

[Self Confidence Skills: Two Key Points](#)

By [Cordell Parvin](#) on May 8th, 2014

Tuesday I gave a presentation to the [Middle Tennessee Association of Legal Administrators](#) at the annual Law Firm Leaders Breakfast. Here are slides from my presentation: [Developing the Next Generation of Law Firm Rainmakers and Leaders](#).

Near the end of the presentation I was asked:

What is the one most important thing young lawyers need to have to become law firm leaders and rainmakers?

My simple answer:

Self-confidence: They have to believe they can lead or they can make rain.

All lawyers have some self-confidence. They could not have made it through law school without it. But, many lawyers don't believe they can become a law firm leader or rainmaker. They might have bought into the misconception that they have to approach it the same way a senior lawyer did.

I love the opportunity to persuade those young lawyers to see themselves differently. You might recall a blog: [Client Development: Change What You Think it Takes to Succeed](#). If you have a minute, go back and read it again.

Early in my career, I arrived at work every day at 6AM so I could spend time listening to the lawyer for whom I did the most work. I made the coffee, grabbed my first cup, went to his office and sat across his desk with my coffee cup in-hand. During our 10-15 minute sessions each day, he shared ideas, really gems, the kind you and I never learned in law school.

I wish I had recorded all of them, because I remember only a few today. I have shared many times one gem he passed on to me. He said:



Clients want to hire lawyers who have confidence inspiring personalities.

He was right. But, he did not share how to develop a confidence inspiring personality. I have some ideas.

I recently watched a short TED video presentation by [Dr. Ivan Joseph](#). Who is he you ask? He is the former soccer coach and current athletic director at [Ryerson University](#) in Toronto.



[The Skill of Self Confidence: Dr. Ivan Joseph at TEDxRyersonU](#)

How do you develop your self-confidence skills? Dr. Joseph's answer is very consistent with my blog posts and coaching I have done:

1. Repetition, repetition, repetition, or practice, practice practice. (See my recent blog: [Are You "Practicing" to Become a Better Lawyer?](#))

2. Self talk- eliminate the negative, reaffirm the positive. (See my recent blog: [Client Development Success: Begin With This Attitude Check](#))

Now you have it. Can you eliminate any negative self-talk and reaffirm the positive? What can you practice this week, this month, this year? What are you really doing well?

Many of you who know me, know that I loved practicing law and helping construction contractors. I can't think of anything I would change about that experience.

But, I left an exciting law practice because I enjoy the opportunity to work with young lawyers even more. When I see the light in their eyes signaling they believe they can accomplish great goals, I know magic is about to happen. Would I see that light in your eyes?

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.