

## **[Client Development Tip: Put Yourself in Your Client's or Potential Client's Shoes](#)**

By [Cordell Parvin](#) on April 30th, 2013

In coaching sessions, I am frequently asked what I think they should do in a particular situation. In almost every case, I have an answer, but I think it is more powerful for the lawyer to figure it out with my help.

I like to say teaching client development is about giving the right answers, while coaching client development is about asking the right questions. So, my first response is:

What do you think you should do?

If the matter involves a client or potential client, I am likely to ask:

Put yourself in your client's (potential client's) shoes. How would you feel if your lawyer...?



If the lawyer I am coaching concludes the client or potential client would feel he or she is being sold or hustled, or feel the lawyer “needed” more work, the answer is pretty obvious.

On the other hand, if you client or potential client would get a strong sense the lawyer genuinely cares and is looking out for the client, then we conclude it is a good idea.

So, what is something you can do for your best client representative that shows you genuinely care about him or her?

**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).