

## [Don't Just Say: "Thank You"](#)

By [Cordell Parvin](#) on August 15th, 2013

Saying "thank you" is one of the most powerful client development tools in your tool kit. When you do it in an authentic and meaningful way, the person you have thanked will want to do more to help you. On the other hand, if you just say: "thank you," with nothing more, that is like saying "fine" when someone asks: "how are you?"

Recently, a Dallas lawyer I coach who is in one of my "[Give and Take](#)" book discussion groups referred a matter to [Leila Rafi](#), a Toronto based [McCarthy Tétrault](#) lawyer I coach, who is in the same "Give and Take" group.



Leila sent me an email that began:

You rock...

Let's be honest, you and I both know that I don't "rock," but I loved reading it anyway. When I replied to let her know I thought it was great that two lawyers from different cities participating in the "Give and Take" group were able to connect, her reply began:

Sending you big hugs...

Those two emails made a far greater impression on me than if she had simply said:

Thank you.

or said,

Thank you for recommending me and my law firm.

I asked Leila to write about saying thank you and she recruited her McCarthy colleague, [Kirsten Thompson](#).



Here is what they shared with me:

There are a lot of ways to say thank you. The most effective way to say thank you is the way that comes naturally to you. This results in a thank you that carries a lot of meaning, as it is both authentic and genuine.

Consider the following email, which Kirsten recently received from a friend/client:

OK – first you are totally amazing (I already knew that, but had to say it again) – LOVE LOVE LOVE LOVE LOVE the TIFF membership. OMG – so generous and very thoughtful of you. We were THRILLED! This email does not take the place of a formal thank you that will soon be sent. However, I had to let you know how excited we were with the membership.

The wedding, celebration, Germany and our FANTASTIC Middle East Adventure – I am bursting to share it all with you! When are you free? Tell me STAT! ;)

Can't wait to see you.

Brian of Arabia

Is this either of our styles? Not on your life. But, it reflects Brian's style which is about as authentic as it gets.

We are big fans of personal thank you cards. Cordell reminds us of how valuable written thank you notes on Monarch stationary or cards are in the blog post [20 Tools for Your Client Development Tool Kit](#).

When a contact refers work to us, we typically send a written thank you card acknowledging the referral. Depending on the relationship with the referral source, we might also make a note of something in their life, such as a new job or baby.

A thank you doesn't always have to be formal or expressed literally as a thank you. Instead you can send another expressive statement reflecting your gratitude or take

someone out to breakfast or lunch. When people are acknowledged, they feel that they have made a difference and are encouraged and motivated to do more.

At a loss on how to say thank you? Take a look at the following blogs on how to do it.

The first, [Take Note: 8 Ways to Say “Thank You” to Customers](#) by Andrea Nierenberg has some great ideas for thanking customers (clients). The second, [22 Delightful Ways to Say Thank You!](#) has some terrific one-liners that will help you find the words you need. The third, [How to write a professional thank-you note](#), suggests following the acronym G.R.E.A.T (grateful, reference, explanation, action, thanks).

These posts will give you some ideas and you can find what is most comfortable to you and then express away.

There is no one size fits all for how a thank you should be dressed, but we all need to be fashionable in our own way.

As Leila and Kristen have shared, the most important thing about a thank you is the sincerity and authenticity that goes with it. In that context, merely saying “thank you,” with nothing more falls short.

**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](http://www.cordellparvin.com) or contact him at [cparvin@cordellparvin.com](mailto:cparvin@cordellparvin.com).