



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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Showing Interest in Your Clients. One sure way to enhance client relationships is to show interest in your clients, not just with respect to the extent they use your services but also with respect to the success of their businesses. In evaluating whether you are sufficiently showing interest in them, ask yourself these questions:

- Have you offered to spend non-billable time to learn about the business?
- Have you toured the clients' offices or facilities?
- Have you spent time with business people to understand their business perspectives on the legal issues you are dealing with?
- Do you have a system for introducing each new firm lawyer who works on client matters to the clients' systems, business and preferences, at firm, not client, expense?
- Have you organized formal exchange programs between lawyers in the firm and lawyers in the clients' law departments to deepen relationships and understanding in both directions?
- Do you track news about your clients and key leadership through Google alerts or other systems?
- When you see news about the client or its industry, do you inquire about the impact on their business?
- When working with a new client, have you asked them to share with you the systems and practices they most value in working with other law firms?

For more ideas on building client relationships, see the recommendations of [The Law Firm Value Committee of the Association of Corporate Counsel](#).

Example: A lateral recruit heard from virtually every suitor law firm that they would introduce her to clients of the firm. While every firm held out the promise of access to firm clients, one firm's description of its systems for onboarding new laterals was compelling to the recruit. That firm committed that it would add the recruit to a particular client team in the firm. The firm then explained that as part of its onboarding system, the lateral would go through a client orientation program that it used for every lawyer in the firm who worked on this client's matters. The client team's orientation program included information about the nature of the client's business, information on the organization of the law department, significant business and law department leaders with whom the firm had relationships, information on past and present matters the firm was handling for the client, and information on key lawyers with client relationships. When the recruit heard the extent of orientation about the client that she would receive, she felt that the firm was serious in its commitment to integrate her onto the client team and very respectful of its client at the same time.

Are you committed to fully understanding your clients' businesses as well as addressing the specific legal matters on which they rely on your expertise?

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