



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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Career Defining Low Profile Cases. Scooter Libby has imprinted Ted Wells and Paul Fitzgerald in our minds; O.J. Simpson did the same for Johnnie Cochran and Dan Petrocelli. Your career-defining case is more likely to be a low-profile case which gives you a chance to form a critical business relationship or develop special expertise which you can market. Do you have a matter which could shape your career awaiting your attention this week? Are you working with a very senior lawyer in your firm who can open lots of doors? Are you opposed to superb lawyers on the other side who may have conflicts down the road? Does one of your matters involve a legal issue of first impression or very high strategic or financial stakes for your client? It is not always evident where your new work will come from but the best opportunities often start with the work on your desk.

Example: An accounting liability case has just been set for trial in four months. The senior partner who is responsible for the matter is currently in trial in another jurisdiction. The case has been neglected because the other lawyers who worked on it have left the firm and no one else in the firm is an expert in accounting liability. You have been asked to prepare the case for trial. Do you beg off on the grounds that you are not an expert and are overloaded or do you dive in? One lawyer who confronted a situation like this ended up with two new specialties: professional liability defense and "go to" lawyer for crisis situations. Even though the senior partner completed her other matter in time to participate, she deferred at trial to the lawyer who had worked up the case. The accounting firm was thrilled with the result and has expanded its relationship with the law firm, often looking to the new lawyer on the team.

Is there work on your desk this week that has the potential to invigorate your career?