



# 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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**Promoting Internal Collaboration.** In the interest of promoting more collaboration among lawyers, many firms, as part of year-end evaluations, ask lawyers to identify other, specific lawyers they have helped and who have helped them during the past year. To help you create a comprehensive list, consider the following questions:

- Did you introduce a lawyer in a different practice group to a client you control?
- Did another lawyer introduce you to a client for cross-selling purposes?
- Did you arrange for a speaking engagement or writing opportunity for another lawyer?
- Did you help another firm lawyer to be nominated to a board on which you serve or to become active in a group you in which you are a leader?
- Did you help another lawyer with strategy on a matter or on a business development initiative?
- Did you make yourself available as a subject matter expert for another lawyer's client or pitch?
- Did you show another lawyer the ropes by bringing them to observe at a significant meeting?
- Did you offer to share origination credit?
- If you are contemplating retirement, did you create a succession plan for client relationships?
- Did you otherwise mentor other lawyers in the firm?

Also consider any situations listed above in which you were the recipient of the opportunity described.

After you fill out your own self-evaluation, you might also send a tasteful note of thanks to the people who helped you whom you mentioned in your form so they know you recognized them. And encourage them to complete their own lists – maybe even share this article with them as a guide.

**Example:** Beginning in 2014, a senior partner who was on the officer ladder of a bar group started bringing several junior partners to the group's meetings. He arranged for other leaders of the group to sit with them at dinners and encouraged his partners to volunteer to speak on programs of the group. One partner in particular became active and was invited to chair a committee of the group. The senior partner suggested that she invite the general counsel of a local company to serve on the committee as an opportunity to get to know him. In 2015, the general counsel contacted the junior partner about the firm's handling a matter for his company. The junior partner asked the senior partner for his guidance and the firm was successful in obtaining the work. The junior partner again sought the senior partner's help on allocating the origination credit for the matter. The senior partner thanked her for offering to share the origination credit but told her it was rightfully one hundred percent her own good work. When the junior partner filled out her 2015 self-evaluation she documented her experience. When she thanked the senior partner for his support, he told her that a senior partner had done the same thing for him as a young partner and he was glad to have the chance to continue the tradition and hoped she would pay it forward.

Reflecting on your own experiences of promoting and benefiting from collaboration over the past year is a good opportunity to consider how to be more intentional in the coming year, too. What can you do in 2016 to make collaboration more of a tradition in your own firm?