

## [Stand Out From The Crowd: Do a Presentation That Captures Potential Clients' Attention](#)

By [Cordell Parvin](#) on April 5th, 2013

If you know me, you know I take great joy in introducing highly motivated lawyers I coach to other highly motivated lawyers I coach and sitting down as a group and brainstorming ideas. Today and tomorrow Nancy and I are hosting the 2d annual Outstanding Women Lawyers' Roundtable. I am very excited to spend time with the lawyers who are coming to Dallas.

One topic we are covering is how to position yourself so potential clients can find you and want to hire you. I have covered that topic this week by suggesting ways to stand out from the crowd. I have shared real life examples from lawyers I have coached. Here is another great example.

A couple of years ago I had the chance to work with [Tricia DeLeon](#), a [Bracewell & Giuliani](#) litigation partner here in Dallas. I loved working with her because she put great effort into coaching. We have stayed in touch and for the second year she will participate in the Outstanding Women Lawyers' Roundtable.

During our coaching Tricia was asked to do a workshop for bankers. It was challenging because it wasn't just an hour long presentation, it was over two hours. We worked on finding ways to keep her audience engaged. She did so well that her workshop style presentation has become an annual event. I received an email from Tricia about her most recent presentation and I asked her to share her ideas with you.

Cordell coached a group of Bracewell & Giuliani's future rainmakers several years ago. I recall having an "aha!" moment when he taught us what NOT to do when presenting to potential clients. He taught me how to create an effective and exciting PowerPoint presentation. Here were my top take-aways:

1. Limit text on each slide to 10 words, preferably less.



2. Include a graphic on each slide. [www.istockphoto.com](http://www.istockphoto.com) is a good source.
3. Include short videos or sound clips.
4. Leave the audience wanting more. Don't finish your presentation. Tell them to leave their cards if they want you to e-mail them the entire presentation.
5. Get the audience involved and engaged in conversation.

I am a litigator who defends banks against consumer-based claims and represents them as secured creditors in bankruptcy matters. I have been privileged to be an instructor at the [American Bankers' Association's Graduate Commercial Lending School](#) the last three years. I teach a two-hour course on [Avoiding Lender Liability Issues in Commercial Lending](#).

**Lender Liability Quiz**

The number one theory of lender liability used by Plaintiffs against lenders is:

- a. Duress
- b. Bad Faith
- c. Breach of Contract
- d. Fraud and Misrepresentation

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As you can see, I don't always adhere to Rule #1 on limiting text to 10 words or less on a slide. But, I never use the PowerPoint as a script to read from while presenting. In my presentation, I encourage participation by asking the audience to answer a multiple choice quiz and to guess how various courts ruled in certain cases. I award Starbucks gift cards and other firm goodies to audience members who participate in

the discussion. It makes me laugh to see adults fight over who is going to “win” my last highlighter or gift card.

Try Cordell’s approach and ditch the typical, boring PowerPoint.

As I shared above, I love connecting highly motivated lawyers I know with others. I am contemplating hosting a group here in Dallas I will call the Outstanding Lawyer Bloggers Roundtable. If you are interested in participating, let me know.

**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).