



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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## Applying What You Know

You already know what you need to do to achieve your business development goals. The topic has been the subject of many meetings you have attended and many articles you have read. Every year you do some type of self-evaluation and projections for the coming year. If you are still not reaching your goals and wondering why, consider these questions:

- Have you been fully committed to your plans? Have you decided that you can live with the consequences of not meeting your goals in terms of compensation, status, and security?
- Looking back on your last set of goals, did you set yourself up by adopting unrealistic numbers?
- Did you create preconditions that slowed you down? For example, did you make your starting point a review of all your contacts to pick the best prospects? Did you delay your activities because you did not have a comprehensive business plan? Did you forego five-minute tasks because you thought you had to carve out at least an hour a day for business development?
- Did you track your progress?
- Did you report to others — other lawyers, staff people, friends, family or a coach — on your progress? Have you made yourself accountable to someone else?
- Did you modify your plans when they didn't seem to be working?
- Did you find ways to integrate your business development activities into other activities? Were you prepared when you met or talked to your clients to ask relevant questions? Did you monitor news about your clients and their industries and their public filings and press releases?

If you know what you need to do but get sidetracked year in and year out, can you evaluate what stands in your way? Many people know what they need to do but have a hard time applying what they know to their own circumstances. If you are in that boat and fully committed to your goals, can you identify the barriers and find someone to help you figure out how to apply what you know?

**Example:** As the year-end approached, with holiday preparations and self-evaluations due, a lawyer decided it was time to mine her extensive contacts in a more comprehensive way. She committed to reviewing all her contacts and getting them onto her firm's holiday mailing list and to categorizing them to pick the most promising prospects among them. But every time she sat down to work on the project, she got no further than names beginning with "C" in her database before having to work on something more pressing. She finally gave up and focused instead on creating three lists: former law firm colleagues who had moved in-house; former law school classmates who were working in-house; and clients for whom she had done good work with whom she had not talked recently. These categories yielded 30 names. She made sure they were all on the firm's holiday mailing lists. She then selected the people on the list with whom she had worked most closely who she thought had the highest regard for her. She organized several year-end gatherings, one for the law school classmates on the list, and one for former colleagues as a way of reconnecting with these two groups. She also invited a few of her former clients to a firm holiday open house.

If you know what to do but cannot apply that knowledge in a practical way, will you abandon your goals or perhaps sharpen your focus? If you are not reaching your business development goals, is it time to take a hard look at whether you are setting reasonable goals? If you have been going it alone, is it time to get help?