

[Exercises to Get Your Lawyers Thinking About Client Development](#)

Posted by [Cordell Parvin](#) on September 19, 2011

I recently spoke to one of the most successful lawyers I ever coached. When I first started coaching her she had under \$200,000 in business. Now, four years later she will generate over \$2,000,000. She talked fondly about how much fun it was to get to know and work with her colleagues in the coaching group. She reminded me of a couple of exercises I created for her coaching group.



After listening to how well she remembered what we did and how well it worked for her and other members in her coaching group, I thought I would share them with you.

I told lawyers in her group to pretend their compensation depended on the amount of business the group brought to the firm. Then I divided them into three groups:

- Group 1 was to brainstorm ideas and create actions that would lead to bringing in business that year (short term)

- Group 2 was to brainstorm ideas and create actions that would bring in business in 1-3 years (mid term)
- Group 3 was to brainstorm ideas and create actions that would bring in business 3 years and beyond (long term)

The lawyers I coached liked thinking of themselves as a firm within the firm and enjoyed brainstorming, developing and carrying out actions designed to bring in business.

I like to also divide lawyers I coach into three groups to brainstorm and discuss:

- Group 1: What are all the potential sources of business and referrals? (e.g. law firm alumni)
- Group 2: What are all the client development activities that take less than 20 minutes and you can do when you are busy? (e.g. forward an article)
- Group 3: What are all the examples of client development tools? (e.g. LinkedIn)

What is the method in my madness? I want lawyers to think creatively and collaboratively. There is nothing more powerful than a group inspired to work together to achieve a common goal.

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.