

Client Development: Adopt Billionaires Traits

By [Cordell Parvin](#) on May 12th, 2015

Last week I read an article in the Dallas Morning News Business Section: [Learn the fascinating traits that billionaires have in common](#). As I read my first thought was that the billionaire traits were the very same that I looked for when hiring young lawyers.



If you develop these traits and make them part of your habits, I predict you will see a dramatic rise in your client development numbers.

- **THEY INVEST IN THEMSELVES:** Lawyers who invest in themselves are more successful. Those lawyers may take classes to learn more about their client's industry. Those lawyers may learn a second language to better serve their clients. Those lawyers develop their client development skills.
- **THEY ARE CONSTANTLY CURIOUS:** I was once asked what was the number one trait I looked for in a young lawyer. I responded I want lawyers who are intellectually curious and have the fire in the belly to learn.
- **THEY SURROUND THEMSELVES WITH SMART PEOPLE:** I have a friend who yearly brought to his firm millions of dollars of business. He was one of the smartest lawyers I have ever met. But, he routinely told me that the lawyers who were on his team were smarter than him and willing to work as hard as him.

- **THEY RARELY EAT ALONE:** The same lawyer mentioned above, never ate alone. Many times he even ate breakfast or lunch twice with different people. In those breakfast or lunch meetings, he asked great questions and actively listened.
- **THEY OWN UP TO MISTAKES:** In the competitive world of law firms, this one is a difficult one. But, the top rainmakers take responsibility when things go wrong.
- **THEY KNOW HOW AND WHEN TO USE LEVERAGE:** This one again is about building the team, giving the team members credit and doing so to create loyalty and to make the pie bigger. Lawyers who hog credit typically do not retain the super stars with whom they work and rarely make the pie bigger.
- **THEY UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN POSSESSIONS AND GROWTH:** I agree with what was said in the article that many billionaires live frugally. If you are a top rainmaker, how are you investing to develop your team?
- **THEY DON'T ALWAYS PLAY IT SAFE:** I like to say that the top lawyers I have coached have worked, as part of the coaching, to do things that are outside their comfort zone. If you want to learn more on this subject, take a look at this Huffington Post piece: [6 Reasons To Step Outside Your Comfort Zone.](#)

If this post resonated with you and you want to do something about it, drop me a note or make a comment on how you plan to make these ideas part of your habits.

By the way, going back to the first attribute: They Invest in Themselves, I invite you to join our next 7 weeks client development class.

The May group just finished the first of seven modules, sent their assignments to me and received my feedback. Here is a [link](#) to the first module the class completed, and here is a [SRE Participant's Guide Intro Mod 1](#) with the assignment they completed and sent to me.

Contact Joyce jflo@cordellparvin.com to sign up for the June class. The cost is only \$95. I have spent more than that in a month on Starbucks Lattes.

Cordell Parvin Blog

DEVELOPING THE NEXT GENERATION OF LAW FIRM RAINMAKERS

Cordell M. Parvin built a national construction practice during his 35 years practicing law. At Jenkens & 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.