

## [Goals: Are You a 1%-er?](#)

By [Cordell Parvin](#) on October 16th, 2012

I am starting coaching a group of partners today. I will ask them and I will ask you: Do you have goals? That is likely not the most appropriate question because we all have goals. Perhaps better questions might be:

- Can you identify your goals?
- Are your goals written?

Why should you write (type) your goals and commit them to paper? The easy answer is *because* scientific studies tell us that people who commit their goals to paper are far more likely to persist and stick with it to achieve them.

According to [Dr. David Kohl](#), professor emeritus at my alma mater, [Virginia Tech](#):

- 80% of Americans say they don't have goals.
- 16% do have goals but don't write them down.
- Less than 4% write down their goals and fewer than 1% review them on an ongoing basis.

Read: [Are you part of the 1%?](#) I have always created written goals. Early in my career I wrote them on legal paper, folded the paper and carried it in my inside suit pocket. I frequently reviewed what I had written. So, I guess I fit into the 1%.

I have been reading [Charles Duhigg's](#) book: [The Power of Habit: Why We Do What We Do in Life and Business](#). In the book he writes about a study done on patients who had hip surgery and their recovery. Since I am getting my hip replaced on December 13, I read with great interest.

Duhigg describes a 1992 British study involving lower-class elderly patients – averaging 68-years-old – who were recovering from recent hip or knee replacement surgery. A psychologist was examining ways to increase the patients' willpower to keep up with the arduous rehabilitation process. Patients were given a booklet with their rehab schedule. In the back were 13 blank pages one for each week of rehab with instructions and: "My goals for this week are\_\_\_\_\_." Those patients

who filled in the blanks with detailed plans for each week were back walking twice as fast as those who had not.

You can read more in this blog about the book: [Small habit-forming advice, via "The Power of Habit" by Charles Duhigg](#).

I wanted to find other studies supporting the importance of written goals. I did a Google search and found: [Goals Research Summary](#). Here is a visual depiction from the summary:



As you can see from the visual, those who did best included those with written goals, those who shared their goals with a friend, and those who sent written reports each week to their friend. This undoubtedly sounds very familiar to those of you who have participated in my coaching program. Each time we meet in person, you create written goals, you share those with me and you keep me up to date

# 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](http://www.cordellparvin.com) or contact him at [cparvin@cordellparvin.com](mailto:cparvin@cordellparvin.com).