



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*

Volume 13, Issue 18

September 9, 2019

Mentoring for Year End Reviews

If you are a designated or volunteer mentor to another lawyer whose professional advancement matters to you, then you are likely approaching a critical event: submission of year-end reviews and self-evaluations. This is an opportunity for you to advance your protégés' standing in the firm by helping them identify -- and communicate -- their strengths, successes, standing in the community, and hard work. Many lawyers give short shrift to preparing their self-evaluations and preparing for their in-person reviews. Here are some ideas on supporting your protégés:

- Review the year-end forms for reviews and self-evaluations with your protégés and give them guidance on the issues that matter most to the firm.
- Encourage your protégés to devote the time to prepare detailed, thoughtful submissions and offer to review their drafts.
- Ask your protégés to remind you of their best work so you can report on it in your reviews of them and touch base with other partners with whom they worked to remind them, too.
- Share with your protégés how to boast about accomplishments in a politically correct way.
- Insure that your protégés credit other people appropriately.
- Help your protégés outline ambitious but realistic plans for the coming year.
- Offer to help them rehearse for in person review meetings and share insights about the partners who will review them.
- Plan on a debrief with them after their year-end reviews so you can start planning for next year.

Helping your protégés plan effectively for year-end self-evaluations and reviews is a very concrete step you can take to fulfill your mentoring responsibilities. This is your chance to ensure that they showcase their progress, and your support.

Example: One practice group had a very specific process for helping its associates prepare for annual reviews as well as for positioning them to make partner. When a partner in another practice group had a highly valued senior associate who was about to be considered for the partnership track, she asked the other practice group leader for advice. The leader said that each year, partners in the practice group conferred on which associates were vital to the group. They organized metrics which demonstrated those associates' work for major clients, their client relationships and in some cases, obtained endorsements from clients. The practice group also held a session each Fall to explain the year-end review process and to urge associates to take it seriously. They also encouraged associates to keep notes during the year of significant successes and feedback from clients to use at year-end. The partner went back to her associate, better armed to offer support and then met with her practice group leader about instituting a similar system for the whole practice group.

Are you providing guidance to your protégés on how to navigate the year-end review process in the most effective way? If your protégés don't advance in the firm, how will your ability to retain and serve clients be affected?