

[Making Rain: Serving Rather Than Selling](#)

By [Cordell Parvin](#) on April 8th, 2015

[Scott Funk](#) is a [Gray Reed & McGraw](#) shareholder from Houston. One of the primary things Scott learned when I worked with him eight years ago was the importance of asking friends good questions, even if the friend was happy with his outside counsel.

Scott shared this story that I have told to the many lawyers I coached after him. I want to make sure you get a chance to read about it.



One of my long time friends owns an oilfield equipment and service company that primarily operates and sells in the U.S., and has operations in India and China. Based on our conversations, I knew my friend was happy with his existing corporate attorney. But I could also tell my friend was looking for something more.

Before our coaching, I would have tried to “sell” him on hiring our firm and why we were the right firm for him, and probably tried to convince him to use LRM instead of his existing attorney.

Based on what I learned in the coaching program, I first set out to find out more about my friend and his company. I learned more about his background, and more about his company operations and opportunities in China and India. He let me know he wanted to expand his company by acquiring a Canadian company. When he said he was hiring a New York firm to help obtain financing for a \$1,000,000 fee, I asked him to give me 30 days to help him find financing at a lower cost.

In the next 30 days I introduced my friend to consultants, several bankers, an investment banker, and a private equity firm. He let me know he was extremely thankful and impressed. While he said that he liked his attorney, he was impressed that we went far beyond just focusing on the legal work.

After he got the financing for the acquisition, our firm became his law firm.

I don't think I would have obtained this client before coaching program because I would have tried to talk instead of listening, and I would have tried to sell our firm rather than demonstrating how we can add value.

So, what is the point of Scott's story?

It is really pretty simple. When you go from thinking about how you can get hired to thinking about how you can add value without expecting anything in return, good things happen.

Scott asked questions, listened and uncovered a need where his firm could add value.

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 or contact him at cparvin@cordellparvin.com.