

## [Client Development: Sometimes You Need Some Luck](#)

By [Cordell Parvin](#) on January 30th, 2015

I tell lawyers I coach that at some point there is a luck factor in client development. I know. I experienced it at least twice. I will share one of those lucky experiences here.

Yesterday, I was the Keynote speaker at the [Wisconsin Transportation Builders Association 2015 Contractor-Engineer Conference](#). I am giving a second presentation at 10 AM this morning. You may be wondering why I chose to speak to contractors when I am no longer practicing law. If you are read on to find out.

I was told there were between 700-800 at the conference, which I believe is the largest audience for whom I have made a presentation.

Since it was Thursday, I began with a Throw Back Thursday (TBT) story. It was November, 1981 when I gave my first presentation to contractors. On that day, I was speaking to contractors with what is now called the [Virginia Transportation Construction Alliance](#).

Take a moment to picture this scene. I made my presentation with no slides, no notes, no podium, just me standing and speaking to the audience. Needless to say I was well prepared.

After I finished my presentation, a man about my father's age walked up to me and introduced himself. He said:

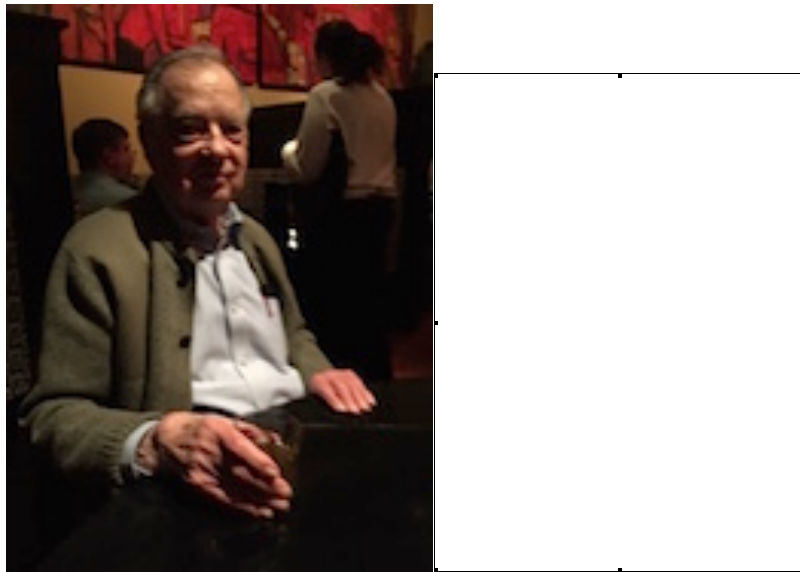
I am Harry Lindberg. I am with the [American Road and Transportation Builders Association](#) (ARTBA). I thought your presentation was very good. How would you like to give it to our national contractors meeting next July?

You know that I was on cloud nine after that offer. That next summer, I gave the presentation at [Callaway Gardens resort](#) in Georgia. After the presentation, three Wisconsin contractors invited me to join them for lunch.

We became fast friends. A few years later, Harry Lindberg became the executive of the Wisconsin Transportation Builders Association and, over the years, I gave at least 10 presentations to the Wisconsin contractors.

Ok, here is the reason why I agreed to come to Madison, WI in January: I was met at the airport by Jim Peterson, one of the three contractors. After checking in at the hotel, I had dinner with Harry Lindberg, Jim and Mully and Barb Brenden, another of the two contractors. Tom, the third passed away about a year ago.

Harry is now 91 and no longer plays golf, but he still plays bridge with a group in Madison. I took this photo and sent it to Nancy.



I am forever Grateful to Harry for giving me the chance to speak to the ARTBA contractors. Clearly I was lucky that he saw me speak. That one opportunity launched my career. Thank you Harry.

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**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).