

[When Should You Say No?](#)

Posted by [Cordell Parvin](#) on September 16, 2011

I got an email this week from a lawyer I coach. She told me she had submitted her resignation to the charitable board of directors and that would free up her time to focus on her more important priorities.



Her thought reminded me of two quotes. I saw the first quote this week when I read: [12 Most Important Quotes for Business from Steve Jobs](#). He said:

It is by saying "no" that you can concentrate on the things that are really important.

The second quote is one by Stephen Covey that I have always found helpful:

You have to decide what your highest priorities are and have the courage—pleasantly, smilingly, non-apologetically, to say “no” to other things. And the way you do that is by having a bigger “yes” burning inside. The enemy of the “best” is often the “good.

[Christy Crider](#) is a [Baker Donelson](#) shareholder I coached a few years ago. After our work together she created an outstanding webinar: [At the Top: Career Success and Life Fulfillment by Using Time Wisely](#). If you have an hour, take time and listen to how Christy plans her life and career based on her priorities.

After I originally posted this, I went back and found a podcast interview segment with [Holland and Hart](#) lawyer, [Nicole Snyder](#). As you will hear in [Nicole Snyder Time is Precious](#), the day she became a partner, Nicole also became a mother of twin boys. As you might imagine, having two children at once made it even easier for Nicole to say no to things that were not her priorities.

When would you say no?

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.