



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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Turning Eggnog into Liquid Gold, Circa 2009. There are fewer lavish law firm holiday celebrations for clients this year so it is even more important to take full advantage of the ones you attend. This newsletter was well-received when it ran in 2008 and I wanted to share it again this holiday season. Are you dreading the loss of billable time and the sea of inebriated faces at holiday parties again this year? Or do you see holiday gatherings as special opportunities to meet people to whom you usually don't have access? For the remaining holiday season, try these strategies to get more value:

- Invite guests. That guarantees you will have people of value to talk to.
- Identify which of your guests you can introduce to *other* lawyers.
- Find out who else is coming and ask for introductions from colleagues.
- Go with someone who knows more people and can introduce you around.
- Create private time with special people by traveling there together or meeting in advance.
- Do your homework. Google people of interest so you are ready to talk to them.
- Go early and position yourself strategically, by the door or by the bar.
- Bring your calendar so you can make follow up plans on the spot.
- Treat the occasions as business opportunity and don't drink a lot.

Example: You decide to use the holiday party to complete some marketing objectives before year end. One of your partners promised to introduce you to a client but hasn't yet. When you review the guest list, you observe several lawyers from that client are scheduled to attend. You contact your partner and ask her to use the occasion to make an introduction. You suggest that she let her clients know that you will be there and that she plans to introduce you. You go one step further and suggest that she propose that the four of you meet ahead of time briefly or go out for dinner after the cocktail party.

When your personal initiative works, you go to the next level and propose to your practice group leader that he schedule a brief meeting of the group before the party to review the guest list and orchestrate introductions among the group. When you meet, you encourage your colleagues to reach to clients of particular interest to you to confirm they are coming or to set a time to get together after the holidays. At the meeting, the lawyers share information on the work your firm has done for the guests who are coming so everyone can talk more knowledgeably to the people at the party. You also invite other lawyers to identify which of your clients and contacts are of interest to them and commit to orchestrate introductions at the party.

Are you ready to make the outcomes from your holiday celebrations less random this year and to be a catalyst for other lawyers in your firm to do the same?

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