

[15 Things I Would Tell First Year Lawyers This Week](#)

Posted by [Cordell Parvin](#) on September 08, 2011

Those fortunate law graduates who have found jobs as first year lawyers in law firms are likely starting this week. It made me think about what I might share with those young and ambitious lawyers.



Here are things I would share during first year orientation:

1. Your time and your energy are important resources, plan and use them wisely.
2. Each year have a plan that includes what you want to learn to become a better lawyer.
3. Don't be so intensely focused on your billable hours that you do not build your profile and build relationships.
4. Your career will be both a marathon and a series of short sprints. That means focusing both on the long-term and short-term goals.
5. Exercise and stay physically fit.
6. Do not eat lunch at your computer. Alternatively, if you feel you must, at least get up and walk around the block outside to clear your mind.

7. When assigned a matter, do some research on the client and the client's industry so you have a context for the legal work you are doing.
8. Treat your supervising lawyer as a client because until you have clients of your own, he or she is your client.
9. If you are getting involved in the community, focus on something you are passionate about and then work your way to a leadership position.
10. Start building relationships right away and keep up with high school, college and law school classmates.
11. To build your career, team up with one of your colleagues to brainstorm ideas and hold each other accountable.
12. Don't seek balance in your life. Instead focus on your priorities.
13. If you "need to," "have to," "got to" do something, you likely won't do it.
14. In your career, you will suffer setbacks. How you deal with those challenging times will play an important role in your career success and your life fulfillment.
15. Think BIG!! Become the best lawyer you are capable of becoming.

For the last few years I have given a presentation [Starting Right for Career Success](#). I hope your first year lawyers will find it helpful.

Cordell Parvin Blog

DEVELOPING THE NEXT GENERATION OF LAW FIRM RAINMAKERS

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.