



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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**Helping Displaced Clients.** When clients displaced by the economic meltdown turn to their lawyers for help with job searches and networking, they find lawyers who want to help but may not feel they have much to offer and are under pressure themselves dealing with crises. Lawyers and jobseekers alike are frustrated. After this crisis, clients will remember -- and reward -- the lawyers who helped them land on their feet. Instead of just saying you are sorry that you don't know of any specific opportunities, or that you will circulate your client's resume, try these approaches.

- Get ready before clients call. Consider who in your circle you would approach if you were standing in your clients' shoes, and create a list to refer to when people ask for introductions.
- Remember that you do not have to be heavily involved in introductions; keeping your role to a minimum helps you and your client. Give your client the name and contact info for each contact and permission to use your name. Then inform each contact by phone or email that your client may contact him. Waiting to take both people to lunch just slows down the process.
- When you make an introduction, tell people about the successes you shared with the client. That lends power to the introduction, reinforces your relationship with your client and his or her self esteem, and promotes you and your firm's capabilities to your contacts.
- Encourage your client to let you know the outcome of the introduction.
- Invite appropriate clients to events you are attending which would provide good networking opportunities and actively make introductions at the events.

This is a time to show clients who are struggling that you still value them but also a time to act efficiently.

**Example:** A finance partner worked on a deal with a senior level investment banker whose firm has just shuttered. At first, the lawyer hesitated to reach out to him because he assumed the banker's network was better than his own and that the banker would call if he needed help. But the lawyer shot the banker a short email, offering condolences and support. The same day, the banker called. The lawyer referred to a list he had created of possible resources and offered to make several introductions. First, he offered to introduce the banker to the lawyers in his firm who represent private equity firms investing in distressed assets. That is a potential win-win; the banker might know of distressed assets that would be of interest to other clients of the firm and the lawyers might know of buyers of distressed assets who could use help from the banker. Then the lawyer offered to introduce the banker to another client who sits on the board of a public company since board service might be a good fit for the banker. When the lawyer called the director-client, he took advantage of the opportunity to mention his firm's work in the area of distressed assets, too.

Are you prepared to help struggling clients expand their networks in efficient ways? Are you making some time to invest in future business even when the work generated by chaos on Wall Street is crushing?