

PREPARE TO WIN



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**CORDELL
PARVIN LLC**

ABOUT CORDELL PARVIN

Cordell Parvin practiced law for 36 years and developed a highly successful national construction law practice. During his career, Cordell has been a rainmaker and taught, mentored and coached young lawyers on their careers, work-life balance and rainmaking. Cordell was also a Practice Group Leader and worked with other Practice Groups helping them to develop their business plans and strategy.

At Jenkins & Gilchrist, PC, Cordell initiated and directed the firm's Attorney Development Program. He created a comprehensive program for associate development focused on skill development, mentoring, shadowing and career planning. Cordell motivated the leadership of his firm to get behind the associate development program and to focus attention on the importance of career planning.

He has a passion for teaching and coaching young lawyers. He recognizes that each lawyer has unique skills, talents and dreams. He works with lawyers as individuals and seeks to inspire and energize them based on their individual career and life dreams.

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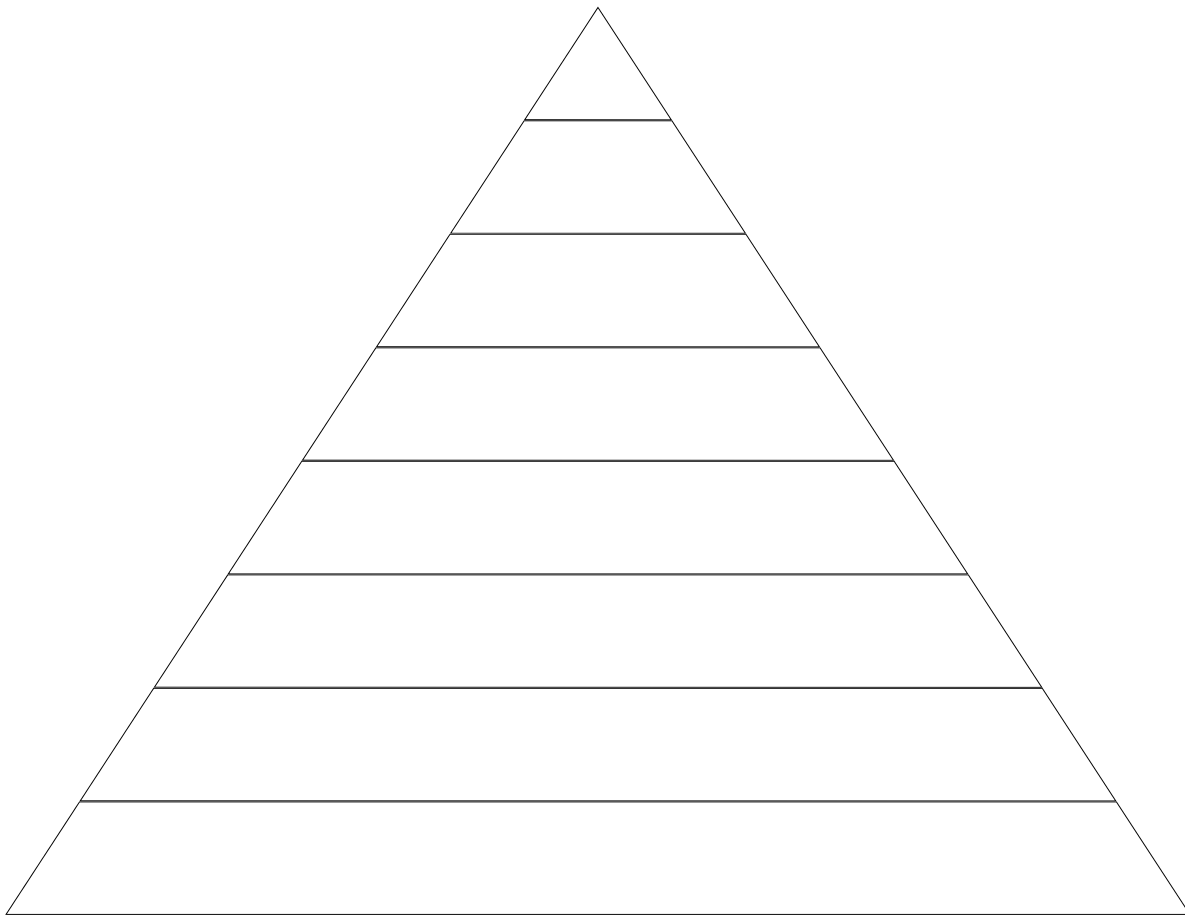
Introduction

I have spent a lifetime studying why some people are very successful and why others are not. Interestingly, many of the people who are truly successful also have a great personal life and are very family oriented. How can this be so? Put simply they understand their priorities and use their time wisely.

I am coaching two junior partners. They are both women. They are both in about the same size firms. They both bill about the same number of hours. Christy, who has two children is incredibly successful and will become even more successful. Samantha is incredibly bright. She is a graduate of an Ivy League school. Yet, she feels overwhelmed and like she is burning out. What are these two people doing differently and how can you apply it to your life and career?

Attitude

It begins with attitude. We all talk to ourselves and we sometimes convey our attitude about things when we talk to others. When I meet with young lawyers I am listening to what they say to learn what they are likely saying to themselves. To paraphrase a quote from Winston Churchill, less successful lawyers see the problem in every opportunity and successful lawyers see the opportunity in every problem. Less successful lawyers frequently say "Yes, but." Successful lawyers say: "Sure how." Less successful lawyers say: "My problem is." More successful lawyers say: "My opportunity is." Less successful lawyers say: "I need to..." More successful lawyers say: "I want to..." Less successful lawyers say: "I am not willing to be successful if it means..." More successful lawyers say: "I can be successful and...." Less successful lawyers say: "I will try my best to...." More successful lawyers say: "I will achieve..." Less successful lawyers find something wrong with any new idea. More successful lawyers figure out how they can use the new idea. So, the first step is to listen to your self talk and if necessary consciously make a change in what you are telling yourself.



Clear Idea of What You Want / Major Definite Purpose

Successful lawyers like Christy have a very clear idea of what they want to accomplish. They know where they want to be five years from now, maybe even 20 years from now. Having clarity on what you want to accomplish with your career actually enables you to have more time for your family. How do you suppose that happens? Put simply, lawyers with clarity on what they want to do with their career do not waste lots of time. Lawyers without clarity waste time and frequently are spinning their wheels and frustrated by it. Clarity about what you want also gives you energy.

In my case, in 1978 I decided I wanted to be the best transportation construction lawyer in the United States. In Christy's case, she wants to become the best long-term health care attorney in the United States. She also has a very clear idea of what she wants to do in her personal life. One way to gain clarity on what you want is to write down what you are doing and what your life will be like in five years.

What are you doing now to achieve what you want? _____

Where do you want to be in five years? _____

Thoughts on Not Burning Out

I received a call from Samantha, one of my female associate friends here in Dallas. I could tell something was on her mind. Samantha told me that she felt like she was “burning out” and felt like she spent all of her time at the office getting her billable work done. She complained that she had no time for her own development, client development or for personal things. Samantha mentioned to me that she and Michelle had been speaking about this problem and they both felt they had no life other than getting their billable hours and they both felt exhausted by it. Samantha and Michelle are not the first associates to feel this way and they likely will not be the last. No matter what we do, there will always be 168 hours in a week. Since we can’t expand time what can we do?

After listening to Samantha for a while, I asked her to describe to me in detail what she had done the day before. She said she had gotten up at about 7:00 AM, showered and had gotten ready for work. I asked what time she had gotten to the office and she told me she had gotten there just before 9:00 AM. She told me she had done billable work until noon. I asked where she had eaten lunch and how long she had taken for lunch. At first she could not remember. Then it came to her. She had gone down stairs and brought something back and ate lunch at her desk. I asked what Samantha had done that afternoon. She said she worked on the same client matter all afternoon and had finally left the office at 7:30 PM. I asked how many billable hours she had recorded that day and Samantha told me she had 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ that day. That seemed about right for the time she was there.

I then asked what she had done after work. Samantha, who is single and lives alone, told me she had stopped at the grocery store on the way home and picked up what she needed to fix dinner. When she got home she changed clothes, fixed dinner and ate. By that time it was after nine. After dinner Samantha remembered she needed to pay her bills and she spent the next hour taking care of that. Samantha went to bed at about 11:15 PM both exhausted and unfulfilled.

I would be exhausted and unfulfilled if that was my typical day. I asked Samantha what she wanted her day to be like and she told me she wanted to be able to work on her own development as a lawyer, on client development and on personal things that were important to her. I asked her to tell me what she had in mind for those areas. About a

year ago, Samantha had developed an interest in doing legal work for construction businesses. Samantha's mother actually owned a successful construction company and Samantha had worked for her mom during summers while she was in high school and college. If her mom could have her way, Samantha would give up her law firm practice and work full time for the company. Samantha's mom had asked Samantha to go to Florida and lead the company's efforts in the hurricane repair and reconstruction work the company was doing. Her mom would love to have Samantha ultimately take over the reigns of the company, but that was not what Samantha had in mind. In her eyes, the company would always be her mother's. After all her mother had started it with nothing after she and Samantha's father had divorced. Samantha did not want to be handed the business, or for that matter be dependent all her career on senior lawyer's clients. She wanted to develop her own business.

Over the last year Samantha had become active in several Dallas based construction associations. She had actually developed three clients over that time. Two were women who knew her mother and the third was a male owned company located in Fort Worth. Samantha told me she would like to be spending more time in her client development efforts and becoming more an expert in construction law topics.

I asked what her important roles are in her personal life. I knew she was very close to both her mom and dad and to her sister who was only a year younger than Samantha, so obviously she was a daughter and a sister. I knew Samantha owned a horse and enjoyed riding and I knew she was active in her church. So, when Samantha hesitated, I reminded her of those roles I knew were important to her. My gentle reminder gave Samantha other ideas. Health and fitness were important to her. She told me she used to run for exercise and had actually run in marathons. She had no time for that now. Samantha also said she was active in the Dallas community. She belonged to the Rotary Club and was very active in their community service projects. She also was a member of Success North Dallas, a group of up and coming business men and women and professionals.

I asked Samantha what it would take to feel better about the time she wanted to spend on her construction client development efforts and her family and other personal interests. Samantha said she simply felt she had no time. She was spending so much time at the office doing billable work that she had no time for the other things.

Finally I asked Samantha if she was interested in my observations. She said that was the reason she had called me. She wanted my advice. With her permission, I started to share my views. I told her billable hours were really not her problem. I told her she was neither planning nor using her non-billable time or personal time wisely. I told her she probably had a plan each week for her billable work. It appeared to me she planned to do billable work from 9:00 to about 7:30 on Monday through Friday. I reminded her that she could do billable work at other times. I knew she had a plan each week for her time in church and that was from 9:30 to noon on Sunday. I asked if she planned any other part of her life for the week. After a short pause, Samantha told me she did not plan any

other part of her life, with the possible exception of attending the Rotary Club meetings and the Success North Dallas meetings. The reason she had stated those were possible exceptions were that she frequently found a work related excuse not to attend.

I asked Samantha when she used to run and work out. She said she used to get up at 5:00 AM and workout till about 6:15 and then shower, eat breakfast, and get ready for work. When she did that she generally got to work no later than 8:00. I told her I get up at 4:30 and get to the Cooper Fitness Center when it opens at 5:00. Over my lifetime, whenever I tried to workout either at lunch or after work, I had missed many times because something else got in the way. I might get a call from a client at the end of the day and when I finished I would no longer “feel like” taking time to work out. For me, planning to workout from 5:00 to 6:00 or 6:30 made it more likely I would do it.

I also told Samantha that after my daughter Jill was born, I frequently worked in my office (which was close to home) from 6:00 to 9:00 on Saturday and Sunday. I chose to do that because Jill was never up early and frequently my wife Nancy was not up early on Saturday or Sunday either. Working during those hours allowed me to be home early and eat dinner most evenings with Nancy and Jill. I was not suggesting that she, or anyone, follow my pattern. I was merely suggesting she look for the other potential times to work that would allow her to accomplish her other priorities. I mentioned that a female partner in my old firm and her husband who is also a lawyer both got up early every day. They alternated days to go to the gym and work out. Since their two children were asleep, on the days when she did not work out, the female partner generally worked at her computer using Citrix to access her office files. For her that was a good use of her time when she had to be home and her children were asleep.

I asked Samantha if she had planned to pay bills after dinner the night before. She said no. She had just realized she needed to do it. I suggested that she even plan when she would do something as mundane and unexciting as paying bill

I suggested that Samantha read the book *First Things First* by Stephen Covey, Roger Merrill and Rebecca Merrill. The book is filled with many suggestions I knew would help Samantha, but the main point I wanted her to get from it is to plan her life around her roles. I also told her Dr. Covey's story about the “big rocks.”

Dr. Covey describes that when he was teaching he pulled out a wide-mouth gallon jar and placed it next to a pile of fist-sized rocks. After filling the jar to the top with rocks, he asked, “*Is the jar full?*” The group replied, “Yes.” He then got some gravel from under the table and added it to the jar. He jiggled the jar until the gravel filled the spaces between the rocks. Again, he asked, “*Is the jar full?*” This time, the group replied, “*Probably not.*” Dr. Covey then added some sand and asked, “*Is the jar full?*” “No!” shouted the students.

Finally, Dr. Covey filled the jar to the brim with water and asked his students the point of this illustration. Someone replied that you could always fit more things into your life if

"you really work at it." "No," countered Dr. Covey. The point is, if you don't put the big rocks in first, ". . . would you ever have gotten any of them in?"

I suggested that Samantha wasn't putting in big rocks in the jar first other than her billable hours and church attendance. If she wanted to develop her construction law expertise and business and wanted to spend time with her mom, dad, sister, riding her horse and being active in the community, she would need to plan that time ahead and not just let it happen. She needed to plan the most important thing she could do each week for each of her roles.

I could tell that Samantha was game to try anything. She asked if I had any more advice. I told her that I would feel exhausted if my day ended by me coming home from work at 7:30 eating dinner doing something she did not enjoy and then going to bed. I suggested she consider going back to her old schedule of getting up earlier and working out. I also told her she would be exhausted if she sat at her desk all day. I told her to get up at least every two hours and if nothing else just walk around her floor and breathe deeply. I also suggested that unless it was absolutely necessary she needed to get out of her office at lunch. Even if she was going downstairs and picking something up she needed to go outside and walk briskly around the block where her office is located.

Finally I told her that this change could not be like a diet that a person starts and then abandons. She needs to make this a life-style change. To do that she needed to do it each day till it became a habit. I told her she should keep a journal for the next month of what she did each day and if she wanted to she could share it with me.

I wonder how many young lawyers only schedule the time they plan to be in the office doing their billable work. My guess is the majority schedule little else. For me, it is as important, if not more important, to schedule my non-billable activities and to schedule my family, fitness and recreational activities. If I don't schedule those activities, they generally get cast aside leaving me feeling burned out and unfulfilled.

| Your Core Values |
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| Your Roles |
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Setting Goals

Successful people set goals and have a plan to achieve them. Years ago I was giving a presentation at my firm's orientation for new partners. I was teaching them how to prepare a Business Plan. I asked how many had set goals for that year. Not one of them had set goals. It caused me to wonder why young lawyers do not set goals. Here are four reasons:

- They don't see the value in it
- They don't know how
- They are afraid of being criticized by someone
- They are afraid of not achieving them

There is a quote by Jim Cathcart that I like. "Most people aim at nothing and hit it with amazing accuracy." There are scientific studies showing that people who have written goals achieve far more than those who do not and they are happier with their careers and life. Why is that? I think it is in part because they feel they have more control of their destiny. They also are going after something. Some of you set goals for 2007. For those of you who did not, let me show you how to set goals you will actually achieve.

Over the next two minutes list 10 things you want to achieve in the next year. Leave some space in between each item. They should be specific and measurable so you will know if you achieved them. They might be:

- Bill ____ hours
- Originate \$____
- Obtain ____ new clients
- Expand existing business with _____
- Speak at ____ industry meetings
- Write _____ articles and get them published
- Contact____ law school classmates
- Meet with ____ contacts
- Add_____ to my web page bio

| Rank | Goal | Why Important |
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Here are some goals I had in 1999:

- Originate \$3 Million in business
- Bill 1800 hours
- Speak at 6 construction industry meetings
- Visit 8 construction clients
- Write the second edition of my Transportation Construction Claims Book
- Conduct 4 in-house client workshops
- Conduct 3 workshops on Innovative Contracting
- Have a client roundtable meeting in Dallas

Now that you have written down 10 goals, go back through and prioritize them. In other words decide which is the most important and so forth. Next, I want you to answer why achieving each goal is important to you. If you do not have a good answer to the why question, then your goal will be like a New Years resolution that you give up on achieving the first time there is a roadblock. You have to have a good answer to the why

question to motivate you, energize you and cause you to have the discipline and commitment to achieve the goal.

Now that you have answered the why question, write down any obstacles you have to achieving the goal. The obstacles can be internal or external. In my experience most of them are internal. In other words, I have to do something different than I have been doing. My greatest obstacle is usually staying focused and not wasting time.

| Obstacle to Achieving Goal |
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Now that you have identified obstacles, identify any people who can help you achieve your goal. Here is an interesting thing to consider. When you are not taking responsibility for your career success, no one wants to help you. But, when you are taking responsibility for your success, you will find people who do want to help you, both inside and outside your firm.

Who Can Help?

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| _____ | _____ |
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Now, I want you to write down as many actions as you can think of to achieve your goal. Using one of my goals as an example, For my goal of conducting 4 in-house workshops I need to:

- Determine which clients
- Identify a topic that would give them value
- Prepare written materials
- Prepare presentation materials
- Establish dates and locations (at client's facility or elsewhere)
- Conduct the workshops

Ok, so make your list of activities you will do to achieve your goal.

| Goal | Activity to Achieve Goal | This Week |
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Now, that you have your list, I want you to write down for each goal something you can do in the next week to get started. We need for the train to get out of the station.

Let's stop there for a minute. My experience has shown me that if you write down your goals and develop a plan of activities to achieve them, you will be one of about 3% of the lawyers and you will be far more likely to achieve them. So, you have made the first step to achieving your own definition of success.

I have always had lifetime goals. Recently, I put my lifetime goals in four categories:

- Physical/Economic
- Mental/Learning
- Emotional/Relationships
- Spiritual/Values

I share my lifetime goals with lawyers I am coaching and I am sharing them with you. Many of the lawyers I am coaching have developed their own lifetime goals and shared theirs with others. Christy shared hers with all the associates in her firm. Here are a few of them:

Physical/Economic

- Be the best Long-Term Care Attorney in the country
- Make Baker Donelson the best firm in the southeast
- Sleep 8 hours a day
- Eat healthy
- Buy a beach home

Mental/Growth

- Learn Yoga
- Live in the moment
- Learn to scuba and dive the Great Barrier Reef

Emotional/Relationships

- See my three best friends in person every year
- Be there every time my children need me and most times when they want me
- Be a mentor and role model for other lawyers

Spiritual/Core Values

- Raise children who love God and respect others
- Be grateful
- Live each day apportioning time to my core values: spiritual, family, health, work

So, consider thinking about your own lifetime goals in those four categories. If you want to share them with me for my thoughts I would be happy to take a look at them.

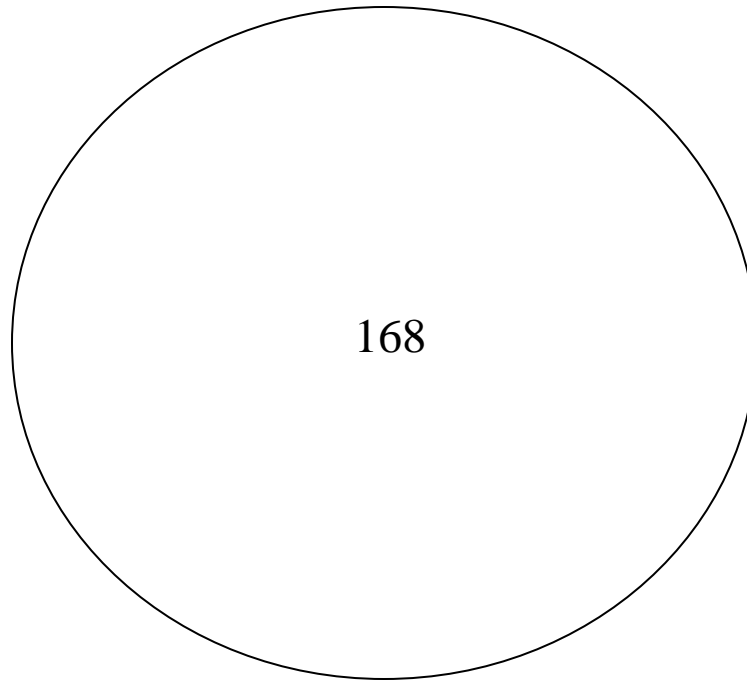
| Physical Economic | Mental Growth | Emotional Relationships | Spiritual Core Values |
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Use Your Time More Effectively

Time is our most valuable resource and we cannot afford to waste it. If you have a clear idea of what you want in your career, have goals and have decided what you want to learn in 2008, you are well on your way to not wasting time because you can see whether a potential activity advances you towards your goals or not.

Look at the circle below. It has 168 in the middle. That represents the number of hours in a week. I want you to make a rough sketch pie chart. The first piece of the pie is how many hours you sleep. If you sleep 8 hours a night, that would be 56. I sleep less than that and you may as well. The next piece of the pie is the number of hours you work a week that are billable. You might record 40 billable hours a week. If so fill in that number. If it takes you longer because you have to write off time, then put down the higher number. The next piece of the pie is your non-billable time you are using to invest in your career. This could be firm administrative activities, time you plan to spend for your development, time you plan to spend for client development. When I was a young lawyer, I tried to spend at least 10 hours a week investing in my career. So, I would have 10 on my pie chart. If I slept 56 hours a week, billed 40 hours a week, spent 10 hours a week on my career, that would leave 62 waking hours for my personal life including being a good father, husband and son, exercising, being involved in my church and community and any other personal activity. I like to tell lawyers that how well they plan and execute the 10 hours a week they invest in their career will determine the quality of their career and how well they plan and execute the 62 waking hours of personal time will determine the quality of their life.

How You Spend Your Time Weekly



Stephen Covey suggests that we have four quadrants of activities:

1. Urgent and Important
2. Not Urgent, but Important
3. Urgent, but not Important
4. Not Urgent and Not Important

The real key for a successful career and for a fulfilling life is to focus on the quadrant 2 activities.

Christy is doing that. She plans based on her priorities and she plans her personal time, and her career investment time the same way she plans her billable time.

Keep in mind that you have to make choices both in your non-billable investment activities and in your personal time. Christy was a deacon in her church. While her church is really important to her, being a deacon took her away from her family. She decided to give up being a deacon and started the children's choir. Now, she is both doing a church activity that is important to her while at the same time spending that time with her children. Interesting enough she also added a marketing activity for her law practice.

Christy also is very good about delegating things that her assistant is better equipped to do. Here is a list of some of the things Christy delegates:

- Book a flight
- Calendar deadlines

- Register me for conferences
- Research opposing counsel on the internet
- Type letters
- Put together seminar packets
- Add information in my contacts
- Address firm Christmas cards
- Order client Christmas gifts

Reading on Success, Client Development

In addition to improving my skills as a lawyer, I have always been an avid reader of books I thought would improve my skills on client development, help me use my time more effectively, leadership, teamwork and a variety of other topics. I have provided you with a suggested reading list. At my old firm, we had a group who would read the same book and we had people assigned to discuss chapters and give practical examples of how what was in the chapter could be applied.

I learned long ago a way to read business books. I first skim the book. In that process I decide what is important that I want to go back and read in detail.

Connecting with Clients

We have gotten to the point that email and instant message are our main ways of communicating. I get emails all day and I am sure you do also. But, you do not connect with people by email and you do not build trust by email.

Jackie is a banking lawyer I am coaching. Her office is in the same building as her firm's largest banking client. Before meeting me if there was a conference on a deal she was working on, Jackie's client representatives would be gathered in a conference room and Jackie would participate on the call at her desk. I suggested that Jackie actually go down and be in the conference room when these calls occurred. Interestingly, the first time she did, she came away with a new piece of business. Out of sight is truly out of mind.

Rusty is a labor and employment lawyer. He was just completing a really difficult employment case for a client that was headquartered in Chicago. Rusty is in the southeast. He asked me what he should do at that point. I told him he needed to go to Chicago and meet with the two founders of the company and give them an in person report. I told him he should also tell them he wanted to learn as much as he could about their company. I told him not to go up there to sell them anything. I suggested he bring only one "prop" with him: A map with an overlay showing where the company's plants were located and where Rusty's firm has offices. Making a long story short, a few months later the client had a small lease matter in a state where Rusty's firm has an office. They called him from Chicago and he got one of his partners to work on it. The

lease matter took only a couple of hours and Rusty and the partner decided not even to charge for it. A few months later the company was sued in a class action labor matter in that same state. Once again, the founders of the company called Rusty and Rusty was able to get the same partner involved in the case. This all resulted from a trip to Chicago to meet the founders.

Rusty began visiting other clients. He visited two clients in Florida. He conducted workshops on hiring and firing for each. Those workshops resulted in additional work for Rusty and his firm in putting together company Employment manuals and policies. While learning about the companies he discovered that one company could actually provide a valuable service to another of the firm's major clients. So, Rusty set up a meeting of the two companies. Both companies were so grateful that they are both sending more business to the firm. This all came from getting out of the office and meeting in person.

Why Should I Hire You

I want you to pretend for the moment that I can refer business to you. I want you to provide me with the information I need to recommend you to a potential client. In 25 words or less tell me about you, your practice, what makes you unique and why a client should hire you. _____

How to Stand Out in Any Crowd

If you look at law firm web pages, most firms look alike. They are “full service” “represent small and large companies.” They are “client focused” and so forth. As lawyers we all are alike in many ways. We all went to law school, we use the same statutes, regulations and case law. Obviously we have to do top notch legal work or we would have no clients.

I think there are four main ways we lawyers get business. First, they might be the very best in their field. If you were thought to be the best civil trial lawyer, or corporate M&A lawyer or labor and employment lawyer in all of your state, it is unlikely you would need to do very much marketing or client development. Whenever a big case or a big deal came in you would be on the go-to list. Second, you could be fortunate enough to represent a company that gets sued a lot if you are a litigator or does lots of deals if you

are a corporate lawyer. That works well until your client is acquired by another company or your contact retires. The third way is to find a niche and become known for expertise in it. The fourth way is to become very active in the community.

I subscribe to a magazine *Selling Power*. As you would expect, it is for salesmen and sales managers. Yet, each and every issue I find something of value to lawyers. It only costs \$27.00 for one year (6 issues) and is well worth it.

In the November/December 2006 issue the cover story is "How to Stand Out in Any Crowd." Seth Godin talks about marketing, change and work. I was fascinated by the article and plan to apply some of Godin's points myself.

According to the article Seth Godin likes to give things away and has built his career on it. I have long advocated that lawyers find things of value to give away. Whenever I write an article, I am anxious to give it away. When Godin wrote his first book he offered a third of its contents online at no charge. He got 175,000 responses requesting the free third of the book. Most of the 175,000 who received the free third of the book clicked the link built into the page and bought it, making it a year long best seller. Guess what I am planning to do with the three books I have written.

Later in the article, Godin talks about three kinds of people. I will put it in the context of clients:

1. Clients who don't need the services you or your firm offer.
2. Clients who need the services you or your firm offer, but are using another lawyer or firm.
3. Clients who are ignoring you.

Godin says you can't market directly to the second and third group. "Instead, have them come to you." How do you suppose you can get them to come to you? Godin suggests you have to create something "remarkable."

I like to tell young lawyers that I owe a great deal of my success to one sales principle. I frequently created something remarkable, was first to market and I gave it away. For example, I have two books on my law firm web page that potential clients can download at no charge.

I have taught others to do the same thing. Jennifer is a labor and employment lawyer I am coaching. She created the "Easy Guide" which is a compilation of labor and employment laws on laminated cards which an HR person can attach to his or her monitor. Jennifer has the clients in the second and third category coming to her.

Christy is a long-term health care defense attorney. She developed a program for clients to educate them on how to avoid litigation in their long-term care facility. The program was so successful that the initial session filled up within a few hours of the

delivery of the invitations and a video of the program was made so that it could be offered as a video seminar.

Getting Better

Successful people are constantly getting better. Tiger Woods is a great example. Last year he was interviewed by Ed Bradley on 60 Minutes. Ed Bradley asked Tiger Woods why he had completely changed his golf swing when he was the number one golfer in the world. Tiger Woods answered: "I knew I could get better." There is a commonly heard phrase that if you are not getting better, you are actually getting worse. That has never been more true for lawyers than it is today because there are so many changes going on in our profession. In my top 10 tips I suggest that you take one area of your practice to focus on getting better. It might be communication skills, drafting skills, a particular legal topic. When I pick that one area I find every book I can on the topic, read articles, attend CLEs, listen to CDs and actually practice what I am trying to learn.

What do you want to do in 2008 to become a better lawyer? _____

What do you want to do in 2008 to have a more fulfilling life? _____

I urge you to implement some of the ideas and let me know what you are doing to take control of your life and career?

Questions for Large Law Firm Associates

General

Why should associates learn about client development when the firm represents some of the largest companies in the United States and the firm would not want any of the clients the associates may attract?

Other than just doing “excellent work” and being responsive, what should associates do for client development?

Planning

Why is it important to set goals?

What are the elements of effective goals?

Why should associates prepare a development plan?

What are the elements of an effective development plan?

How much non-billable time should an associate spend on his or her own career development each year?

How much time should an associate spend on client development each year?

Client Development

What should a 1-3 year lawyer do on client development that will provide the greatest return when he or she becomes a partner?

What should a 4-7 year lawyer do on client development that will provide the greatest return when he or she becomes a partner?

When was the last time you updated your website biography?

In 25 words or less, what do you do and why should a client hire you?

How can you best build your reputation and profile?

What do you think a lawyer interested in developing business by being active in the Bar should do?

What do you think a lawyer interested in developing business by being active in the community should do?

Why is it important to write articles?

Where can you get your articles published?

How do you decide on what topics to write?

Why is it important to make presentations to groups?

How do you determine where to speak?

How do you determine the topic on which to speak?

What are the elements of a good presentation?

How would you follow up with the audience after a presentation?

In surveys, 75% of clients are not satisfied with the legal service they are receiving.
What can we do to change that perception?

What can you do to better serve your clients?

Who are your business contacts?

How can you better focus on those contacts?

What are the attributes of lawyers who successfully “connect” with their clients?

What can you do to build trust with your clients?

What can you do to build rapport with your clients?

How can you follow up after meeting with a client or potential client?

If there was one thing you could do this year you are not currently doing that would make you a more successful lawyer, what would that be?

PHILOSOPHIES

1. **KNOW YOUR CLIENT**
 - Listen; don't talk
 - Learn client industry and business needs, as well as personal information
2. **IDENTIFY YOUR "MAJOR DEFINITE PURPOSE"**
 - Find a niche that is the intersection of your talent and passion, and your clients' needs
3. **BUILD AND RAISE YOUR PROFILE**
 - Write and speak, especially for specific industries
4. **STAY IN TOUCH**
 - List your clients and prospects and make a plan for the frequency and nature of contacting them
5. **DON'T "SELL"**
 - Find value and provide it now, and never appear greedy or hungry
6. **GET OUT THERE**
 - Network, join associations, volunteer and perform community service
7. **UNIQUE SELLING PROPOSITION**
 - Identify or create something unique and remarkable about you or your practice
8. **ALWAYS STRIVE TO GET BETTER AND BE THE BEST**
9. **THE LITTLE THINGS MATTER**
 - Go the extra mile to let the client know you genuinely care
10. **BE PERSISTENT, BE PATIENT**
 - Client development takes time and effort
11. **MAKE A SPECIFIC BUSINESS PLAN (YR, MO, WEEK, DAY) FOR CLIENT DEVELOPMENT**
 - Set goals and set them high
12. **EXECUTE YOUR PLAN BY LIVING IT DAILY**
 - Monitor where you are and do something every day as part of the plan
 - Be accountable to a group or a coach (personal trainer)
13. **BE FOCUSED**
 - Plan ahead and have a purpose and target for everything you do

PRACTICAL TIPS

1. Socialize often - make your clients your friends and your friends your clients
2. Join industry associations, attend industry meetings and trade shows, and subscribe to industry publications to find articles of interest to send to clients
3. Stay in contact through multiple means (notes, calls, lunches, blogs, e-mail, newsletter, articles, etc.)
4. Write an article at least one time a year (identify a problem and prove it exists; identify the solution and prove it works; by inference, you are the one to handle)
5. Speak at least one time a year at a seminar/event (focus on audience needs/issues)
6. Study and read about success, and emulate skills and habits of successful lawyers
7. Create an "Easy Guide" (short and concise guide for a client to use for a specific need)
8. Create and maintain a blog on an industry-specific legal topic
9. Conduct seminars and workshops for clients (get CLE approval for in house attorneys)
10. Joint venture with clients to make presentations to mutual clients (cross market)
11. Give thoughtful gifts and send personal notes
12. Thank clients for their business (handwritten thank you notes, dinner, bottle of wine, etc.)
13. Recycle past articles by sending them to prospects as "thought you might be interested"
14. Return calls and e-mails promptly (within 24 hours), even if to say you have to respond later
15. Have your elevator statement ready and use it (25 words or less on what you do and why you are unique)
16. Find areas of common interest (sports, music, family) to discuss with your client
17. Call, e-mail and write ex-clients and prospects just to see how they are doing
18. Acknowledge a client's birthday, milestone event, anniversary of a good settlement, etc.
19. Show up for events you would just as soon skip
20. Use those sports tickets

RECOMMENDED READING

Being a Lawyer

"True Professionalism" by David Maister
"Lawyer Life" by Carl Horn
"Transforming Practices" by Steven Keeva
"How to Argue and Win Every Time" by Gerry Spence
"To Kill a Mockingbird" by Harper Lee

Business

"Built to Last: Successful Habits of Visionary Companies" by Jim Collins & Jerry Porras
"Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap....and Others Don't" by Jim Collins
"Gung Ho" by Ken Blanchard & Sheldon Bowles
"Jack Welch and the GE Way: Management Insights and Leadership Secrets of the Legendary CEO" by Robert Slater
"Raving Fans" by Ken Blanchard & Sheldon Bowles
"The Four Obsessions of an Extraordinary Executive" by Patrick Lencioni

Business Development

"Clients for Life: Evolving from an Expert-for-Hire to an Extraordinary Advisor" by Jagdish N. Sheth and Andrew Sobel
"Making Rain: The Secrets of Building Lifelong Client Loyalty" by Andrew Sobel
"The Trusted Advisor" by David Maister, Charles Green & Robert M. Galford

Interpersonal Skills

"How to Work a Room: The Ultimate Guide to savvy Socializing in Person and Online" by Susan RoAne
"How to Connect in Business in 90 Seconds or Less" by Nicholas Boothman
"How to Talk to Anyone: 92 Little Tricks for Big Success in Relationships" by Leil Lowades
"Never Eat Alone" by Keith Ferrazzi
"Likeability Factor" by Tim Sanders

Leadership

"Aligning the Stars" by Jay Lorsch & Thomas Tierney
"Beyond Success: The 15 Secrets to Effective Leadership and Life Based on Legendary Coach John Wooden's "Pyramid of Success" by Brian Biro & John Wooden
"First Among Equals" by Patrick McKenna & David Maister
"Managing the Professional Service Firm" by David Maister
"Principle-Centered Leadership" by Stephen Covey
"Leadership From The Inside Out" by Kevin Cashman
"Contented Cows Give Better Milk" by Bill Catlette & Richard Hadden
"The Leadership Engine" by Noel Tichy with Eli Cohen
"Leading With the Heart" by Mike Krzyzewski

Life

"The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People" by Stephen Covey
"The Power of Full Engagement" by Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz
"First Things First" by Stephen Covey, Roger Merrill & Rebecca Merrill
"Man's Search for Meaning" by Viktor E. Frankel
"Goals" by Brian Tracy
"Overachievement" by John Eliot, Ph.D.
"The Power of Purpose" by Richard J. Leider

"Getting Things Done" by David Allen

"The Ultimate Guide to Mental Toughness" by Daniel Teitelbaum

Emotional Intelligence/Personality Profiles

"Selling with Emotional Intelligence" by Mitch Anthony

"Emotional Intelligence" by Daniel Goleman

"Emotional Intelligence at Work" by Hendrie Weisinger, Ph.D.

Marketing and Sales

"Heavy Hitter Selling: How Successful Salespeople Use Language and Intuition to Persuade Customers to Buy" by Steve W. Martin

"High Trust Selling" by Todd Duncan

"Selling with Emotional Intelligence" by Mitch Anthony

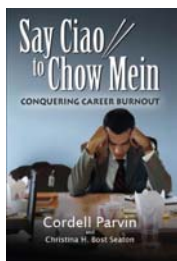
Presentation Skills

"10 Simple Secrets of the World's Greatest Business Communications" by Carmine Gallo

"Beyond Bullet Points" by Cliff Atkinson

"Presenting to Win: The Art of Telling Your Story" by Jerry Weissman

Parable Books and Prepare to Win



"Say Ciao to Chow Mein" is a real-world example of how young lawyers can take control of their life and career by prioritizing their personal and professional time to get more satisfaction from both. Young lawyers learn in 3 hours what it took most lawyers years to figure out.



The sequel "Rising Star: The Making of a Rainmaker" follows a young partner, Gina, who gets promoted as a result of having a lot of business from one client and then feels immense pressure to be even better, be a super mom and super wife. Through real-life examples, Gina learns how to balance the demands of her career and home while developing the skills necessary to become a rainmaker.

"Prepare to Win: A Lawyer's Guide to Rainmaking, Career Success and Life Fulfillment" expands on the principles in "Say Ciao to Chow Mein" and "Rising Star: The Making of a Rainmaker" in a non-fiction setting. "Prepare to Win" is in workbook format so that the reader can immediately implement successful rainmaking, career development, and life fulfillment skills.



Please visit our website for more information about Cordell Parvin, the parable books and Prepare to Win, Webinars, or our law consulting blog.

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Making 2007 Your Best Year Ever

by Cordell Parvin

Published in NYSBA Perspective / Spring 2007 Edition

Making 2007 Your Best Year Ever

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Introduction

I have spent a lifetime studying why some people are very successful and why others are not. Interestingly, many of the people who are truly successful also have a great personal life and are very family oriented. How can this be so? Put simply, they understand their priorities and use their time wisely.

I am coaching two junior partners. They are both women. They are both in about the same size firms. They both bill about the same number of hours. Christy, who has two children, is incredibly successful and will become even more successful. Samantha is incredibly bright. She is a graduate of an Ivy League school. Yet, she feels overwhelmed and like she is burning out. What are these two people doing differently and how can you apply it to make 2007 your best year ever?

Attitude

It begins with attitude. We all talk to ourselves and we sometimes convey our attitude about things when we talk to others. When I meet with young lawyers I am listening to what they say to learn what they are likely saying to themselves. To borrow a quote from Winston Churchill, less successful lawyers see the problem in every opportunity and successful lawyers see the opportunity in every problem. Less successful lawyers frequently say: "Yes, but." Successful lawyers say: "Sure, how." Less successful lawyers say: "My problem is." More successful lawyers say: "My opportunity is." Less successful lawyers say: "I need to . . ." More successful lawyers say: "I want to . . ." Less successful lawyers say: "I am not willing to be successful if it means . . ." More successful lawyers

say: "I can be successful and . . ." Less successful lawyers say: "I will try my best to . . ." More successful lawyers say: "I will achieve . . ." Less successful lawyers find something wrong with any new idea. More successful lawyers figure out how they can use the new idea. So, the first step to making 2007 your best year ever is to listen to yourself talk and if necessary consciously make a change in what you are telling yourself.

"Interestingly, many of the people who are truly successful also have a great personal life and are very family oriented. How can this be so? Put simply, they understand their priorities and use their time wisely."

Clear Idea of What You Want

Second, successful lawyers like Christy have a very clear idea of what they want to accomplish. They know where they want to be five years from now, maybe even 20 years from now. Having clarity on what you want to accomplish with your career actually enables you to have more time for your family. How do you suppose that happens? Put simply, lawyers with clarity on what they want to do with their career do not waste lots of time. Lawyers without clarity do waste time and frequently are spinning their wheels and frustrated by it. Clarity about what you want also gives you energy.

In my case, in 1978 I decided I wanted to be the best transportation construction lawyer in the United States. In Christy's case, she wants to become the best long-term care

attorney in the United States. She also has a very clear idea of what she wants to do in her personal life. One way to gain clarity on what you want is to write down what you are doing and what your life is like five years from now.



Setting Goals

Really successful people set goals and have a plan to achieve them. Years ago I was giving a presentation at my firm's orientation for new partners. I was teaching them how to prepare a Business Plan. I asked how many had set goals for that year. Not one of them had set goals. It caused me to wonder why young lawyers do not set goals. Here are four reasons:

- They don't see the value in it
- They don't know how
- They are afraid of being criticized by someone
- They are afraid of not achieving them

There is a quote I like. It is "Most people aim at nothing and hit it with amazing accuracy." There are scientific studies showing that people who have written goals achieve far more than those who do not and they are happier with their careers and life. Why is that? I think it is in part because they feel they have more control of their destiny. They also are going after something. Some of you have already set goals for 2007. For those of you who have not, let me show you how to set goals you will actually achieve.

Over the next two minutes list 10 things you want to achieve in 2007. Leave some space in between each item. They should be specific and measurable so you will know if you achieved them. They might be:

- Bill ____ hours
- Originate \$ ____
- Obtain ____ new clients
- Expand existing business with ____
- Speak at ____ industry meetings
- Write ____ articles and get them published
- Contact ____ law school classmates
- Meet with ____ contacts
- Add ____ to my web page bio

Here are some goals I had in 1999:

- Originate \$3 million in business
- Bill 1,800 hours
- Speak at 6 construction industry meetings
- Visit 8 construction clients
- Write the second edition of my Transportation Construction Claims Book
- Conduct 4 in-house client workshops
- Conduct 3 workshops on Innovative Contracting
- Have a client roundtable meeting in Dallas

Now that you have written down 10 goals, go back through and prioritize them. In other words, decide which is the most important and so forth. Next, I want you to answer why achieving each goal is important to you. Here is the reason to do that. If you do not have a good answer to the why question, then your goal will

be like a New Year's resolution that you give up on achieving the first time there is a roadblock. You have to have a good answer to the why question to motivate you, energize you and cause you to have the discipline and commitment to achieve the goal.

Now that you have answered the why question, write down any obstacles you have to achieving the goal. The obstacles can be internal or external. In my experience most of them are internal. In other words, I have to do something different than I have been doing. My greatest obstacle is usually staying focused and not wasting time.

Now that you have identified obstacles, identify any people who can help you achieve your goal. Here is an interesting thing to consider. When you are not taking responsibility for your career success, no one wants to help you. But, when you are taking responsibility for your success, you will find people who do want to help you, both inside and outside your firm.

Now I want you to write down as many actions as you can think of to achieve your goal. Using one of my goals as an example, for my goal of conducting 4 in-house workshops I need to:

- Determine which clients
- Identify a topic that would give them value
- Prepare written materials
- Prepare presentation materials
- Establish dates and locations (at client's facility or elsewhere)
- Conduct the workshops

Ok, so make your list of activities you will do to achieve your goal.

Now that you have your list, I want you to write down for each goal something you can do in the next week to get started. We need for the train to get out of the station.

Let's stop there for a minute. My experience has shown me that if you write down your goals and develop a plan of activities to achieve them, you will be one of about 3% of the lawyers and you will be far more likely to achieve them. So, you have made the first step to achieving your own definition of success.

I have always had lifetime goals. Recently, I put my lifetime goals into four categories:

- Physical/Economic
- Mental/Growth
- Emotional/Relationships
- Spiritual/Core Values

I share my lifetime goals with lawyers I am coaching and I am sharing them with you. Many of the lawyers I am coaching have developed their own lifetime goals and shared theirs with others. Christy shared hers with all the associates in her firm. Here are a few of them:

Physical/Economic

- Be the best Long-Term Care Attorney in the country.
- Make Baker Donelson the best firm in the southeast.
- Sleep 8 hours a day.
- Eat healthy.
- Buy a beach home.

Mental/Growth

- Learn Yoga.
- Live in the moment.
- Learn to scuba and dive the Great Barrier Reef.

Emotional/Relationships

- See my three best friends in person every year.
- Be there every time my children need me and most times when they want me.
- Be a mentor and role model for other lawyers.

Spiritual/Core Values

- Raise children who love God and respect others.
- Be grateful.
- Live each day apportioning time to my core values: spiritual, family, health, work.

So, consider thinking about your own lifetime goals in those four categories. If you want to share them with me for my thoughts I would be happy to take a look at them.

Getting Better

Really successful people are constantly getting better. Tiger Woods is a great example. Last year he was interviewed by Ed Bradley on *60 Minutes*. Ed Bradley asked Tiger Woods why he had completely changed his golf swing when he was the number one golfer in the world. Tiger Woods answered: "I knew I could get better." There is a commonly heard phrase that if you are not getting better, you are actually getting worse. That has never been more true for lawyers than it is today because there are so many changes going on in our profession. In my top 10 tips I suggest that you take one area of your practice to focus on getting better. It might be communication skills, drafting skills, a particular legal topic. When I pick that one area I find every book I can on the topic, read articles, attend CLEs, listen to CDs and actually practice what I am trying to learn.

So, what do you want to do in 2007 to improve your skill? What is the one area that you want to focus on?

Reading on Success, Client Development

In addition to improving my skills as a lawyer, I have always been an avid reader of books I thought would improve my skills on client

development, help me use my time more effectively, leadership, teamwork and a variety of other topics. I have provided you with a suggested reading list for 2007. At my old firm, we had a group who would read the same book and we had people assigned to discuss chapters and give practical examples of how what was in the chapter could be applied.

I learned long ago a way to read business books. I first skim the book. In that process I decide what is important that I want to go back and read in detail.

Use Your Time More Effectively

Time is our most valuable resource and we cannot afford to waste it. If you have a clear idea of what you want in your career, have goals and have decided what you want to learn in 2007, you are well on your way to not wasting time because you can see whether a potential activity advances you towards your goals or not.

There are 168 hours in a week. I want you to make a rough sketch pie chart. The first piece of the pie is how many hours you sleep. If you sleep 8 hours a night, that would be 56. I sleep less than that and you may as well. The next piece of the pie is the number of hours you work a week that are billable. You might record 40 billable hours a week. If so fill in that number. If it takes you longer because you have to write off time, then put down the higher number. The next piece of the pie is your non-billable time you are using to invest in your career. This could be firm administrative activities, time you plan to spend for your development, time you plan to spend for client development. When I was a young lawyer, I tried to spend at least 10 hours a week investing in my career. So, I would have 10 on my pie chart. If I slept 56 hours a week, billed 40 hours a week, spent 10 hours a week on my career, that would leave 62 waking

hours for my personal life including being a good father, husband and son, exercising, being involved in my church and community and any other personal activity. I like to tell lawyers that how well they plan and execute the 10 hours a week they invest in their career will determine the quality of their career and how well they plan and execute the 62 waking hours of personal time will determine the quality of their lives.

Stephen Covey suggests that we have four quadrants of activities:

1. Urgent and Important
2. Not Urgent, but Important
3. Urgent, but not Important
3. Not Urgent and Not Important

The real key for a successful career and for a fulfilling life is to focus on the quadrant 2 activities.

Christy is doing that. She plans based on her priorities and she plans her personal time, and her career investment time the same way she plans her billable time.

Let's look at her calendar for December.

Keep in mind that you have to make choices both in your non-billable investment activities and in your personal time. Christy was a deacon in her church. While her church is really important to her, being a deacon took her away from her family. She decided to give up being a deacon and started the children's choir. Now, she is both doing a church activity that is important to her while at the same time spending that time with her children. Interestingly enough she also added a marketing activity for her law practice.

Christy also is very good about delegating things that her assistant is better equipped to do. Here is a list of some of the things Christy delegates:

- Book a flight
- Calendar deadlines
- Register me for conferences
- Research opposing counsel on the internet
- Type letters
- Put together seminar packets
- Add information in my contacts
- Address firm Christmas cards
- Order client Christmas gifts

Pareto's Principle— The 80/20 Rule

I am coaching a young partner named Pam. She is a truly outstanding lawyer and is very well known in her city. She is working to a frazzle on client development activities and not achieving the results she desires. Why is that? She simply has not distinguished between really good opportunities and those that border on being a waste of her time. When I am with Pam I keep telling her: "Focus, focus, focus" and I tell her that for her "less can be more." She will become way more successful by not doing everything, but instead doing a few things really well.

In the early 1900s a gentleman by the name of Pareto did a study in Italy and found that 20% of the people owned 80% of the wealth. That led to many others finding the same principle applied to their own field. There are a variety of ways this might apply to us. It might be that 20% of our clients produce 80% of our fees. It might be that 20% of our time spent on client development might produce 80% of our business. The point is simple.

Face Time

We have gotten to the point that email and instant message are our main ways of communicating. I get emails all day and I am sure you do also. But, you do not connect with

people by email and you do not build trust by email.

Jackie is a banking lawyer I am coaching. Her office is in the same building as her firm's largest banking client. Before meeting me, if there was a conference on a deal she was working on, Jackie's client representatives would be gathered in a conference room and Jackie would participate on the call at her desk. I suggested that Jackie actually go down and be in the conference room when these calls occurred. Interestingly, the first time she did, she came away with a new piece of business. Out of sight is truly out of mind.

Rusty is a labor and employment lawyer. He was just completing a really difficult employment case for a client that was headquartered in Chicago. Rusty is in the southeast. He asked me what he should do at that point. I told him he needed to go to Chicago and meet with the two founders of the company and give them an in-person report. I told him he should also tell them he wanted to learn as much as he could about their company. I told him not to go up there to sell them anything. I suggested he bring only one "prop" with him: A map with an overlay showing where the company's plants were located and where Rusty's firm has offices. Making a long story short, a few months later the client had a small lease matter in a state where Rusty's firm has an office. They called him from Chicago and he got one of his partners to work on it. The lease matter took only a couple of hours and Rusty and the partner decided not even to charge for it. A few months later the company was sued in a class action labor matter in that same state. Once again, the founders of the company called Rusty and Rusty was able to get the same partner involved in the case. This all resulted from a trip to Chicago to meet the founders.

Rusty began visiting other clients. He visited two clients in Florida. He conducted workshops

on hiring and firing for each. Those workshops resulted in additional work for Rusty and his firm in putting together company employment manuals and policies. While learning about the companies he discovered that one company could actually provide a valuable service to another of the firm's major clients. So, Rusty set up a meeting of the two companies. Both companies were so grateful that they are both sending more business to the firm. This all came from getting out of the office and meeting in person.

Why Should I Hire You?

I want you to pretend for the moment that I can refer business to you. I want you to provide me with the information I need to recommend you to a potential client. In 25 words or less tell me about you, your practice, what makes you unique and why a client should hire you.

How to Stand Out in Any Crowd

If you look at law firm web pages, most firms look alike. They are "full service" "represent small and large companies." They are "client focused" and so forth. As lawyers we all are alike in many ways. We all went to law school, we use the same statutes, regulations and case law. Obviously we have to do top notch legal work or we would have no clients

I subscribe to a magazine *Selling Power*. As you would expect, it is for salespeople and sales managers. Yet, each and every issue I find something of value to lawyers. It only costs \$27 for one year (6 issues) and is well worth it.

In the November/December issue the cover story is "How to Stand Out in Any Crowd." Seth Godin talks about marketing, change and work. I was fascinated by the article and plan to apply some of Godin's points myself.

According to the article Seth Godin likes to give things away and has built his career on it. I have long advocated that lawyers find things of value to give away. Whenever I write an article, I am anxious to give it away. When Godin wrote his first book he offered a third of its contents online at no charge. He got 175,000 responses requesting the free third of the book. Most of the 175,000 who received the free third of the book clicked the link built into the page and bought it, making it a year-long best-seller. Guess what I am planning to do with the three books I have written?

Later in the article, Godin talks about three kinds of people. I will put it in the context of clients:

1. Clients who don't need the services you or your firm offer.

2. Clients who need the services you or your firm offer, but are using another lawyer or firm.
3. Clients who are ignoring you.

Godin says you can't market directly to the second and third group. "Instead, have them come to you." How do you suppose you can get them to come to you? Godin suggests you have to create something "remarkable."

I like to tell young lawyers that I owe a great deal of my success to one sales principle. I frequently created something remarkable, was first to market and I gave it away. For example, I have two books on my law firm web page that potential clients can download at no charge.

I have taught others to do the same thing. Jennifer is a labor and employment lawyer I am coaching.

She created the "Easy Guide" which is a compilation of labor and employment laws on laminated cards which an HR person can attach to his or her monitor. Jennifer has the clients in the second and third category coming to her.

I urge you to implement some of the ideas and let me know what you are doing to make 2007 your best year ever.

Cordell Parvin has practiced law for 36 years. In 2005 he left his law firm to focus his work on helping young lawyers with career and client development. He is the author of *Say Ciao to Chow Mein: Conquering Career Burnout* and two other books on law careers and client development. To learn more go to his website www.cordellparvin.com.