



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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The Next Big Thing

When you are in the final stages of an all-consuming transaction or trial, it is hard to divert any attention to what comes next. But unless the major matter is your swan song or you have a reservoir of clients who have been waiting patiently for you to conclude your matter and attend to them, you cannot afford to wait to lay the groundwork for your next big thing. Here are some options to consider:

- Can you start to engage with any other clients even before the conclusion of your current matter? Perhaps you can identify clients or other lawyers who would be interested in your progress. For litigation, could you share non-confidential information about significant rulings or invite other clients to observe examination of a key witness?
- Be alert for other important legal matters on which your current client has deferred action because of your current matter. Arrange for someone else in your firm to attend to such issues until you are free again, so the work does not go to another firm.
- Ask your assistant to keep a list of people who tried to arrange calls or meetings while you were unavailable so you can follow up when your matter ends. If you know when you will be free and you can have your assistant schedule meetings then, that would be even better.
- When your matter ends, use celebrations strategically. When possible, invite other lawyers to whom you want to introduce the client.
- If you have a [good outcome](#), send media coverage, with a personal note, to everyone with whom you hope to work next. Tell people why you think the outcome is relevant to them or that this was the matter that kept you from seeing them for a few months.
- Are there lessons learned from any aspect of the matter that you can use as a hook for a CLE program, an article, or a client alert? Would your client speak at a program or co-author an article for an industry publication?

Your priority, of course, is to conclude the matter on the most favorable terms first. But some modest advance planning can help you avoid a dry spell when you finish your matter.

Example: The lead partner on the matter had been through the cycle many times: buried until a major matter was over and then on the bench, out of commission until new work turned up. This time, the partner, determined to anticipate the drought, explained the challenge to the team, including the associates and her legal assistant. One senior associate whose work on the matter was over volunteered to reach out to practice group and industry sector leaders to ask to be on the agenda for their next meetings. He then outlined the potential relevance of the matter to other firm clients and offered to arrange meetings after the conclusion of the matter. One lawyer offered to ask another client with a similar case pending if they wanted to attend some of the proceedings. That lawyer had been in discussions with a litigation finance company about funding the litigation and invited the litigation finance group to attend as well. As a result, as soon as the trial concluded, the team had meetings on the calendar and several good leads for the next big thing.

As you wind up the work that has consumed you, can you carve out a little time to insure that when you have the capacity, the work will be there?