

[Why Some Potential Rainmakers are Overlooked](#)

By [Cordell Parvin](#) on September 12th, 2012

You likely have potential rainmakers in your firm that you are overlooking. You might even have concluded these lawyers are not motivated to make rain.

I have learned from coaching lawyers that there is more than one way to be motivated. I will show you by telling you the tale of two lawyers. For purposes of this discussion, I will call one of them Sandra and the other one Jill. I bet you know lawyers who are like each of them.

Sandra is a go getter. She is very upbeat and has high energy. She is obviously highly motivated and very focused on her goals. She is very positive and very competitive. She is creative and willing to take risks on client development, but sometimes she is not very strategic using her time. She sets stretch goals and achieves them. When she achieves a goal she is highly charged. If she finds anything she believes she will not do well, she simply does not try doing it.

Jill, is much different. While she is highly motivated, she is not as positive. She does well and succeeds because she does not want to look like she doesn't know something. She likes to say that she fears that her clients may come to realize that she is not the expert that she appears to be. She is very focused and not easily distracted. She is very detail oriented. She values getting it right more than getting it done quickly. She struggles with being a perfectionist. When she achieves a goal instead of being charged up, she is actually relieved.

[Winston Churchill](#) said it well:

The pessimist sees difficulty in every opportunity. The optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.



Sandra is the optimist and Jill the pessimist. Some law firm leaders or marketing professionals may believe that Sandra will easily become a rainmaker and Jill will never become a rainmaker. I am

sharing this story simply to tell you that both can become successful rainmakers, but you cannot coach and motivate them the same way. If you try and use the power of positive thinking with Jill, it will not motivate her.

So, how would you motivate Jill to become a rainmaker in your firm? If you want some ideas read: [Getting Others to Embrace Risk](#) by [Heidi Grant Halvorson](#). If you want even more ideas, read her book.

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.