

[Self Motivation: Have You Answered the Why Question?](#)

By [Cordell Parvin](#) on January 15th, 2015

Time management is the most frequent agenda item for lawyers I coach. More specifically, I am asked how to find time for client development when the lawyer is busy with billable work and wants quality family time. Do you also wonder how you can find the time?

You might think this is a time management issue. More often than not, I find it is a self-motivation issue. [Donald Latumahina](#) wrote an interesting blog: [Self Motivation: How to Motivate Yourself](#) a few years ago. His first suggestion for building self-motivation is to **Have a Cause**. He says:

While other causes could inspire you temporarily, a cause that matters to you can inspire you indefinitely.

His third suggestion is to **Be Hungry**. He says:

To be truly motivated, you need to have hunger and not just desire. Having mere desire won't take you through difficult times since you don't want things badly enough.

If you are struggling to make time for client development ask yourself the "why" question. Write down why developing a client base and book of business is important to you. It will help get you have a cause. Let me share my answers with you. Developing a client base and book of business would:

- Provide security for my family
- Enable me to help clients achieve their goals
- Make my work more interesting

If you find it challenging to make time for client development, you might want to read [Rising Star](#), which I co-authored with Kristi Sebalj. (Note: As you will see if you click, the Kindle version is on sale for \$2.99). Here is some of what I said in the introduction:



kindle edition

This was the second book I have wrote about Tony and Gina Caruso. In “Say Ciao to Chow Mein: Conquering Career Burnout” Christina Bost Seaton and I focused on Tony, who after finishing his first year as an associate in a large Texas law firm is burned out and struggling to find meaning in his career. Rising Star: The Making of a Rainmaker is about Gina, who is now a partner in a mid-sized firm. She is the talk of the firm, having brought in \$1 Million of business. Yet, she feels like a one-hit wonder because her success was a result of one big case from one big client...

I have known Tony’s and Gina’s throughout my 35 years practicing law. Their characters are a composite of lawyers who have worked for me and lawyers I have been blessed to coach and mentor. Many of those lawyers have caused me to study and examine differences between lawyers who are successful and happy and lawyers who are not...

As you read Rising Star, think about what you really want in your career and how you can most effectively and efficiently achieve it. That will be a good starting point to motivate you to achieve your goals.

One final note: If you are a regular reader, you know that Gina Caruso and her husband Tony are the characters in the novel I am writing. Gina is a risk taker with high energy and enthusiasm. She has an amazing ability to persuade people she meets. Tony is more cerebral and focused like a laser beam. While Gina is all over the map, Tony keeps his eye on the ball. When Gina finds herself in a jam, it will be up to Tony to help get her out of 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.