

PRAISE FOR

Prepare to Win

Prepare to Win is a must read if you want to take control of your career and have a great time in the process. It seems so hard to find time for the most important priorities in our lives, but in this book Cordell shows you the way to make real differences in areas that really matter most to you personally. Sometimes, it seems impossible to fulfill all those predictions of someone who had “a great future.” But you definitely can, and applying the principals Cordell teaches in *Prepare to Win* will help you do it.

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PREPARE TO WIN

**A Lawyer's Guide to Rainmaking,
Career Success and Life Fulfillment**

BY CORDELL PARVIN



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Prepare to Win

A Lawyer's Guide to Rainmaking, Career Success and Life Fulfillment

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Introduction

■ WAS ASKED RECENTLY HOW I could possibly leave a secure, successful law practice in a large firm to go out on my own to coach, mentor, and help lawyers. It was a logical question given that my practice was thriving, my clients were happy, and my wife felt more secure than ever with my regular paycheck. Simply, helping lawyers achieve success and fulfillment was the intersection of my passion and talent. It also fulfilled a need. While my law practice energized me, I was even more energized by my efforts to help young lawyers. I felt like I was making a greater contribution.

Why do young lawyers need help? Do they need a guide to rainmaking, career success and life fulfillment? We live in an interesting time in North America. We earn more than ever before. We are enjoying our careers and lives less. We work to earn more money and find no greater fulfillment from it. Experts sometimes refer to this as the “hedonic treadmill” or “hedonic adaptation,” that is, we rapidly adapt to improvements and thus feel no better off.

In 1999, Professor Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi (pronounced `Me-hi Chicksent-mehiee’) wrote an article in *American Psychologist* titled “If We Are So Rich, Why Aren’t We Happy?” He points out that material rewards, which people value so highly, do not necessarily provide the happiness expected from them because of the well-documented escalation of expectations. If people strive for a certain level of affluence, thinking it will make them happy, they will already be reaching for the next level when they reach it. Second, people evaluate their possessions in comparison with those who have the most, not in terms of what they need to live comfortably. Third,

material rewards alone are not sufficient to make us happy. Czikszentmihalyi points out those other conditions, like family, friends, and having time to reflect and pursue diverse interests, are related to happiness. Given the scarcity of time, there is an inherent conflict in going after more material rewards and spending time with family and friends.

Plenty has been written about the growing dissatisfaction of lawyers with their careers. In a law review article appearing in the *Vanderbilt Law Review*, "On Being a Happy, Healthy, and Ethical Member of an Unhappy, Unhealthy, and Unethical Profession," Professor Patrick J. Schiltz paints a fairly bleak picture of the current legal profession. He points to studies that show lawyers as increasingly depressed and suffering from anxiety, alcoholism, and drug abuse. While the empirical data is sparse, some indications show that the divorce rate among lawyers is higher than the rate of other professionals including doctors. Although he noted there is limited information available, it appears the physical health of lawyers is not much better than their mental health.

After discussing the health issues, Professor Schlitz then discusses studies showing the unhappiness of lawyers. A RAND study of California lawyers shows that only half would become lawyers if they had it to do again. A study of North Carolina lawyers reveals that 25 percent would not become lawyers if they had it to do again. With the exception of a Chicago study, all of the surveys reveal a substantial decline in lawyer satisfaction. The lawyers who are the most dissatisfied are the ones working for large law firms.

Why are lawyers so dissatisfied with their careers? Why are lawyers in large firms more dissatisfied than lawyers in smaller firms? Professor Schlitz believes it is primarily an increase in billable hour requirements that take away from family life and personal life. I agree there is way more attention to billable hours. I often hear associates say, "I have to get my hours." That is how their performance is measured, but I also believe that it is way more than just increased billable hours. Young lawyers today do not feel they are in control of their career or their life, and they do not find meaning in the work they are doing.

YOU ARE THE CEO OF YOUR CAREER AND YOUR LIFE

Are you one of those lawyers? Do you feel like you are not in control of your career and your life? If so, *Prepare to Win* will hopefully provide you with a guide you can use for career success and life fulfillment.

When I was a young child, I became interested in understanding why some people are successful and others are not. What are the traits of successful people? I tried to learn by reading biographies and autobiographies of famous leaders in American history. When I was a teenager, I read three books that changed my life forever. *Think and Grow Rich* by Napoleon Hill was a study of the attributes of successful people. The principles in the book are as meaningful today as they were when it was first published during the Great Depression. In *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee, I learned about the importance of having principles and a clear understanding of who you are. I also learned about the importance of courage in the face of adversity. Finally, *The Story of My Life* by Clarence Darrow fascinated me. I was captivated by the cases Darrow handled and his philosophy about the role of lawyers.

I have spent most of my career applying the principles I learned back then to my own career and teaching others how to apply them as well. Several years ago, I was asked to take over responsibility for the attorney development program at my law firm. I was frankly surprised to learn that many of our young lawyers came to work each day with no vision for what they wanted to accomplish in their career. Thus, they had little enthusiasm about being a lawyer. I started programs on career planning and how to set goals and achieve them.

Through this book, I hope to give you a step-by-step guide you can apply to take control of your own career and achieve the success that is meaningful to you. As you will learn, many successful lawyers also have balance in their lives. How do they do it? They know what they want. They have a plan to achieve it. They have a passion for what they are doing and for their clients. With that passion, they have the discipline and commitment to achieve their goals.

You can do it also. You can be a rainmaker. You can develop a successful career and have a fulfilling life. This book is your guide. Use it as a workbook. Answer the questions, and define your own career success. Go ahead now. Prepare to win!

Chapter One

How Do Rainmakers Do It?

Only those who dare to fail greatly can ever achieve greatly.

—Robert F. Kennedy

ALISON HAD THE KIND of job that most young lawyers dream about. After graduating from Cornell Law School, she landed a position at a prestigious Texas law firm. Many of her colleagues envied her because she worked for some of the most respected partners in the firm. She was clearly on her way to an impressive career.

While everything looked exactly right, Alison wasn't happy. For her, work in securities arbitration was tedious and boring. It didn't take long for the daily drudge to get to her. Alison knew she wouldn't be able to do this for the rest of her life, but she couldn't go to the partners and tell them how much she hated the work they asked her to do.

Had law school been a mistake? After all of her years of dedication and thousands of dollars in student loans, she couldn't just give it all up and walk away.

A FATEFUL LUNCH

In the spring of 2004, Alison invited me to lunch and said she didn't want to do securities arbitrations for the rest of her career. But what could she do?

I looked at her sympathetically and said, "Alison, you've told me what you don't want to do. Now tell me what you do want to do."

Dumbfounded, Alison looked at me and said, "I haven't really thought about that."

Alison struggled to answer my question. She had been following the path that was supposed to be right for her for so long that she had lost touch with what would keep her engaged and excited every day.

Because she was struggling to figure out what she wanted to do, I finally asked, "What makes you unique?"

"I speak German fluently. I spent two years in Germany while I was in school," she said.

"What could you do with that background?" I asked.

She said, "I guess I could help German companies doing business in the United States or American companies doing business in Germany, or I could handle international arbitrations."

I looked in Alison's eyes and saw no passion when she spoke about doing this kind of work. It was also very telling that she had started her answer with "I guess." When you feel passionate about something, you don't say, "I guess."

When we got ready to go back to the office, Alison mentioned something she had been hesitating to tell me.

"I want to tell you an idea I have, but you have to promise not to laugh."

"I promise," I said.

"I want to become an equine lawyer. I want to represent people and companies that own racehorses," she said.

I could see a gleam in her eye. "What excites you about this area of law?" I asked.

"I grew up around horses," she continued. "I own a horse now. I know and appreciate 'horse people.' The work would include both transactions and litigation."

The passion that had been missing when she spoke about her German language skills was very evident when she spoke about horses. Alison had just believed that she could not practice law in an area that satisfied her.

When I asked why she couldn't do it, Alison, literally, was "off to the races." She was taking her first step to becoming a rainmaker. Over the last two years, Alison has immersed herself in the horse racing industry while still doing billable general

litigation work. She has written an article for *The Texas Thoroughbred*, conducted workshops for thoroughbred owners, and become very active in national and state thoroughbred associations. Will Alison become an equine lawyer rainmaker? Only time will tell and it will depend in large part on whether Alison has the discipline and commitment to “prepare to win.”

WHAT MAKES A RAINMAKER?

A lawyer I am coaching asked, “What is the one most important attribute that rainmakers have that the average attorney lacks?”

I said, “They have a burning desire to succeed and help their clients succeed.”

Lawyers with that attribute generally have several other qualities that set them apart from the pack.

- **Rainmakers have a positive attitude.** To paraphrase Winston Churchill, rainmakers see the opportunity in every difficulty while other lawyers see the difficulty in every opportunity. A lawyer’s attitude will always tell me whether he or she has what it takes to be a rainmaker. If I hear phrases like “Yes...but” or “my problem is,” I know this lawyer does not quite have the persistence to become a rainmaker. I know I’m talking to someone with the right attitude to be successful when I hear “Sure! How?” or “Give me some ideas I can try!” If you ever begin to say “Yes...but,” stop yourself. Say “Sure! How?” instead. This is how you can begin to develop the attitude you’ll need to become a rainmaker.

Alison had a bad case of “Yes...but” before our lunch. She discovered opportunities to pursue her career in the field of equine law when she began saying “Sure! How?”

- **Rainmakers are really good lawyers.** They may not always be the smartest lawyers in their fields, but they always focus on becoming the best lawyer possible. Today, just being a good lawyer isn’t enough to attract business. Being a good lawyer is simply the price you pay to be in the game.
- **Rainmakers are genuinely likeable.** They connect well with others because they sincerely like people. As a result, they’re naturally open and friendly, empathetic, and understanding. They’re good listeners and can quickly build trust and rapport.

- **Rainmakers have a confidence-inspiring personality.** When I was a young lawyer, we didn't have formal mentoring programs, but mentoring took place every day. My mentor first taught me that clients need to feel confident that you can take care of their problem. They entrust you with something that is vitally important to them, and they need to feel that you can help them.
- **Rainmakers are willing to move outside their comfort zone.** Real achievement occurs when you stretch and try something that is uncomfortable for you. In 1980, I gave my first presentation to a large audience. Because I was really nervous, I stayed up the night before to review my presentation. I visualized the audience and myself at the podium. The next day, despite my nerves, my presentation was received very well.

I was nervous when I tried my first case before a jury. I spent so many hours preparing for the trial that I had to cut my billable hours by half. In each of these instances, getting outside my comfort zone helped me to gain confidence in new areas. If I hadn't been willing to try, I never would have known if I could give a successful presentation or try a case before a jury.

JERRY'S GIFTS

Jerry is one of my friends who is a rainmaker. I have learned a great deal from him about the importance of knowing client representatives personally and showing you genuinely care about them. Jerry told me a story about his relationship with a young CEO at his largest client. The CEO has three children. Jerry knows each by name. One of the children is an autistic boy who fell in love with a stray dog while the family was vacationing in Montana one summer. The family adopted the dog and brought it back to Florida. When Jerry learned about the new dog named Montana, he sent handwritten notes to each of the three children with toys for each child to give to Montana as a gift. Jerry explained in the note why he had selected each toy, showing that he knew something specific about each child. When he told me the story, Jerry showed me the appreciative e-mail he had received from the CEO. To borrow from the MasterCard commercial: Toys for dog...\$21; Postage...\$9; A great relationship with a client...Priceless.

- **Rainmakers really care about their clients.** They find joy in helping others. They look at a case from the perspective of the client and figure out how they can add value. They take time to understand their client's industry, company, and individual client representative. Many rainmakers learn the name of a client representative's assistant, and they always treat the assistant as well as they treat the client. They try to learn as much as possible about the client representative's family and personal interests.
- **Rainmakers are patient and resilient.** They know it will take time to build their profile and relationships, and they don't give up. I recently met with Larry, a partner at a large international firm. Larry said he always tries to build friendships with potential clients because he genuinely enjoys people and cares about them. If these friendships also bring him business, it's gravy. Of course, Larry is such a true friend that the business often comes his way—even if it takes a long time. Luckily, Larry is patient. After ten years of sustaining a particular friendship, his longtime friend became general counsel of a company that needed Larry's services. The company is now one of Larry's largest clients.
- **Rainmakers know what their clients need and have a burning desire to fill those needs.** This burning desire gives the rainmaker a sense of purpose. I learned this concept as a teenager when I read *Think and Grow Rich*, a book written by Napoleon Hill during the Great Depression. Even though Hill grew up in poverty in the coal fields of Virginia, he persevered and became a prominent lawyer and journalist. Andrew Carnegie, the steel magnate, commissioned Hill to write a book about how successful people achieved that success. After twenty years of study, Hill wrote, "There is one quality which one must possess to win, and that is definiteness of purpose, the knowledge of what one wants, and a burning desire to possess it."
- **Rainmakers are either "remarkable" or they create something that is "remarkable."** Seth Godin is the marketing guru who wrote *Purple Cow*. He advises you are either remarkable or invisible. Rainmakers are remarkable in the eyes of the clients and potential clients who would hire them. They attract business because people talk about them and urge others to hire them.

YOU CAN BE A RAINMAKER, TOO

In 1978, I decided I wanted to be the preeminent transportation construction lawyer in the United States. I chose that niche for two reasons. First, other construction lawyers weren't focusing in this area, and I believed I could be "first to market." Second, two of my friends from college were working in their family-owned highway construction businesses, so I had some connections that would help me to reach my goal.

I had a burning desire to achieve this goal, and I developed a plan to achieve it. I didn't say "Yes...but," I said, "Sure! How?" And I determined how to make it happen. So can you.

In this book, you'll learn exactly how I and several other attorneys became rainmakers. If we can do it, you can do it. If Alison can do it, so can you. Stop having miserable days feeling stuck in your profession. Let's make rain.

NOTES

What makes you unique?

Chapter Two

Living and Practicing Law with a Purpose: You Have to Answer the “Why” Question

This is the true joy in life, the being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one; the being thoroughly worn out before you are thrown on the scrap heap; the being a force of nature instead of a feverish selfish little clod of ailments and grievances complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy.

—Richard J. George Shaw

REMEMBER EXACTLY WHEN AND why I decided to become a lawyer. I was in the eighth grade. Because I was already a fan of biographies, I purchased a book called *The Story of My Life*, an autobiography by Clarence Darrow, an outspoken opponent of capital punishment and a proponent for the civil rights of all of our citizens. Darrow was brilliant, witty, profound, and genuine. His words and deeds greatly influenced my feelings about being a lawyer. Nearly seven decades after his death, they still inspire me.

In his book, Darrow chronicled his most famous cases, including the Loeb-Leopold murder case and the Scopes trial, which involved the teaching of evolution

in Tennessee. I was most moved by Darrow's discussion of the Sweet trial, a murder case involving eleven African-Americans in Detroit. The fate of the Sweet family and friends was in the hands of an all-white, male jury. Darrow wondered what a white man would think of his chances of a fair trial in Africa if he was to be judged by twelve men with dark faces. After final arguments, the jury deliberated for more than twelve hours, but they reported they couldn't reach a verdict.

Darrow then decided to demand separate trials for each defendant. The state chose to prosecute Henry Sweet first. Just as in the first trial, African-American citizens packed the courtroom to watch the proceedings.

Darrow said, "Their silent, appealing looks were more eloquent than any words I could offer."

He made what he believed to be one of the strongest final arguments he had ever made. The jury quickly returned a verdict of not guilty. Afterward, the state's attorney dismissed the other cases. Darrow said his defense of this case gave him as much gratification as any he had undertaken.

Even though I read Darrow's account thirty-five years after the fact, his final two sentences in the chapter influenced me enormously:

The people who sought to drive that colored family from their home were only part of the product of the bitterness bred through race prejudice, for which they were not responsible. So long as this feeling lives, tragedies will result.

How many lawyers-to-be took the LSAT with these Darrow-isms propelling them forward:

- As long as the world shall last there will be wrongs, and if no man objected and no man rebelled, those wrongs would last forever.
- Chase after the truth like all hell and you'll free yourself, even though you never touch its coat tails.
- History repeats itself. That's one of the things wrong with history.
- I am a friend of the working man, and I would rather be his friend than be one.

- I am an agnostic; I do not pretend to know what many ignorant men are sure of.
- If you lose the power to laugh, you lose the power to think.
- Just think of the tragedy of teaching children not to doubt.
- Hope is the salvation of the world, inasmuch as it has any salvation.

A SENSE OF CALLING

While most of us will never have the chance to make a difference like Darrow, we can still approach our law practices with a strong sense of purpose. Your life purpose, or work purpose, is a calling. It is, as theologian Frederick Buechner describes it, “the place where your deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet.”

In the 2005 Annual Report of the Thomas M. Cooley Law School, President and Dean Don LeDuc said:

The best lawyers know that the practice of law is a calling. We lawyers are called upon to give of ourselves, our knowledge and skill, our time and effort, and, for some, our very lives. We are called to assist people who have legal difficulties and personal problems. We are called to defend the rights of others. We are called as healers to solve problems and called as guides to steer the less fortunate through our societal maze. We represent those who cannot help themselves and even those who cannot pay for that representation. And we are called to volunteer our time and finances in countless ways. We do all this because we know, as the attorney’s oath of office tells us, that we will never reject the defenseless or oppressed for personal reasons. We do all this because we are called to serve and because it is a privilege to practice law.

You might say that it’s easy to find meaning if you represent individuals. Even those who represent corporations can find meaning. Paul and Mary Jo are cochairs of a housing practice group that works for developers who provide affordable housing for those in need. When Paul and Mary Jo speak to the members of their practice group, they can point to how the group’s work contributes to the communities it serves. This work gives them a strong sense of purpose.

FRUITS OF PASSION

I was inspired by Darrow's real-life passion as well as the fictional risks taken by Atticus Finch in *To Kill a Mockingbird*. All trial lawyers hate to lose cases, but both Darrow and Finch assumed underdog roles that kept with their high ideals. They took on unpopular cases based on their strong sense of life purpose and principles.

Did you have similar lofty hopes on your first day of law school? Did those hopes eventually give way to overriding concerns about test scores and future employment? If so, you're one of many. Most students are baffled when they are asked to reexamine their original career desires. They're stunned when they read the personal statements they prepared as beginning law students.

Daisy Hurst Floyd, a law professor at Texas Tech University, wrote in the Spring 2003 issue of *Law Teacher*:

The most revealing and the most troubling answer to the question of what seeds are sown in law school is that law school causes students to lose the sense of purpose that made them want to be lawyers. The loss is not only harmful to individual students, but also has enormous negative consequences for the profession and for those served by the profession.

David Dominguez, a law professor at Brigham Young University, wrote in *Law Teacher* in the Fall 1997 issue about this almost universal descent into cynicism. The article was based on his experiences with first- and second-year law students. When they were coached to integrate their early hopes into their career goals, Dominguez found that most of them responded positively and pledged, "Our dreams will no longer be ignored."

DREAM RESTORATION

Someone once asked Albert Einstein about what question he would ask God. At first, he said he would ask God about how the universe began. After reflection, he said he would ask God *why* the universe began because this would let him know the meaning of his own life.

Perhaps the most powerful discussion on life purpose can be found in Vienna psychiatrist Viktor Frankl's book, *Man's Search for Meaning*, which was dictated in nine days and sold nine million copies before his death in 1997. In exploring his own life purpose after losing his entire family in the Holocaust, Frankl left a legacy for us all:

Everyone has his own specific motivation or mission in life; everyone must carry out a concrete assignment and demand fulfillment. Therein he cannot be replaced, nor can his life be repeated, thus, everyone's task is unique as his specific opportunity to implement it.

More recently, Dr. Rick Warren wrote in *The Purpose Driven Life* that he once got lost in the mountains and stopped to ask for directions back to his campsite.

He was told, "You can't get there from here. You must start from the other side of the mountain."

This didn't mean his goal was impossible. It meant that no goal will seem possible if you focus on the starting point. You need to be able to see past whatever is blocking your path and stay focused on the endpoint. Only then will you find your way under, over, or through any obstacles.

ANSWERING THE "WHY" QUESTION

What does all of this have to do with becoming a rainmaker? You are unique, and you have a singular contribution to make in the world—one that will fulfill you. To discover your contribution, you must have a good answer to the "why" question. If you don't, you will go through the motions without understanding why you're doing it. More importantly, you won't be happy. The lawyers I know who haven't answered the "why" question tend to feel obligated to do their jobs, but they don't feel a passion to do it.

It's vital to use your vision wisely and set your sights on the endpoint, that is, the goal you truly wish to achieve. If your vision ends at your annual review, the end of the month, or your next payday, your success may end there as well. If your vision is based on pleasing a parent, spouse, or boss, your goal is not your own. If you apply your vision to your purpose, the end is limited only by your view of the horizon. So,

if you want to be a rainmaker, you have to ask yourself the right questions:

- When did you decide you wanted to become a lawyer?
- Why are you practicing law now?
- What do you really want in your life and your career?
- Are you truly satisfied with where you are in your career and life?

If your focus is on getting your billable hours, you probably haven't contemplated these questions. And you're not alone. Very few young lawyers have thought about the answers to these crucial questions. In the process of dealing with the demands of day-to-day work and trying to have some semblance of a life, few young lawyers take the time to focus on soul-searching exercises.

Unfortunately, many law firm partners do not take the time for these questions. While they may be more eloquent than their new associates, their answers are equally blank and unfocused. Many successful partners do not enjoy their work and are not fulfilled in their personal lives.

*If you have a purpose in which you can believe,
there's no end to the amount of things you can accomplish.*

—Marian Anderson, operatic singer

FINDING YOUR PURPOSE

I once did not give much thought to why I was practicing law. I just got out of bed every day and did it. I then went through a stage where it was all about me. I focused on generating a lot of business and building my reputation. When I stopped focusing on myself and instead concentrated on how to help my construction clients become successful, I actually became infinitely more successful. As I look back over my career, I realize that I always had a sense of purpose. I just didn't call it that. But I have always asked myself important questions like:

- Why am I here?
- How can I be unique and different?
- How can I make a difference?

Although I didn't write it down early in my life, my life purpose has never really changed. When I was a teenager, I wanted to make a difference in people's lives by inspiring them and teaching them how to win and be successful. As a teenager and college student, I coached preteens in athletics. In fact, I came very close to pursuing coaching team sports as a career. Even after I became a lawyer, I continued to coach and teach. For many years, I taught Sunday school to high school students. I was the youth group leader at my church. I always understood why inspiring, coaching, and teaching were important to me.

My greatest satisfaction has always come from connecting with others in a meaningful way and making a contribution to their lives. I was clear about my life purpose and why it was important to me.

It is possible to have separate career and life purposes. While it's perfectly okay for them to be separate, they must eventually align in some way. Let's say that your purpose is to live and serve the clients in your small hometown and be active in your community. If you marry your high school sweetheart and open a law office in the center of town, your work and life purpose are compatible. What if your work purpose is to serve international clients? You might not be able to do this in your small hometown. Your desire to live in your small hometown can't be easily aligned with your desire to serve international clients.

I faced a conflict between my career and life purpose when I began working in my first law firm. I wanted to use my government contract experience. More importantly, I wanted to live in Roanoke, Virginia, where there were no government contractors. So, I chose to live in Roanoke and alter my career purpose somewhat, focusing on construction industry government contractors. When my practice later blossomed, I realized I couldn't achieve my career purpose while living in Roanoke, so I moved to Richmond, Virginia. I later went to Dallas, Texas. Each step along the way, I set priorities and worked to find a way to align my career and life purposes.

NOTES

What inspired you to become a lawyer?

What is your career purpose?

How does your work benefit your clients or your community?

What is your life purpose?

How are you aligning your career purpose and life purpose?

What are your top priorities?

Chapter Three

Your Vision of Success: How Do Rainmakers Do It?

An average person with average talent, ambition, and education can outstrip the most brilliant genius in our society if that person has clear, focused goals.

—Brian Tracy, author of *Hire and Keep the Best People*

NAPOLEON HILL CALLED IT “definiteness of purpose.” I call it “vision of success.” Determining my vision of success has always come naturally to me. I was well into my law career before I realized that many of my peers had not really thought about their vision of success. I knew that a key part of my coaching and mentoring of young lawyers would begin with helping them determine what they wanted to achieve.

I learned all I needed to learn about a vision of success when I was fourteen years old. That year, President Kennedy addressed Congress and set an awe-inspiring goal for our country:

I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the earth. No single space project in this period will be more impressive to mankind or more important for the long-range

exploration of space; and none will be so difficult or expensive to accomplish.

That speech inspired me to dream big. As a teenager, I dreamed of becoming a professional athlete, and I set goals related to my sports activities, such as free throw percentage in basketball, strikeouts and earned run average in baseball, and average yards per carry in football.

When I started law school, my goal was to finish in the top five of my class. When I became a lawyer, my first major goal was to be promoted to partner. After accomplishing that goal in 1978, I decided I wanted to be the preeminent transportation construction lawyer in the United States.

THE THREE CIRCLES

What is the best way to determine your vision of success? In his book *Good to Great*, Jim Collins says that “good to great” companies find their vision of success in the intersection of three circles called the hedgehog concept:

1. What the company is best at in the world
2. What drives the company’s economic engine
3. What you are deeply passionate about

To apply the hedgehog concept and find the intersection of the three circles in your life, ask yourself these questions:

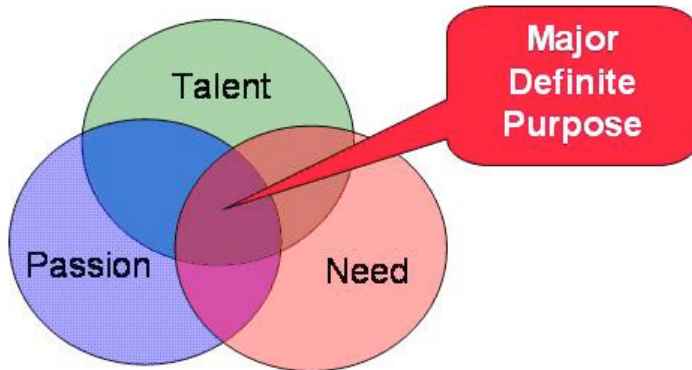
- **What is my greatest talent?** If the answer is “playing bass guitar” or “singing at karaoke bars,” proceed to the next question before coming back to this one. Otherwise, carefully consider your best qualities and how they might fit into your goals as a lawyer. If you excel at public speaking or researching case law, your talents fit well into a traditional view of a law career. What if your talent is running a dairy farm or playing tennis? If you grew up on a dairy farm and understand the economics of the industry, you could apply this knowledge to a career targeted at dairy farmers, suppliers, or buyers. If you gave up tennis because of an injury, you have specialized knowledge about sports injury litigation. There are many

ways in which you can apply your non-legal talent to a career in law.

- **Are there clients who need my talent?** It is possible to make a sustainable wage playing bass guitar or singing at the local watering hole, but consider other talents that you possess if your best talent isn't marketable. Each of us is multitalented. Given the number of ways in which money is exchanged, how often companies consolidate, and the frequent changes in regulations and technology, there's a legal niche for nearly any of your talents.
- **What am I most passionate about?** Passion is a requirement for success. We tend to be passionate about things at which we excel. My wife's golf handicap is far superior to mine. Unsurprisingly, she is more enthused when we play golf. On the other hand, I have been a public speaker for years. I'm energized for every event and eagerly anticipate opportunities to speak to other lawyers and leaders. If you put me in front of a large group, I am in my element.

Of course, it's possible to be great at something that you don't enjoy. Remember Alison? She was talented at securities litigation, but she did not want to spend the rest of her life doing it. So she thought about passions that weren't intrinsically linked to talent or law, specifically, her love of horses. Perhaps your passion is dogs or movies. If so, you could focus your law career on protecting animal rights or representing actors, directors, and writers in the film industry. If you're passionate about both movies and animals, you could build a career representing animals in film.

Even if your passion seems lightweight, don't immediately discount it. Whenever I have an illuminating discussion with an associate, it usually begins, "You will probably think this is silly, but..." The next words are generally a key to that person's passion. Some very rewarding careers have been shaped around those moments. If you're passionate about something that is a marketable talent, bingo! You don't have to envision your goal because it's staring you in the face. If the way to apply your passion to your career isn't immediately clear, spend some time imagining possibilities or brainstorming with a friend.



CREATING YOUR VISION

Now that you have asked the three key questions of the hedgehog concept, you need to understand how to apply your answers to your vision. Ask yourself these two questions:

- **Where do I see myself in one, five, or ten years?
What is my vision of success?**

Remember, you can only reach goals that you can see. As Percy H. Johnson said, "You are not likely to get anywhere in particular if you don't know where you want to go." You will learn ways to reach your goals with greater speed and efficiency than you might imagine, but the time element is not as critical as seeing the endpoint and forming a plan to reach it.

- **What is the most important thing I can do this year to get me started?**

After you have answered the above questions for your career, ask them again for your personal life. When you find passion in both your professional and personal life and use your time based on your priorities, fulfillment is yours.

NOTES

What is your vision of success?

Chapter Four

Core Values: How Do You Want to Live?

Be more concerned with your character than your reputation because your character is what you really are while your reputation is merely what others think you are.

—John Wooden, coach

YOUR VISION IS WHAT you want to accomplish. Your purpose is why you want to accomplish it. Your core values are how you want to live. I previously discussed the three circles for determining your vision of what you want to accomplish: your talent, your clients' needs, and your passion. In *The 8th Habit: From Effectiveness to Greatness*, Stephen Covey added a fourth circle that he labeled conscience. Covey wrote that conscience is "that still, small voice within that assures you of what is right and that prompts you to actually do it." Mapping out the rest of your career requires you to know:

- Where you are now
- Where you want to go
- What route (based on your values) will be the best one to get you there

In my own life, I have never been more disappointed with myself than when I felt I was failing to live according to my values. It typically occurred when my ego got in the way or I focused on what I wanted without enough thought as to how I would get there. I learned long ago that you don't create your values. You discover them.

If you don't do the work to discover what you value, you may easily come up with fake goals and phony purposes. But when you look within for your core values, you have found something that's real. You have found what gives meaning to your life. If your goals are contradictory to your values, you will almost certainly be derailed along the way. But if your goals align with your values, you will be propelled toward desired outcomes.

In March 2006, I spoke at a Texas State Bar Young Lawyers Association program entitled, "Crossroads: Mapping Out the Rest of Your Career." I loved the title because a crossroads is a defining moment in someone's life. It's a moment when we look deep inside and determine what we really value, step up to the plate, and declare our intentions. In these defining moments, we discover what matters most to us.

MY CAREER AND LIFE AT THE CROSSROADS

October 9, 1978 was the coldest October 9 in recorded history in Roanoke, Virginia. After having practiced law for seven years, I was considered a mid-level lawyer. My wife, Nancy, and I had been married for eight years. Although I had a good life and career, the events of that day brought me to a crossroads that motivated me to map out my future success and a plan for how to achieve it.

On that morning, I took Nancy for her weekly visit to Dr. Julian Meyer's office. Nancy was seven-and-a-half months pregnant. She was earlier diagnosed with toxemia/preeclampsia, a pregnancy-induced hypertension. Not only do women with toxemia have elevated blood pressure, they also face eyesight problems and risk of liver and kidney damage or failure. Dr. Meyer had warned us that Nancy's blood pressure would continue to rise over the months of her pregnancy. Her pressure was suddenly 200/155.

Dr. Meyer said, "Ready or not, today is the day we have to take this baby. Otherwise, you are risking permanent damage."

He didn't know if our baby would be born alive or if it would be born with birth defects.

At 7:40 that night, our daughter, Jill, was born. She weighed just three pounds and seven ounces. She was so small that I could hold her in my hand like a doll. Nancy's blood pressure went down, but her white cell count changed dramatically. One specialist after another was called to diagnose the problem. On the tenth day after Jill's birth, the doctors were getting ready to take some of Nancy's bone marrow to determine if she had leukemia. But Nancy's white cell count miraculously became normal again, and she was soon able to leave the hospital. After about four weeks, we were allowed to bring Jill home as well.

During Nancy's pregnancy, Jill's birth, and Nancy's extended stay in the hospital, I felt completely out of control. I was just a bit player in the most important event of my life. In this experience, I learned a great deal about the things I value in my career and life. In the hope that my discovery will lead young lawyers to think more carefully about what they value, I have shared those values with them many times. That experience taught me the importance of my family. I also learned there is much more to life than practicing law. While I loved being a lawyer, part of my love of the profession was because it allowed me to provide for my family. For eight years, Nancy and I had both worked very hard. We had focused almost exclusively on our careers. On that fateful October 9, our priorities changed.

WHAT I LEARNED FROM HARRY CHAPIN

I have always been a big fan of Harry Chapin. I'm sure many young lawyers have never heard of him, but I'm fond of saying, "All I ever needed to know about how I want to live my life, I learned from Harry Chapin and his songs." Harry's most popular song is called "Cat's in the Cradle." His wife wrote the lyrics. It is about a father who is too busy with work to be present for his son's birth. He is also too busy to play catch with his son. When the son is grown with his own family, he becomes too busy to visit his parents. The father laments:

As I hung up the phone, it occurred to me, he'd grown up just like me.
My boy was just like me.

Upon hearing that song, I decided I would always make time to be with Jill, making certain we would regularly have special father/daughter time. During my

career, I traveled frequently during the week. We always set aside Saturday afternoons for father/daughter time. And what great times we had! I also made the effort to go to work early so I could be home for dinner with Jill and Nancy. I normally worked from 6:00 to 9:00 AM on the weekends because Jill and Nancy were usually sleeping and didn't miss me.

"Dreams Go By" is another Harry Chapin song that resonates with me. It's about a couple who has dreams while they are in school, but they wait to pursue them. They get married and decide to have their children first. When they're getting ready to pick up their grandchildren, they lament:

But I guess our dreams have come and gone. You gotta dream when
you are young.

You can't put off trying to accomplish your big dreams. After Jill was born on that cold October day, I decided to take control of my future. Much to the chagrin of my partners, who wanted nothing more of me than to litigate their clients' cases, I decided I would focus on construction law and issues faced by highway and bridge contractors. I developed my plan to become the best transportation construction lawyer in the United States.

Harry Chapin's personal life also taught me. He had been a successful entertainer for a long time, but it wasn't until the early 1970s when he truly found fulfillment. A priest explained to Harry that performers could do a great deal to raise funds and consciousness that could change the world. Harry wanted to do his part to stop world hunger. While some singers might perform at one benefit, Harry contributed the proceeds from 130 of his more than 200 concerts each year, and he took the time to sign autographs for everyone who had purchased a souvenir. He was about to perform a free benefit concert in 1982 when he was killed in an automobile accident. In 1986, his family was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor in recognition of his efforts to address world hunger. His epitaph is taken from his song, "I Wonder What Would Happen to this World." It reads:

Oh if a man tried
To take his time on Earth
And prove before he died

What one man's life could be worth
I wonder what would happen
to this world.

I specifically learned from Harry Chapin's life that I wanted to make some kind of difference in the lives of my clients and the lawyers who worked with me. To make that difference with clients, I wanted to have a niche practice doing something I enjoyed for clients that I also enjoyed. In 1978, I decided that my career purpose was to help my construction clients build great projects and achieve their business objectives. While I was not totally clear about it, my life purpose then was to be a loving father, husband, and son. These purposes were aligned with my values, which, of course, made them easier for me to achieve.

DISCOVERING YOUR VALUES

What does discovering your values have to do with becoming a rainmaker? Simply stated, you can be successful outwardly without focusing on your values, but you cannot be inwardly fulfilled without focusing on your values. The key is to dig deep and discover what matters most to you. Doing so will enable you to make the commitment and maintain the discipline you need to achieve your life and career purposes.

How can you discover your values? Think about what you want others to say about you, including your family, best clients, colleagues, support staff, and adversaries.

How do you want to be remembered? What qualities do you admire in others that you want to cultivate in yourself? What brings meaning to your life? If someone were to take something or someone away from you, what would you grieve for the most?

Think about the times when you're in the zone. What do you do for its own sake? Your answers will help you to determine what you value most in your life.

Sir Laurens van der Post, a naturalist and author, may have said it best:

There is nothing wrong in searching for happiness, but we use the term as if it were the ultimate in human striving. What gives far more comfort to the soul...is something greater than happiness or unhappiness and that is meaning. Meaning transfigures all.

NOTES

What values do you hold most dear?

Chapter Five

The Importance of Role Models and Mentors

Really great people make you feel that you, too, can become great.

—Mark Twain

DURING THE SUMMER OF 1976, I left the United States Air Force, where I had been on active duty litigating government contract disputes. Nancy and I had moved to Roanoke, Virginia, where I began my career in private practice with Martin, Hopkins, and Lemon. Eager but nervous about my new opportunity, I was grateful when John, the most junior partner in the firm, took me under his wing. He was only a few years older than me, but he had already become the firm's hardest working and most successful partner. John was an ideal role model and mentor because he possessed many traits that I admired and wanted to emulate.

We were always the first to arrive at the office. On many mornings, I would bring my cup of coffee to John's office and brainstorm ideas with him, learning a great deal in the process. We never called it mentoring, but that's exactly what it was.

I vividly remember how John encouraged me. He set high, challenging standards for me, but he always made me feel like he believed I could meet them. I learned about building client relationships by listening to his stories and observing his actions. When my work was excellent, he never hesitated to tell me. Perhaps most important of

Chapter Six

Setting Yearly Goals and Developing Your Career Plan

*Realize what you really want. It stops you from chasing butterflies
and puts you to work digging gold.*

—William Moulton Marsden

I HAVE MET MANY LAWYERS who don't set goals or have any sort of plan. I recently spoke with a young partner named Lisa about her career. When Lisa described what she wanted from her law career, her description was vague. I wanted to say that she would never be truly fulfilled unless she clearly defined her dreams on paper, but I decided to listen a little more to get to know her better.

I learned that Lisa had recently returned from a bicycling vacation in China. She vividly described the scenery she photographed and the people she met. Lisa was clearly passionate about cycling, especially in Asia and Europe, so I began asking her questions about her experiences. I discovered that Lisa had begun planning her trip almost two years earlier with the intent of simply visiting the Great Wall and Beijing. After conducting extensive online research, reading some books, and speaking to travel agents, she decided that the Bike China trip would best meet her needs. She told me she visualized many of the places she would visit and the things she would do while in China.

Chapter Seven

A Call to Action: Executing Your Plan

I don't have lunches, dinners, go to plays, or movies. I don't meditate, escalate, deviate, or have affairs. So, I have plenty of time.

—Robert A. Gottlieb, editor of *The New Yorker*

COACH BOBBY KNIGHT SAID, “Most people have the will to win; few have the will to prepare to win.” In my case, “the will to prepare to win” meant writing a law review article, speaking at an American Bar Association Annual Meeting, getting appointed to a task force to rewrite the Public Procurement Law in Virginia, and speaking at meetings of every construction association in my hometown. Each of these preparation steps led to other preparation steps, including a presentation to a state highway contractor's association, a presentation to the American Road and Transportation Builders Association, and the development of expertise in issues impacting transportation contractors.

I recently reviewed some of my old plans, including one from 1999. In that year, my primary goal was to bring in \$3 million in business. I prepared my plan from the top down, that is, what actions to take to achieve my goal. And I prepared it from the bottom up, that is, how much time I would have for client development. I removed the names of my clients, but the following is the action items I listed for 1999:

Chapter Eight

Mind Games: Getting and Staying “In the Zone”

All emotion is involuntary when genuine.

—Mark Twain

PSYCHOLOGISTS HAVE FOUND THAT, in the workplace, emotional intelligence (EI) is an 85 percent predictor of employee success, as opposed to only 15 percent for IQ. Daniel Goleman popularized the concept of EI in *Emotional Intelligence* in the mid-1990s. EI is the ability to perceive, access, generate, and reflectively regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth. EI is essentially the measure of someone’s skills, which Goleman says can be more critical to success than IQ. Although some traditionalists scoff at this seemingly touchy-feely approach to leadership, Stanford and Harvard, two institutions noted for their high, book-smart standards, are exploring the importance of EI.

A Stanford study asked 270 business leaders to rate twenty attributes of successful leaders, including soft skills such as building relationships and self-awareness (EI) and hard skills such as financial acumen and execution. The top five critical skills were vision, strategic thinking, relationship building, execution, and people development. Of the remaining fifteen attributes, leaders ranked all of the EI factors above the non-EI competencies. These included adaptability, optimism, empathy, and self-awareness.

Chapter Nine

Building Your Profile: The Power of Writing and Speaking

*It took me fifteen years to discover that I had
no talent for writing, but I couldn't give it up because,
by that time, I was too famous.*

—Robert Benchley

EARLIER, I BRIEFLY DESCRIBED how I prepared to win. Following in the footsteps of my role models, including certain government contracts lawyers and construction lawyers, I decided that writing and speaking were the best ways for me to become known in the industry.

I first decided to write a law review article and try to speak at an American Bar Association convention. In 1980, I spoke at the American Bar Association convention in New Orleans. In 1981, I published an article in the American Bar Association *Public Contracts Law Journal*. I received several hundred bound copies of the law review article, which I immediately sent to highway contractors. I really didn't care whether they read the article. I just wanted them to know about my expertise in the legal matters that impacted their business. I also wanted them to know that the American Bar Association thought my writing was worth publishing.

At the same time, I took advantage of every speaking engagement I could get in

Chapter Ten

Community Service and Networking

Doing well is the result of doing good.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

YOU CAN BECOME REMARKABLE without focusing on an industry niche. I know lawyers who have thrived from active community service or bar service. In 1967, one of my former partners, Neil, moved to Los Angeles after graduating from Stanford Law School. He was 3,000 miles from home and only knew three people. The day the bar exam ended, his oldest child was born. Four days later, he began his career as an attorney. As you will see, Neil felt conflicted by the work he was doing to help the wealthy become even more wealthy and his desire to make a difference. Neil eventually found greater meaning in his life by being active in the community and actually increased his volume of business by doing good things for the right reasons. Neil describes his start in this journey:

I faced the daunting prospect of trying to make a living in a high-powered law firm that had a reputation of chewing up associates and spitting them out. In my early years at the firm, I found the practice of law very difficult, very high stress, and very unsatisfactory. I questioned whether I had chosen the right career. Perhaps a degree from a top

Chapter Eleven

Connecting with Contacts

*The most important single ingredient in the formula of success
is knowing how to get along with people.*

—Theodore Roosevelt

HAVE YOU IDENTIFIED YOUR potential clients? What are their perceptions, views and biases? You could have goals and a plan and build your reputation and profile, but it will not make a difference if your clients and potential clients are not paying attention.

What views do most business clients share? I believe they are interested in:

- Increasing revenue
- Decreasing cost
- Increasing certainty
- Decreasing risk

When you are writing, speaking, or communicating with business clients, it is important to address one or more of those areas.

Not all clients and potential clients are equally attractive. I have always believed in the 80/20 rule. Eighty percent of my business is generated by relationships with 20 percent of my contacts. Focusing my attention on the 20 percent has consistently

Chapter Twelve

Top Ten Client Development Mistakes

Mistakes are a fact of life. It is the response to error that counts.

—Nikki Giovanni

IN 2002, THE TAMPA Bay Buccaneers had a spectacular season, culminating in a 48–21 rout of the Oakland Raiders in Super Bowl XXXVII. In 2003, they didn't even make the playoffs. In fact, the Bucs ended the season with a losing record. They were the second straight Super Bowl winner (11th overall) to fail to make the playoffs the following season. They were the sixth team to follow a Super Bowl victory with a losing record. What accounts for this phenomenon?

Leaving aside free agency and injuries, I believe players become enamored with themselves and their success instead of remaining hungry and focused on their team. One team didn't let that happen. At the same time that Tampa Bay could not put two good seasons together, the New England Patriots, coached by Bill Belichick, won three Super Bowls in four years. They put the word "we" ahead of the word "me." Belichick never let his players become complacent about their success.

David Halberstam tells the Belichick story in a great book, *The Education of a Coach*. The Patriots won their first Super Bowl as a distinct underdog to the St. Louis Rams. To remain on top, Belichick understood that the best players would have to take the lead

Chapter Thirteen

Improving Client Service

Service is the rent that you pay for room on this earth.
—Shirley Chisholm, American politician

If you had to choose, would you prefer:

- More billable hours or more loyal clients?
- More clients or fewer, better clients?
- To get origination credit or to become a lifelong advisor?
- To earn a bonus or to expand your relationship with an existing client?

IF YOU LEARN HOW to understand client issues and communicate in a collaborative way, you won't have to choose. Over a long-term period, loyal, lifelong clients will reward you in many more ways than an immediate bonus. But here's the catch. You can't fake commitment to your clients, can't pretend to be an attentive listener, and can't proclaim to understand your client's needs unless you do. If you want to add value to your services, your efforts must be honest and real.

Law publications annually produce reports on the top revenue-generating firms and the most profitable firms. I can only hope clients don't read the interviews with firm leaders. They would conclude that these firms are only interested in the highest possible profits per partner. When I think in such a monetary way, I can't fake interest

Chapter Fourteen

From Niches to Riches

You can't be all things to all people. But I can be all things to the people I select.

—Donald Neuenschwander, Chairman, Medical Center Bank, Houston

DOUBT THAT DAVID BOIES has to do a lot of marketing. He is remarkable in the eyes of his clients and potential clients. The *New York Times* once called him “the lawyer everybody wants.” His high-profile cases include *Bush v. Gore* in the 2000 election recount and the antitrust case against Microsoft. If you’re the best litigator or corporate lawyer, you will likely do very well until someone younger comes along.

You can also get business if you have one or two very large clients who are sued often (if you’re a litigator) or do several deals (if you’re a corporate lawyer). Imagine if you were the litigator with national responsibility for Bridgestone/Firestone litigation or for Philip Morris in the tobacco suits.

Some say you can get a lot of business if you have the gift of gab and network in the community, becoming known by everyone who matters. I don’t recommend this approach unless you have a cast of outstanding lawyers to do the work.

The easiest way to get business is to find a niche. This can be a type of work or a specialty within a particular industry. If you look at the investment people who are interviewed on television, they generally focus on one industry. I think lawyers should do the same.

I have previously discussed how I developed my niche. I started my career in

Chapter Fifteen

Important Extras: The Value of Extraordinary Client Service

*People don't believe what you tell them.
They rarely believe what you show them.
They often believe what their friends tell them.
They always believe what they tell themselves.*

—Seth Godin

WE LIVE IN AN information age where our increasingly savvy clients can find out a great deal about us on the Internet. With a few clicks of the mouse, they can discover if we have received favorable or unfavorable press. They can find out the average billable hour rates in their communities. They can easily compare the price of our standard contract services with the cost of downloading do-it-yourself forms. They can chat online about how our services, fees, and performance records compare with our competitors.

As a result of this information explosion, clients expect more from us and will abandon us if we don't deliver. This is not a disadvantage. It's an unparalleled opportunity for you and your firm to promote and deliver extraordinary client service. It's a chance to be the first in your area to market yourself as the firm that surpasses a client's expectations.

Chapter Sixteen

The Business Case for Better Balance

It's like drinking from a fire hose. There is tremendous pressure on younger lawyers to produce 2,000, 2,200, 2,400 billable hours.

Well, that produces an unlivable kind of life.

—U.S. Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer

RECEIVED A CALL RECENTLY from Samantha, one of my associate friends in Dallas. She told me that she felt like she was burning out and she was spending all of her time at the office doing her billable work. She complained that she had no time for her own development, client development, or personal things. Other associates in her firm felt equally exhausted. Many associates wonder how they can add more hours to their week. But everyone is stuck with the same reality. There will always be 168 hours in a week. Because we can't expand time, what can we do?

The case for helping associates achieve better balance in their lives typically has not been well-received. Many law firm leaders see requests for more balance to be code for not working hard. Because, until recently, most of the life-balance requests were from women to law firm leaders who were primarily men, the issue seemed rooted in male/female differences.

Today, the quest for greater balance is more generational than gender-based.

Chapter Seventeen

Building the Next Generation of Rainmakers

The glory of each generation is to make its own precedents.

—Belva Lockwood (1830–1917), American lawyer

I WAS RECENTLY ASKED TO give a presentation at the 2006 American Bar Association annual meeting on building the next generation of rainmakers. As I thought about what I would say, it occurred to me that most of the rainmakers in law firms will be at retirement age within the next ten years. That may be fine if a firm has institutional clients, but, if the firm is more entrepreneurial, building the next generation of rainmakers is especially important.

I believe rainmakers have high levels of EI and may be different personality types than the majority of lawyers. My premise seems to be supported by a couple of articles by Lawrence R. Richard, an Altman Weil consultant. Based on his findings, as well as my own observations, I believe most rainmakers have a strong ego drive. In part, they define themselves by the recognition they receive and the sense of accomplishment they feel when a new client hires them.

Most rainmakers are empathetic. They have a great ability to understand the world from their clients' perspective. Rainmakers typically exhibit high ego strength and resilience. They can quickly bounce back from criticism, rejection, or defeat.

APPENDIX

The following is the client service policy created with the help of my clients.

CONSTRUCTION LAW

CLIENT SERVICE GOALS OF THE CONSTRUCTION LAW PRACTICE GROUP

The lawyers and staff of the Construction Law Practice Group at Jenkins and Gilchrist realize that providing quality service to our clients is as important as providing quality work. Through this client service policy, members of our practice group are setting goals for the representation of our construction industry clients by which we expect our performance to be measured.

It is our express goal to become your law firm of choice, but not simply for the duration of any particular project. We view any representation as the opportunity to earn the position of your principal outside legal counsel for years to come.

1. **Highest quality of work.** Providing the highest quality of work is your expectation and our goal. We recognize that providing you with high-quality service will never substitute for providing you with the highest quality work product. We will strive to provide you with both.
2. **Responsiveness.** We will keep our promises on meeting deadlines. We will return all telephone calls, e-mails, and correspondence as soon as possible, but in every

instance within twenty-four hours, including weekends if required by the client's circumstances. We will respond to a matter based on the urgency determined by the client.

3. **Expectations.** Prior to beginning a project, we will work with our client to establish expectations for quality and timeliness and establish a plan for accomplishing our client's goals within cost parameters that are commensurate with the complexity and value of the particular matter. We will keep our clients informed of developments, progress, and decisions they need to make. We will make our best efforts to exceed our client's expectations. We will meet with our clients face-to-face at least once a year to obtain feedback on the quality of our work and the quality of our service.
4. **Industry knowledge and experience.** Our lawyers focus on the construction industry. We attend industry meetings and write for industry publications. In accepting the representation of a client, we will seek to develop a comprehensive understanding of the particular business considerations and challenges that bear upon our representation.
5. **Accessibility.** Any member of our practice group can be reached at any time of the day or night during the week or on the weekends. Our secretaries and staff will know where we are and how we can be reached at all times. We will travel to our client's offices and project sites.
6. **Meetings.** We will work with our clients to establish a specific objective and an agenda for each meeting. During each meeting, we will help develop action items to be taken after the meeting. We will provide summaries of all meetings and action items by the end of the business day following the meeting.
7. **Value.** We will seek to understand what our clients value and provide such value to our clients. We will advise our clients when we believe their staff or others can provide the same service at a reduced cost. We will use state-of-the-art technology processes and procedures to provide our services efficiently and economically. We will not overstaff any project. We will seek to match levels of expertise and experience with the requirements of each particular project, at all times attempting to achieve the highest level of benefit to cost.
8. **Quality assurance.** Our lawyers and staff are well-trained. The project, client needs, and client expectations will be defined before work is begun. Senior members of our practice group will provide the vision for the work assigned and will supervise

more junior members. Both during work on a project and after it is completed, we will seek feedback from our clients. We will reward our lawyers and staff for providing outstanding service to our clients.

"Seeking to earn our construction industry clients' business every day."

About the Author

CORDELL PARVIN IS AMONG the nation's most widely known and respected transportation construction lawyers. With thirty-five years of experience, he has established himself within his field as a rainmaker, instructor, and career coach. Cordell is passionate about teaching young lawyers. He works with them individually and seeks to inspire them based on their specific career goals.

His enthusiasm for helping firms and lawyers achieve greater success prompted him to leave Jenkins & Gilchrist in January 2005 to open a consulting practice. He continues to practice construction law, frequently representing the nation's leading contractors.

Cordell earned his law degree from the University of Richmond and his Bachelor's degree from Virginia Tech. He is a member of the American Bar Association, the Texas State Bar Association, the Virginia State Bar Association, Associated General Contractors of Texas, the American Road and Transportation Builders Association, and the American Arbitration Association.

Cordell makes his home in Dallas with Nancy, his wife of thirty-six years and greatest supporter. Nancy is an avid golfer who started playing when she was forty years old and now has a 1 handicap. She plays in tournaments in Texas and across the United States. While Cordell is proud of the work he has done for clients and, more recently, for lawyers, law firms, and law students, he is most proud of his daughter, Jill, who follows her passion and teaches middle-school students.

Services Available

CORDELL PARVIN SPEAKS AT law firm retreats and conducts training and development programs on mentoring, client development, developing the next generation of rainmakers, and practice group leadership. He coaches lawyers on career and client development, setting goals, and rainmaking skills.

Cordell Parvin is available to give presentations and conduct seminars. To make arrangements, contact:

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www.cordellparvin.com

Recommended Reading List

BEING A LAWYER

- *True Professionalism* by David Maister
- *Lawyer Life* by Carl Horn
- *Transforming Practices* by Steven Keeva
- *How to Argue and Win Every Time* by Gerry Spence
- *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee

BUSINESS

- *Built to Last: Successful Habits of Visionary Companies* by Jim Collins and Jerry Porras
- *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap...and Others Don't* by Jim Collins
- *Gung Ho* by Ken Blanchard
- *Jack Welch and the GE Way: Management Insights and Leadership Secrets of the Legendary CEO* by Robert Slater
- *Raving Fans* by Ken Blanchard and Sheldon Bowles
- *The Four Obsessions of an Extraordinary Executive* by Patrick Lencioni

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

- *Clients for Life: Evolving from an Expert-for-Hire to an Extraordinary Advisor* by Jagdish N. Sheth and Andrew Sobel
- *Making Rain: The Secrets of Building Lifelong Client Loyalty* by Andrew Sobel
- *The Trusted Advisor* by David Maister, Charles Green, and Robert M. Galford

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

- *How to Work a Room: The Ultimate Guide to Savvy Socializing in Person and Online* by Susan RoAne
- *How to Connect in Business in 90 Seconds or Less* by Nicholas Boothman
- *How to Talk to Anyone: 92 Little Tricks for Big Success in Relationships* by Leil Lowades
- *Likeability Factor* by Tim Sanders
- *Never Eat Alone* by Keith Ferrazzi with Tahl Raz

LEADERSHIP

- *Aligning the Stars* by Jay Lorsch and Thomas Tierney
- *Beyond Success: The 15 Secrets to Effective Leadership and Life Based on Legendary Coach John Wooden's Pyramid of Success* by Brian Biro & John Wooden
- *First Among Equals* by Patrick McKenna and David Maister
- *Managing the Professional Service Firm* by David Maister
- *Principle-Centered Leadership* by Stephen Covey
- *Leadership from the Inside Out* by Kevin Cashman
- *Contented Cows Give Better Milk* by Bill Catlette and Richard Hadden
- *The Leadership Engine* by Noel Tichy with Eli Cohen
- *Leading With the Heart* by Mike Krzyzewski

LIFE

- *First Things First* by Stephen Covey, Roger Merrill, and Rebecca Merrill
- *Getting Things Done* by David Allen
- *Goals* by Brian Tracy
- *Man's Search for Meaning* by Viktor E. Frankl
- *Overachievement* by John Eliot, PhD
- *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* by Stephen Covey
- *The Power of Full Engagement* by Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz
- *The Power of Purpose* by Richard J. Leider
- *The Speed of Trust* by Stephen Covey

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE/PERSONALITY PROFILES

- *Emotional Intelligence* by Daniel Goleman
- *Emotional Intelligence at Work* by Hendrie Weisinger, PhD

MARKETING AND SALES

- *Heavy Hitter Selling: How Successful Salespeople Use Language and Intuition to Persuade Customers to Buy* by Steve W. Martin
- *High Trust Selling* by Todd Duncan
- *Selling with Emotional Intelligence* by Mitch Anthony

PRESENTATION SKILLS

- *10 Simple Secrets of the World's Greatest Business Communications* by Carmine Gallo
- *Beyond Bullet Points* by Cliff Atkinson
- *Presenting to Win: The Art of Telling Your Story* by Jerry Weissman

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I hope you have enjoyed reviewing the sample copy of *Prepare to Win*. My intention in providing a sample is to kind of do what Amazon does with “search inside.” They usually provide the Table of Contents, Introduction, a chapter or two, Index, etc. so people can get a better idea of what the book is about and how it is written.

Prepare to Win is a great book for law students to use in preparing for their careers. I graduated from law school in December, 2004. Although I am in the publishing business, I am also a licensed attorney in the State of Texas. During my first two years out of school, I practiced law and still have a couple of clients. Knowing what I know now, I wish *Prepare to Win* would have been available to me prior to my graduation.

If you believe your students would benefit from *Prepare to Win*, please contact me. I will give your school a discount based on quantity ordered. Or, your students can buy the books at a 10% discount if they mention your law school.

Thank you for your interest in *Prepare to Win*.

Best regards,
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