

[Bet Your Law Firm is Not Teaching This Essential Skill](#)

Posted by [Cordell Parvin](#) on August 25, 2011

I have written that [law school teaches students to think like a lawyer, but it does not teach students to think like a client](#). Unfortunately, young lawyers in big firms do not regularly interact directly with clients. Law firms are not teaching their associates how to interact with clients. As a result, associates get to the point when this is an essential skill and they are not prepared for it.

If I was still the partner in charge of attorney development in a law firm, I would create scenarios of client interviews. Those could easily be created by using actual situations more senior lawyers have encountered. Senior lawyers could play the role of their client.

It is important to spend time teaching the young lawyers potential questions they can ask. I might even have them watch television interviewers like Larry King and Barbara Walters. Have them read: [27 Secrets to Interviewing Like Larry King – Part One](#), [Part Two](#) and [Part Three](#).

Next focus on teaching active listening. skills Finally I would videotape the young lawyer by having a camera over the shoulder of the make believe client representative.

When the client interview is concluded, have a senior lawyer review it. Later, play the excerpts from the video back and have the senior lawyer discuss the facial expressions and other body language clues.



What is your firm doing to teach lawyers to ask good questions and actively listen?

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DEVELOPING THE NEXT GENERATION OF LAW FIRM RAINMAKERS

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