



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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Mentoring Business Development Skills. Watch one. Do one. Teach one. That is the way doctors learn new procedures. New Hollywood talent agents learn by listening in on phone negotiations. Too many law firms defer formal business development training till lawyers become senior associates even though the criteria for partnership may include rainmaking potential and associate satisfaction increases with involvement in initiating business. If associates have spent years on big cases, with little client exposure or encouragement to flex their marketing muscles, the pool of senior associates with perceived rainmaking potential will be limited to people who have a natural affinity for marketing, were blessed with rainmaker mentors, or just got lucky. Are you at risk of losing senior associates and potential partners by overlooking the opportunity to train them in business development?

Associates can get meaningful business development exposure by selectively shadowing you and provide valuable support to your business development efforts. What opportunities do you have for associates to shadow you this week as you expand your own business? Are you making a presentation to a client? Are you meeting with a colleague to map out a strategy for a potential client? Are you taking a client to lunch? Are you attending a bar association event at which you may meet new prospects? Are you working with your marketing staff on a pitch or RFP? Have you considered which associates you could match with these opportunities for mentoring purposes? If you are responsible for mentoring newer lawyers on the art of business development, do you have a mentoring plan in place? Are you scheduling associates into select meetings to see you in action?

Example: Your assignment from the environmental practice group is to pursue work from clients who have major manufacturing facilities. The marketing department has provided you with a list of relevant firm clients with the originating and responsible attorneys. Can you invite an associate to help you analyze the list and prioritize among the prospects? Are you more likely to get the job done if you commit to review the list with an associate? Will your own strategic thinking be sharpened by making the process more transparent? What value would you create if you turned a business development exercise into a talent development exercise too?