

[Client Development Coaching: One Huge Benefit is Sharing with Others](#)

By [Cordell Parvin](#) on October 16th, 2014

One of the great joys I have coaching lawyers from the US and Canada, and I think one of the huge benefits for those lawyers is getting to know each other and sharing ideas and referrals. Here are three examples that have happened just in the last week.

One way we do it is through book groups. One book group is currently reading [Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking](#) by [Susan Cain](#). The book group shared their thoughts on the first chapter last week.

Another way we do it is I introduce lawyers from different firms who might be good referrals for each other. This week I received an email from one of the Toronto lawyers I coached sharing with me that a Texas lawyer I coached had sent a Toronto litigation matter to her.

A third way we share ideas occurs when a lawyer I coach asks a question and I seek thoughts from other lawyers I coach who I believe would have the best ideas on the subject. That happened just this week.

A lawyer I coach asked:

I have identified several (7-8) in-house counsel that I would like to develop a relationship with/take to lunch, etc. Many (but not all) are women, some are women of color, and one even went to my law school (but before I did).

My question is what do you suggest is the best way to connect with these people?

One of my work colleagues is LinkedIn "friends" with practically everyone in our city, but I would prefer NOT to ask him for an introduction as the point is to develop my own clients.

A few of these in-house counsel are connected to other attorneys that I know via LinkedIn, but I find it awkward to ask another attorney for an "introduction." At the same time, I am told that "cold calling" to introduce oneself and set up a lunch is considered quite tacky and taboo.

Do you agree or is there a way to do it a non-aggressive way (particularly for the one who also went to my law school)? It just seems like a great pool of potential clients that I am missing out on, but I am certainly not the “hard sell,” aggressive type and don’t want to do anything that would be frowned upon.

I sent her question to Bizunesh Scott, another lawyer I coach who offered these suggestions:



I tend to not ask people to introduce me on LinkedIn. I have a lot of LinkedIn connections and get asked to make introductions. But, often the person they want an introduction to is a 2nd degree connection. And, even if it’s a first degree connection, I often do not know the person well enough for the ask. I would use that as a last resort and only if you are confident that the person you are asking has a meaningful relationship with that person (same year out of law school, previous work history together, in same association maybe).

A couple of suggestions (all to be done by email):

1. Invite the target to a conference that you are attending or speaking at by offering to pay the registration.
2. Host a webinar and invite your targets to the webinar.
3. Invite your clients and potential clients targets to an in person lunch at your firm to discuss a substantive legal topic. Call it a roundtable. I would put all their names in the to line so they know the scope of the attendees and let them know it is small on purpose.

4. If someone cannot make it to 1-3, a follow-up email for a quick call, coffee, or meeting.
5. Google the person to see if they are speaking at any conferences and connect with them there.
6. Use a connection and do a cold email. I respond to sorority connections, law school connections, or if I am bored.
7. If you are not in the same state, email that you are in town for an event and would like to meet to discuss topic.

After two emails within a month, wait two months before contacting again.

Would you like to form or join a book group? Do you have a question, that another lawyer like you might answer? Do you want to become part of a client development group telephone coaching program? Finally, would you like to participate in one of the group roundtables I host here in Dallas and Fort Worth.

Although I have not scheduled the events yet, we are looking at hosting a Bloggers Bootcamp and hosting a Construction Lawyers Client Development Bootcamp.

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.