

[Client Development Tip: Give Away Some of Your Time](#)

By [Cordell Parvin](#) on November 6th, 2012

When I coach lawyers, I urge them to offer something of value to a client at no charge. A construction lawyer I coach did that and spent a full day on three complicated construction projects his client was building. That time deepened the relationship with that client.



If you are looking for ideas on what you might do, here are some examples of things I did years ago:

- One of my most important clients was a very successful family owned business in the construction and energy businesses. I learned they met quarterly for strategy sessions. When I learned that, I called and said: “John, I was just thinking about your family strategy meetings that you were telling me about last time we met. If you think it would be valuable, I would be happy to come to your quarterly meetings at no charge and listen and also share with your family what I see going on in the industry.”
- Another important client had district offices throughout the country. The district offices regularly held quarterly sessions on Saturday mornings for the management level employees. I knew the district managers and the in-house lawyers who worked for those districts. I called an in-house lawyer and said: “ Tom, if you think it would be valuable, let’s get together and create a training program we can give at one of your district’s quarterly meetings.”

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- If your clients have no work for you right now, think about calling and saying: “Hey Bill, let’s get together and brainstorm ideas on something I could do for your company at no charge that will be beneficial for your company when the economy comes back.”

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.