



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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**The Effectiveness of Mobile Communications.** Cellphones mean that people can communicate anywhere and anytime: from beds, cars, trains, streets, and even toilets. But the fact that you can communicate all the time does not mean that it is always optimal or appropriate to do so. Leaving aside the obvious tackiness of toilets, there are many other issues to consider:

- Do clients appreciate when you answer their calls while on the run?
- If you make or take a call while traveling, do you have access to necessary information?
- Can you make a record of the conversation or take follow up action if you are out and about?
- Can you maintain your client's privacy while sitting on a train or plane or walking on the street?
- If you bill by time units, can you track the amount of time while traveling?
- Can you concentrate and think as effectively when you make or take calls on the fly?

It is important to ask clients for their preferences with respect to communications generally and especially with respect to mobile communications. One cannot assume that every client has the same attitudes; establishing and communicating the communications guidelines for each client should be a part of the initial engagement process and shared with the whole client team.

**Example:** The lawyer was faced with a classical dilemma: the negotiations on a major matter had not concluded on the schedule she expected as the date of her family vacation approached. Her client insisted that she not cancel her vacation especially since they could continue to communicate by cellphone, email and text. Despite everyone's best efforts, the communications were a nightmare: calls were dropped, cell reception was often poor, and the lawyer was distracted by competing family demands. She finally flew back to her office to dedicate a few days to wrapping up the negotiations and then rejoined her family. Her client was grateful for her dedication but both the client and the lawyer agreed that going forward they would not conduct any important business without secure, private communications. The client also instructed other lawyers in the law department to make similar requests of counsel with whom they worked and suggested that the company not pay for time spent on calls with poor reception or a lot of background noise.

Have cellphones become so ubiquitous that you are simply assuming that your clients appreciate your using them to communicate with them? Are you really communicating the respect and seriousness your clients expect and deserve when you use cellphones on the fly or in non-private spaces?