

[Why You Practice Law and How to Make It Matter](#)

Posted by [Cordell Parvin](#) on June 28, 2011

Recently I wrote: [For Lawyers: Questions to Help You Figure Out Your Purpose](#). As I was writing I was thinking about Nashville construction lawyer [Matthew DeVries](#). I got to know Matt first on Twitter. Last September Matt traveled to Dallas to give a presentation and joined me for dinner. He had read my book [Prepare to Win](#) on the flight to Dallas. So, we spent some time at dinner talking about the journey each of us had taken to find our purpose.

Matt has a [construction law blog](#), but he also has a blog on family life. Shortly after our dinner, Matt sent me a post he did [How to Draft a Family Plan and Prepare for Rain!](#) Matt quotes from my book on how I found my passion and purpose as a lawyer.



I was checking out blog posts the other day and found Scott Ginsberg's [How to Matter](#). Scott begins by saying: "The human need to feel needed by (and valuable to) the world is about as deep as they come" and then lists 9 specific ideas. If you get a chance to read it,

I think you will see how the ideas apply to you, not only as a lawyer helping clients, but also as a mentor helping younger lawyers in your firm.

I went through three stages developing my sense of purpose. Early in my career I did not give much thought to why I was practicing law. I just got out of bed every day and did it. I enjoyed what I was doing, but there was nothing special about it.

I then went through a stage where it was all about me. By that point I had discovered that lawyers with business were respected. So, I focused on generating a lot of business and building my reputation. I wanted to be the best in my narrow niche. This was a good strategy for learning and developing business, but there was still something missing.

When I stopped focusing on myself and instead concentrated on how to help my construction clients become successful, I actually became infinitely more successful and had a heck of a lot more fun. I know it is because my mission changed from me to helping my clients.

What's the bottom line? When we feel we are contributing to someone else's success, we become more fulfilled and more successful ourselves.

Why are you practicing law and why does it matter?

Cordell Parvin Blog

DEVELOPING THE NEXT GENERATION OF LAW FIRM RAINMAKERS

Cordell M. Parvin built a national construction practice during his 35 years practicing law. At Jenkins & Gilchrist, Mr. Parvin was the Construction Law Practice Group Leader and was also responsible for the firm's attorney development practice. While there he taught client development and created a coaching program for junior partners. In 2005, Mr. Parvin left the firm and started Cordell Parvin LLC. He now works with lawyers and law firms on career development and planning and client development. He is the co-author of ***Say Ciao to Chow Mein: Conquering Career Burnout*** and other books for lawyers. To learn more visit his Web site, www.cordellparvin.com or contact him at cparvin@cordellparvin.com.