



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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Partnering on Business Development

New Year's resolutions are usually commitments made by individuals to be carried out - or forgotten - on their own. If you have returned from the holidays with renewed zest and zeal for your 2020 business development goals, you will increase the odds of success if you don't go it alone. We all know how easy it is to get inundated by client demands that can, and will, derail us from these new goals. Involving an energetic, ambitious, candid colleague in the process will provide you with a sounding board, accountability, a division of labor, better ideas, and a greater likelihood of success. If more success on the business development front is a priority this year, consider taking these steps:

- Pick one project to generate new business. The project could be expanding work from an existing client; teaming up with someone from another practice group to offer something new to clients; reaching out to a new prospect; creating a blog or contributing to one.
- Make your project specific and feasible - the proverbial "low-hanging fruit."
- Identify one colleague to invite to work with you on the project. Make it someone you can count on to share the work and commit to keeping each other accountable.
- Outline the steps you need to take along with a timetable. Put due dates for each step on both of your calendars. The last thing you need is another to-do list. If you don't hit a due date along the way, give yourselves a new one but keep it targeted to a specific completion date.

Even if you already have a lot of other commitments to clients or firm management, teaming up with a colleague on one discrete business development project should be doable. If you are not already a leader in your firm, launching and successfully completing a business development project in this way may help establish you as a leader.

Example: Every year, a partner returned from the holidays refreshed and committed to reaching out to clients and prospective clients about their needs. Every year, her good intentions were superseded by more immediate demands. This year, she also took on a leadership role in her practice group which added substantial administrative responsibilities. She decided to focus on just one new, promising business development initiative, to follow up with a client who had expressed interest in the firm's expertise in a different practice area. She asked a highly motivated senior associate to work with her on the project. The two of them met and developed a game plan which included research on the challenges faced by the unit of the client's business which needed help and the firm's capabilities in that area. They also scoped out possible occasions when the client would be in the firm's offices and reached out to lawyers in the other practice group about their availability for an introduction. The senior associate took responsibility for setting up a meeting with the other firm lawyers to brief them on their existing work for the client and the client's preferences. Within a short time, the two lawyers had teamed up to introduce the client to lawyers in another practice group with relative ease.

Are you setting feasible business development goals for the new year and partnering with other lawyers to help you stay on track to achieve them? Can you start the year with an achievable win that will build enthusiasm for additional initiatives?