



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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**Event-Driven Marketing.** Does your business plan include a specific process for identifying the events that lead to business for your practice? Once you have identified the relevant events, do you have a strategy for using that information in an effective way to secure new work? Here are some questions to help you focus on an event-driven business development strategy:

- For each type of work you do, have you looked at the circumstances that typically lead your clients to retain outside counsel?
- If some aspects of those circumstances are public information, do you have a process in place to track that information?
- For relevant events that are not public, are there correlated public events that could serve as a proxy for you to act on?
- When there is no public access to information, have you encouraged your clients and prospective clients to contact you when they become aware of the triggering event?
- If you are tracking specific types of events, is someone assigned to review the information and notify the right people in the firm?
- Is there a process in place to check conflicts so you don't waste effort?
- For each type of event, have you identified all the potential decisionmakers? General counsel, senior executives, board members, outside counsel or others?
- Is someone assigned to determine who in your firm has access to any of the potential decisionmakers? Is your firm's database adequate for the task?
- Do you have buy-in from colleagues that they will act when asked? Do firm compensation policies incentivize them to do so?

**Example:** A litigation practice group leader scheduled a discussion about event-driven marketing. She asked each lawyer to be prepared to describe what public or private information they routinely tracked for business development purposes and their level of success. Several lawyers said that they had given up sending copies of new lawsuits to certain clients because the clients were tracking the same information and did not appreciate being bombarded by notices of new lawsuits by lots of law firms. One lawyer said that he had more success when he sent specific information about the firm's experience with the plaintiffs' lawyers to clients that had been sued. Another lawyer said that instead of tracking information herself, she had discussions with each of her clients about what information they could track that would be helpful in risk management. For example, she helped public company clients track the same kind of information as plaintiffs' lawyers to anticipate potential securities fraud lawsuits. The practice group leader also encouraged lawyers to respond with urgency when asked by another lawyer to reach out to a client based on a new event. She also pressed the lawyers to share origination credit in these situations to reward both the lawyers who uncovered relevant events and the lawyers with the client relationships.

Making good use of event-driven marketing requires a lot of planning and coordination. If you and your colleagues are not planning and collaborating effectively, you can be sure that many of your competitors will be targeting your clients.