



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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To Make Connections, Find “Connectors.” Is now the time to accelerate your networking efforts, whether to find new clients or your next job? If so, first identify the “Connectors” in your law firm or broader circle, the people with a special gift for bringing people together per Malcolm Gladwell in *The Tipping Point*. Start by making a list of the people who think highly of you and can vouch for your professional skills. People who have had positive experiences with you will be more comfortable introducing you to other people. Then prioritize your list, taking into account these factors:

- Which people have broad and diverse networks and blend them with ease? Check out their entries on LinkedIn and Facebook.
- Who has made introductions for you in the past?
- Who has the best contacts to the specific kinds of people who interest you?
- With whom do you have the strongest relationship?

As between a lawyer with a great network with whom you have worked only slightly and someone with fewer contacts for whom you have achieved great results, prioritize the person who can talk about your accomplishments. When you reach out to people on your list for help, make it easy for them and be respectful of their relationships with people you want to meet.

Example: A new partner asked an active partner in her firm to meet her for coffee in his office for 15 minutes. Beforehand, she accumulated information about her “Connector’s” affiliations, including organizations, prior law firms, social networks like LinkedIn, and clients. She specified the profile of the people she wanted to meet, by industry and position. She went to the meeting with a positive attitude about getting closer to her target rather than expecting to be discouraged if the meeting did not produce an immediate result. When it turned out that her “Connector” did not have an exact match in his network, she did not give up. She asked for an introduction to someone in his network who might have a valuable connection for her and probed whether particular affiliations of his might be helpful.

When her probing still did not work, she persisted, asking: “If you were in my shoes and wanted to meet these kinds of people, to whom would you talk?” He then identified someone else who might be able to make such an introduction. Her willingness to ask for an introduction produced not only the name of a potential resource but also his contact information and permission from the “Connector” for her to call that person and use his name. The “Connector” also offered to call or email the resource first to make him aware of his recommendation that they speak. Afterwards, the young partner made a point of thanking and reporting back to the “Connector.” Because she alerted the partner to her interests, he also began to invite her to events where he expected there would be people who matched her interests and proposed her for the board of an organization to which he belongs.

Are you ready to get organized to leverage the most connected people in your firm and your broader circle of contacts who can help you extend your professional network? Are you prepared to do so in a systematic and efficient way?