What Does It Take to Make Rain?

By Cordell Parvin on July 9th, 2012

Suppose you asked 15 of the most successful lawyers you know how they became successful rainmakers: What do you suppose they have in common? What do you suppose are differences among them?

This week I am meeting for the last time with the Fox Rothschild partners coaching group known as Make Fox Rain 8. Like the seven Fox Rothschild groups I coached before them, this group has been focused and engaged on becoming more successful and more valuable to clients. Several lawyers in the group are blogging. Frank Cook, a successful labor and employment lawyer in the group recently started a new blog: New Jersey Human Resources.

Several months ago, Frank asked me:

> What is the one single trait that separates the top rainmakers you know from other lawyers?

As you likely know, I did not hesitate in replying:

> They have a burning desire to succeed.

When asked, I normally add:

> And they have a burning desire to help their clients succeed.

My answer peaked Frank's interest and he decided to cold call Fox Rothschild's top 15 rainmakers to see what they share in common and how they differ from one another. He captured their answers in a report I titled: What Does it Take to Make Rain. Frank sent to his fellow Make Fox Rain coaching colleagues and gave me permission to share it with you. I urge you to read the entire report and let me know what you think. Here are some points I found interesting:

1. Indeed, the top rainmakers were all driven to succeed. While they did not mention that, it was evident in what they do.
2. Each lawyer has a plan and can immediately explain it.
3. Even though they were already successful, they made a concerted effort at client development each and every day.
4. Some were extroverted, but many were introverted. Everyone of them was playing to his or her strengths.
5. They used the two "R"s of business development: Relationships and Responsiveness.
6. Many expressed there is a little "luck" in rainmaking.
7. Most did not ask for business, but instead focused on being of service to clients and potential clients, including helping their clients obtain business.

After reading the memo Frank created, can you think of anything to add to this list?

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.