

## [What is Your “Brand” and Why Does It Matter?](#)

By [Cordell Parvin](#) on May 13th, 2013

A year ago I was introduced to a young, smart, corporate lawyer in a well-known national law firm. When I met him, I could not help but notice his shoes were not shined and actually had scuff marks. His shoes looked like the one on the left in the photo.

His un-shined shoes made an impression on me that will take a long time to go away. It is the first thing I think about when his name comes to my mind. I wonder if potential clients and referral sources also notice his shoes. If so, he will be forever “branded” as a business lawyer who does not dress like one.



I don't like the word “brand” to describe lawyers. Yet, we each have a brand. It is what our clients, referral sources, contacts, adversaries and colleagues in our office say about us. What do those folks say about you?

Recently I read the *Forbes* article by [Lisa Quast](#): [Build A Personal Brand, Not Just A Career](#). I was fascinated by the discussion of Marissa Mayer, Yahoo's new CEO.

As Google's 20th employee and first woman engineer, she is a 'brand.' Marissa Mayer is the woman that made Google successful.

That is definitely a brand. I urge you to read the entire article and discuss some of the ideas with your colleagues.

When I was building my law practice I wanted my potential clients to think I was:

1. The preeminent transportation construction lawyer in the US
2. Innovative
3. Construction business savvy
4. Trusted advisor
5. Likeable
6. Caring
7. Focused on helping contractors

I never called that a “brand” but it was. For 25 years I wrote a column for [Roads and Bridges](#) magazine titled “Law: The Contractor’s Side.” The title of the column itself “branded” me as a contractor’s lawyer.



What do you want your clients to think about you? What is the best way to show them your brand?

# Cordell Parvin Blog

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**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).