

[10 Days to Launch Your Client Development Efforts: Day 9](#)

By [Cordell Parvin](#) on July 18th, 2013

On Day 9, I want you to think about your friends who work for companies you would like to have as a client. Let's explore what you can do.



Become The Second Lawyer

Focus on building the relationship and being the second lawyer or firm. Lawyers and law firms have conflicts or may not handle a particular type of matter. If you can get the opportunity to “show your stuff” in one of those situations, you will have a great opportunity.

- That sounds easy, but as a practical matter how do you do it? In a conversation what would you ask?

Become The Subject Matter Expert

A second strategy is to become the “go-to” leading expert in something her company needs. Clients have outside lawyers and law firms, but they may be more a generalist. You can get the opportunity to work with one of those companies, when you are widely considered the “go to lawyer” in a specific area, or if you are an industry expert.

- What area of law or industry do you enjoy and know more about than other lawyers?

Add Value The Other Firm Is Not Providing

A third strategy is to find a way to add value that is beyond just the legal work. You can only achieve this by knowing a great deal about the companies and asking great questions to learn what is going on with the company.

A litigator I coached was with a friend who owned an oil field business. By asking questions, the litigator learned that the friend was acquiring a business and was having trouble getting the financing. The litigator offered to have his corporate/finance partners look into getting the financing. A month later the friend had the financing and the law firm had a new client.

- In what ways can you or your firm add value that your potential client is not receiving from its current firm?

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.