

## Business & Careers

# A little direction can go a long way to boost career



**Gary Mitchell**  
**The Coach**

Coaching has become more and more popular within the legal industry, and for good reason. Just as your clients go to you for expert advice and support, you do have options when working to grow your firm or practice.

Here are three varying examples where coaching made a measurable impact on the people being coached.

### Law clerk turned rainmaker

**Situation:** A managing partner hires me to work with his senior law clerk in helping her to develop business development and marketing skills. Admittedly, she did not even know what business development was, let alone how and where to start when we first began. However, she was very keen on learning new skills and taking her career to the next level.

**Approach:** Working with her over the course of one year, we created a plan of action helping her to understand where

and how to network, build relationships, grow her professional network, host workshops, create her own networking/mastermind group, get published, speak at events, join organizations, get on the board of industry associations, etc. During that time, this law clerk was like a sponge, soaking up all my advice and guidance. She reached out in between coaching calls regularly for feedback. Her progress really started to take flight after she met a few “connectors” at networking events. She then became part of an exclusive networking group that meets monthly. With that experience she started her own networking/mastermind group with a few of her best contacts.

**Results:** As the year of coaching was winding down, she had already begun to bring in clients to the firm. The remarkable part of this story is that while she was now fully engaged in business development, not only was she now becoming a rainmaker, her dockets were up 20 per cent over the previous year. She is more engaged, more loyal, more productive and more valuable to her firm. For her part, her income has increased, and she has experienced transformational growth in her personal and professional life.

### Junior partner to top rainmaker

**Situation:** A junior partner who was already doing “well” in building his prac-



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He had his firm hire me to help him take it to the next level. Much like athletes who want to compete on the world stage, he wanted more. He interviewed three potential people to help him and in the end chose me primarily for my entrepreneurial drive and tenacity.

**Approach:** As with all clients, we began by looking at his current clients and contacts to mine them for opportunities. A quiet and somewhat introverted type, he wasn't a big fan of going out there to attract new contacts as much as working with his current clients and contacts to explore opportunities. Over the course of one year of coaching, this client got more and more confident in his approaches to business development. Where he had been “good” previously, he was now becoming “great.”

**Results:** Within a couple of years of working with this client at age 40 became the No. 1 income earner and rainmaker at his firm. He brought in the largest file in the 100-year-old history of his firm. Years later, that file continues to generate revenues.

### Unhappy litigator's turnaround

**Situation:** A very unhappy fifth-year associate decides he can no longer practice as a litigator. He approaches his firm to get support in making a shift to build a solicitor practice. The marketing department hired me to work with him to turn his career around.

**Approach:** As we began to create his business plan, we started by clarifying his definition of success, and what he ultimately wanted to create for his career. We then focused on his values and what was important to him. Before we decided where he would focus his attention we spent some time figuring out what made him tick. As it turned out, environmental issues were very important to him. So we investigated the “green” market and how it was being served. Through his connections and contacts he was able to get some meetings with green start-up companies.

**Results:** It didn't take too long before he was bringing in new business focused on green start-up companies. He created

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an IP practice and worked under one of the partners at his firm. The shift that he experienced was clearly visible to his colleagues at the firm. He was happy, engaged, motivated and committed to building his practice. It wasn't too long before he was basically caught up to the partner track he had been on. What was that worth to him and his career? What was that worth to his firm that instead of losing this talented and loyal associate, they made a small investment in him and helped turn his career around?

So what could be possible for you and your career? Take the leap. Make the investment in yourself and your career. Whether you are a solo practitioner or working for a firm, improving your ability to attract clients will make you a more valuable commodity. Not to mention the increased income you will enjoy.

*Gary Mitchell is the principal at On Trac Coach, helping lawyers and law clerks attract more clients. He is also co-founding partner at Legal A Team, a full service legal marketing agency focused on supporting small to mid-size firms and solo-practitioners, and the author of Raindance: The Business Development Guide Book for Lawyers. He can be reached at 604-669-5235 or gary@ontraccoach.com*

## ANNOUNCEMENT

**BRUDER | SPRINGSTEAD**  
LLP

Bruder Springstead LLP is pleased to welcome the following associates to the firm:



**Millie Katyal**  
416.867.8817  
mkatyal@bruderspringstead.com



**Randal Brown**  
416.867.4507  
rbrown@bruderspringstead.com

We are looking to hire further candidates with a minimum of three years experience. Applications can be sent to [nadia@bruderspringstead.com](mailto:nadia@bruderspringstead.com)

18 King Street East, Suite 1501, Toronto, Ontario M5C 1C4  
Telephone: 416.364.2600 Fax: 416.364.7207  
[www.bruderspringstead.com](http://www.bruderspringstead.com)