



# 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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## 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 insure that they showcase their progress, and your support.

**Example:** One practice group in a firm had a very specific process for helping to position its associates for annual reviews with the goal to position them to make partner. At the beginning of each year, the practice group leader encouraged all the lawyers in the group to keep notes of significant successes and client feedback to use at year-end. Then, each Fall, the practice group leader organized a meeting of partners in the practice group to discuss which associates were vital to the group. For each valued associate, the practice group leader then solicited metrics which demonstrated those associates' work for major clients and their client relationships. Some partners took the initiative to obtain endorsements for associates from clients to use in the year-end review process. The practice group also held a session each Fall to explain the year-end review process and to urge associates to take it seriously. The partners in this practice group developed a reputation within the firm of actively promoting their associates for partnership and long-term success.

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?

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