

[Client Development Coaching and Training: Why Start Now?](#)

By [Cordell Parvin](#) on July 24th, 2013

I could answer by simply saying that every lawyer I have coached wishes he or she had started focusing on client development earlier in their career. But, let me give my own example.

I tell law firm leaders that when I was growing up I played baseball every day during the summer. I played all the way through college.

I have not swung a baseball bat in 30 years or more. If I went to a batting cage today, I am not positive I would hit the ball, but I am positive I would not think about the technique of my swing.



On the other hand, I never played golf when I was young. I played for the first time when I was in law school. Now, 40 plus years later, when I stand over a golf ball, I am still thinking about all the things I need to do—technique.

If baseball and golf analogies do not resonate with you, think about driving. If you drove to work today, did you think about technique: I need to brake now, I need to put my turn signal on now? I bet you did those things naturally.

Then think back when you were in drivers' ed. When you drove then, I am confident you thought about what you needed to do. It was not natural like it is today.

Client development is similar. The earlier in your career you can work on client development and learn how to do it, the sooner client development and people skills will come naturally to you. If you

start now, at some point when you are meeting with a potential client, or giving a presentation, or attending a networking event, you will not think about your technique.

So, if you are a young lawyer, what are you doing now to go from thinking about technique to making your client development efforts part of who you are?

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.