

## [What Kind of Client Development Efforts Suit You Best?](#)

Posted by [Cordell Parvin](#) on July 21, 2011

Has a mentor/senior lawyer in your firm told you how to develop business? Has the suggested approach felt uncomfortable? That is natural because one size clearly does not fit all. The lawyers I have coached have appreciated that they can approach client development in different ways.

Have you read [The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference](#) by [Malcolm Gladwell](#)? If you haven't, I recommend you read it. Like most business/marketing books you should skim the parts of the book that do not apply to marketing your law practice and focus on the parts that do.

The first of the three main points in The Tipping Point is the "law of the few". The marketing activities that will work best for you will depend in part on whether you are a (1) **Connector**, (2) **Maven** or (3) **Salesmen**.

Connectors know lots of people. You know the type. No one is a stranger to them. They know people in different worlds. Connectors are masters of "weak ties," meaning many relationships that are not deep ones. If you are a connector, more than anything else you need to spend your marketing time out from behind your computer. Want to determine if you are a connector? Take Gladwell's [Are you a connector test](#).

Mavens accumulate knowledge. They do the research most of us don't want to do and they find joy in passing along what they learn. If you are a maven, you figure out things that impact your clients before other lawyers. You should spend your marketing time staying on top of what is impacting your clients and writing or speaking about those topics.

Salesmen are charismatic people who can persuade others even when the others are not convinced of what they are hearing. They can sell anything. Based on two studies, Gladwell notes that little things can be as important as big things. Second, non-verbal clues are as important; or, more important than verbal clues. Finally, persuasion works in ways we do not fully appreciate. It is not



always the obvious eloquence; it can be way more subtle. Great salesmen connect with their clients in a variety of non-verbal ways including non-verbal enthusiasm, confidence and emotional expressiveness. If you are a salesman, you should spend your marketing time speaking to groups and in one-on-one meetings with potential clients and referral sources.

If you want to get a better idea of what kind of marketing efforts will work best for you, buy the book [StrengthsFinder 2.0](#) and take the [StrengthsFinder test](#). My friend and colleague [Cindy Pladziewicz](#) helps lawyers I coach figure out how to use their StrengthsFinder results. She recently wrote: [Want to develop a great business plan? Play to your strengths.](#) If you take the test, and want to share your strengths and set up a session with Cindy, let me know.

Cindy has been working with me on my strengths. Take a look at a [report](#) that was done analyzing my strengths. If you look at the report about me you will likely understand what client development efforts suited me best when I practiced law and why I am well suited to teach and coach lawyers.

Which type of person are you? What are your strengths? Are you spending your marketing time to your best advantage?

**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).