

## [Client Development: You've Got to Get Feedback](#)

By [Cordell Parvin](#) on December 5th, 2012

Do you have anyone giving you feedback on your client development efforts?

I have always had coaches giving me feedback. It started with little league baseball, then high school sports. A law school professor gave me coaching. Then, as a Judge Advocate litigating government contract cases in the Air Force I received coaching from my boss. In each instance, I learned what stop doing or do differently.



Fast forward to when I was at the very top of my law career. I will never forget meeting regularly for coffee early in the morning with our firm's top financial guy. One day he told me:

Cordell, you are full of many client development ideas. I recommend you pick one and complete it before starting the next one.

That was exactly the feedback I needed. I received that advice 12 years ago and I still remember it today.

Client development coaching is about offering feedback. I got feedback and now I offer feedback to lawyers I coach.

A lawyer I coached some time ago shared with me a great success he had encountered based on his using the feedback I had offered. In our coaching session he told me he would be taking a GC of a potential client to a basketball game.

He told me he would normally talk about his firm and asked for my feedback. I told him to not mention his firm. I suggested that instead, he set up a Google Alert and find out what was going on with the company and ask questions. I advised him that at some point, the GC would say something like:

Jonathan, tell me about your firm...

Later Jonathan told me the GC made that very statement as they were driving out of the parking garage after the game.

Who is giving you feedback? What have you learned and changed as a result of the feedback?

This is the time of year when law firms are budgeting and contemplating how they will spend their money in 2013. I hear from many firms contemplating client development coaching. If your firm is one of them, I wrote an article: [Practical Advice For Setting Up A Business Development Coaching Program](#). Take a look and let me know if you have any questions.

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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).