

## [2013 Partners Face Layoffs: 4 Ways to Build Your Practice and Security](#)

By [Cordell Parvin](#) on January 10th, 2013

Recently the Wall Street Journal Law Blog Posted: [Law-Firm Partners Face Layoffs](#) The blog included a quote from a former partner:

“You’re only as secure as the amount of money you bring in,” says a partner who during the recession was asked to leave a large national law firm. He was let go from his subsequent firm last year.

It isn’t enough to be a good lawyer, he says. “The job is to make money for the firm.”



This is a not so subtle reminder that the only security law firm lawyers have is clients. Every lawyer practicing in a law firm needs to focus on client development. I am always surprised that so many lawyers wait until it is too late.

**If you are an associate, the sooner you start learning, practicing and working on client development. the sooner you will boost your firm’s bottom line and your own security.**

At the risk of being too simplistic, there are four main ways you can get business:

1. Becoming the very best in your field. If you were thought to be the best civil trial lawyer, or corporate M&A lawyer or labor and employment lawyer in your state, or maybe even your city, it is unlikely you would need to do very much marketing or client development. Whenever a big case or a big deal came in you would be on the “go-to” list.
2. By being fortunate enough to represent a large, active company that gets sued a lot, if you are a litigator, or does a lot of deals, if you are a transactional lawyer. That works well until your client is acquired by another company or your client contact retires.
3. By finding a niche and becoming an expert. That is the approach I took. I believe this takes the least amount of time.
4. By being very active in the community and building many relationships. One of my former partners did this very well and was active in highly visible community organizations. He attracted work outside of his practice area because he was considered a “trusted advisor.”

In 2013, I am creating group telephone client development coaching programs, with 10 lawyers in each group. Each month during the year we will cover topics. Here are the monthly topics:

- January: How to Prepare Plan and Goals.
- February: Client Development 2013 and Beyond.
- March: Motivation, Time Management, Hold Yourself Accountable.
- April: How Business Clients Select Lawyers and Law Firms.
- May: Raising Your Credibility and Visibility.
- June: Writing and Speaking to Get Hired.
- July: Blogging: What and How to Write a Blog for Clients.
- August: Relationship Building.
- September: Social Media and iPad apps
- October: Client Meetings, Client Pitches, Getting Selected.
- November: Client Service.
- December: What Sets Rainmakers Apart or What Separates Stars from Superstars.

# Cordell Parvin Blog

DEVELOPING THE NEXT GENERATION OF LAW FIRM RAINMAKERS

If you are interested in participating in one of the groups, contact Joyce at [jflo@cordellparvin.com](mailto:jflo@cordellparvin.com).

**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).