



Q: Law firm retreats are so time consuming and expensive. Are they worth the time, money, and effort?

A: What we sell in a law firm are relationships, and deep relationships aren't formed by a weekend meeting every 3-4 years. If a firm wants its lawyers to cross-sell, for example, they have to know very well some lawyers in other departments, practices, specialty areas, offices, cities, *etc.*

I've presented at a lot of firm, department, and partner retreats; I'll bet I've done over 100 of them. One thing I've found is that if you want to build a firm or culture, there's really no substitute for getting together in person, and bonding. This is why I always recommend a balance of educational and social programming. It might seem like the games or golfing-type socializing is frivolous, but I think it's important to building the camaraderie that bonds a firm's or department's lawyers together.

So, my answer to your question would be "no" -- even though cost and inconvenience are legitimate concerns, if you're interested in building a strong firm or department, I don't think that doing this annually is too often.