



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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Lunch is Not the Only Way. Does your marketing “to-do” list include scheduling lunch with key clients and prospects? Do you keep putting off the calls because you just don’t have time to take off a few hours in the middle of the day for lunch? Is it almost impossible to find a mutually convenient date for lunch with some people? Do you have clients who keep rescheduling lunch? Here is a dirty little secret: your clients and prospects don’t have time either and may view lunch with you as an obligation they would just as soon skip anyway. Even your most loyal clients are struggling with the same bundle of demands that you are: your clients have “clients”, deadlines, and families, too. Instead of fighting to get on your clients’ calendar for lunch, consider how you can spend some quality time with them without burdening either of your schedules, or your diets. Can you offer to pick up your client to carpool to a common occasion even if it takes you out of your way? Can you package a meeting before a meeting you are both attending with other people? Can you ask your client what is the best way from their standpoint to get together other than lunch?

Example: Your client nodded agreement the last time you said, “We should do lunch soon.” You have a great relationship with her assistant, too, but can’t seem to get a date that works. Try coffee. Call your client’s assistant and say that you have to be in their neighborhood/city in a few weeks, have flexibility as to which day you are there, and want to find a time to catch up with your client. Then ask if there is a convenient date and time for you to come by and have a cup of coffee at their offices. Make clear that you are going there on purpose and not just planning to drop in if you have time while in the neighborhood. Meeting for coffee eliminates a lot of the overhead of lunch for your clients; they don’t have to leave their office; you have more privacy than in a restaurant, private club, or executive dining room; they have access to other people or materials in case your probing discussion leads to a current problem that needs addressing; and neither of you sabotages your plan to eliminate big meals at lunchtime.

Are you willing to consider replacing “let’s do lunch” with “how about coffee at your office?”