

[3 Simple Ideas to Delight Your Clients and Set Your Firm Apart](#)

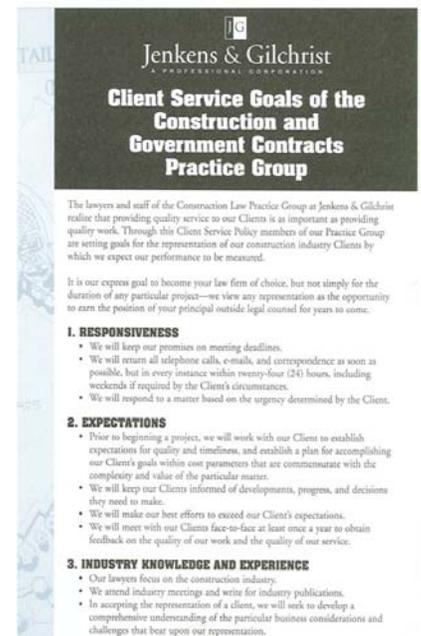
Posted by [Cordell Parvin](#) on July 12, 2011

I am often asked how to create a business development culture in a law firm. It begins by understanding the firm's clients' needs and being creative in responding to them. Client surveys show that clients do not feel they are receiving the service they deserve. So, if you can set your firm apart from other firms, you will have a real opportunity.

Here are three simple things I did when I was practice group leader and in charge of attorney development in my old law firm. You can do them also.

Create a Client Service Policy

Just suppose you interviewed your clients to find out what they valued from a service standpoint and then you created a client service policy based on the feedback you received. My construction law practice group did that and found it was not only a great client service tool, but also served as a great marketing tool. We had it printed and put a link on our web site. We gave it to our new and existing clients at the beginning of any significant matter. It gave us a vehicle to then ask for an evaluation based on the policy after we completed an assignment.



Put Associates in Your Clients' Offices

Knowing that clients do not want to pay for associates to learn about their business, consider putting associates in their offices for a week or two weeks at no charge. Your associates will gain from learning about the company, will make friends and occasionally bring back a new file.

Conduct Client Point of View Programs

Many of your firm's clients like to share their perspectives. Consider creating a quarterly "Client Point of View" program that will give them the opportunity. Have a firm partner bring a client representative

to an associate or firm lunch. Have the client tell the associates about his or her company, about the relationship with the partner and generally good and bad experiences with lawyers and firms. Then have the partner and client talk about a specific topic like billing or responsiveness or knowledge of industry/company and what was expected from associates in work for the company. I think your clients will enjoy speaking about their company, themselves and what they like and do not like. They will also feel a stronger connection to your firm.

These are three simple ideas your firm can implement right away. Do you see any downside in trying them?

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.