



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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Choosing the Talent You Want to Keep

This is the second in a series on [retaining the best talent](#). If you are a rainmaker or aspiring rainmaker who is committed in principle to retaining the best talent to help sustain your own career success, you now have the task of choosing the people in whom to invest. To evaluate whether you are working with the people who have the most relevant qualities, check the factors on this list:

- Reliability. When the lawyer commits to a project, he or she gets it done well and on time.
- Relationship-oriented. The junior lawyer understands the importance of establishing relationships with clients and senior lawyers in the firm, takes initiative to do so and is not focused solely on discreet assignments.
- Career-focused. The lawyer is committed to a long-term career, pays attention to their professional development, is eager to learn new skills, seeks feedback and is willing to take risks.
- Energetic. The lawyer has a high level of intensity while working, whether full-time or part-time.
- Diversity. The lawyer adds dimensions to the talent mix by virtue of their skills, work experience, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or other qualities.
- Compatibility. Compatibility counts - provided you are not assuming compatibility just based on similar race or gender to your own.

The best lawyers and the most successful rainmakers have great teams behind them. Sometimes teams emerge organically from work on a major matter. But often, great teams are the product of leaders who have chosen members well and then managed and cultivated them.

Example: When a client invited a firm to submit a proposal to remain on the client's preferred provider list, the client relationship partner asked each lawyer on the team to contribute ideas for the RFP. One lawyer on the team reported that she had regularly gotten feedback from the client about the one thing that consistently set the firm apart from other firms on the list: the firm's practice of doing a detailed assessment of each matter upfront. The client appreciated the opportunity to make an informed judgment about strategy and budget. Her sources said that the client was considering adopting a similar requirement from all its outside firms. The lawyer proposed that the firm offer in the RFP to do a webinar on early assessments for other firms on the list and include an in-house lawyer on the program. The client relationship partner incorporated this idea in the RFP which was well-received by the client. The lawyer then volunteered to organize the webinar and was one of the firm lawyers presenting at the session for the client's law department and outside law firms. At her year-end review, the client relationship partner gave the lawyer high marks for her initiative and reported to firm leadership that she was "a keeper".

Are you paying close attention to the "keepers" on your firm's roster? In the battle for talent, can you afford not to?

Look for a discussion of what it takes to be considered a "keeper" in the next issue on December 21, 2020.