

[Lawyers: Your Process Just May Be More Important than the Outcome You Achieve](#)

By [Cordell Parvin](#) on February 5th, 2015

Lawyers: Have you ever in your career practiced meeting with a client?

Law Firms: Have you ever given your young lawyers the opportunity to practice a meeting with a client?

Why should you? Why must you? Why should you video tape those sessions?



I wrote about this important topic in a blog post last November: [New Client Meetings: Has Your Firm Created Opportunities to Practice?](#)

Recently I read an interesting 2013 University of Missouri Journal of Dispute Resolution Article: [What Do Clients Want from Their Lawyers?](#) I found many interesting things in the article. It begins by discussing the BTI surveys I have written about here with the headline that 70 Percent of Big Companies Dissatisfied With Primary Outside Counsel.

Then I found this extremely interesting finding:

Many lawyers equate client satisfaction with the outcome achieved; however, studies over the past three decades in three different countries have produced impressive evidence that clients evaluate their lawyers' competence more in terms of the process experienced by them in the representation than the outcome.

I am sure clients do care about the outcome, but even if you get a favorable outcome you could easily lose your client if you have not paid attention to the process. Your success as a lawyer depends in large part on your relationship building skills with your clients.

If you go to the end of the article you will find a comparison of the medical profession with the legal profession. For doctors effective communication is not only taught in medical schools, but is also demonstrated through simulated patient assessments in order to receive a medical license.

You did not have to demonstrate your communication skills to pass the Bar. Yet, I urge you to practice those skills.

How much time will you spend this year either learning about relationship building or practicing it?

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.

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