

## [Are You Focused on the Past, Present or Future?](#)

By [Cordell Parvin](#) on November 27th, 2013

I first heard that question asked several years ago when I read [Daniel Teitelbaum's](#) book: [The Ultimate Guide to Mental Toughness](#).

If you don't have time to read the book, you might find this [review](#) helpful. As you will see, the book is less about mental toughness, and more about motivation and triggers to achieve goals.

In the book he suggests that top performers:

- Expect to win.
- Always keep their minds focused on the "best case scenario."
- Know exactly what they want out of life, both short-term and long-term.
- Have a high level of self belief.
- Know how to keep themselves focused and motivated.
- Stay out of their comfort zones.

Teitelbaum also describes a Harvard School of Psychology study focused on the differences between three levels of achievers:

1. Low achievers tend to focus on the past and can't get their minds off of past defeats.
2. Average achievers focus on the present, on just getting done the work they have. (For lawyers the billable work we have to do.)
3. Top achievers stay laser focused on the future, on the specific victories they are planning to make happen and they consistently think about and visualize those victories.



So, are you focused on the past, present or future?

Happy Thanksgiving to those of you in the United States. I will be back on Monday. One topic I want to cover next week is holiday cards.

**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).