. If you are sending something, make it a plant or a desktop gift which will remind them of you, not flowers.
- Use Google alerts, https://www.google.com/alerts, or other systems, to track their online activities and their companies. When you are alerted, use the occasion or news to ping them.
- Ask a lawyer colleague who works for other clients in the same industry to provide you with something pertinent, like a report on new government regulations, to send to your old client.
- Get on the firm's mailing list to receive new material on that industry so you can send it with a personal note to your old client. Do not just put your client on another practice group's mailing list; a personal touch is much more effective.
- Keep valuable old clients on a tickler list. Periodically devise ways to reconnect with each one.

Example: A practice group was brainstorming about prospective new clients. One lawyer mentioned a prominent company in the area which seemed to be in the news a lot for transactions and lawsuits. The group agreed to do some research to see if the firm had any contacts with the company. When the firm's marketing staff reported on the results of comparing the company's executive management team to the firm's Interaction data base, they had found that an old client of the firm had become an executive at the company. The group tasked the lawyer who knew the old client with reestablishing contact. When the lawyer reached out to his old client, the client was delighted to hear from him. When the lawyer proposed lunch, the client invited him for lunch in the company's executive dining room. When the lawyer mentioned that he would be pleased to meet the company's general counsel, the client walked him over to the general counsel's table and made the introduction on the spot.

Are you making a priority in your business plans of reconnecting with former clients for whom you have gotten great results?

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