

FOLLOW THE YELLOW BRICK ROAD — AN ALLEGORY FOR RAINMAKERS



JAIMIE B. FIELD, ESQ. is founder of Marketing Field, LLC, a marketing and business development consultancy devoted solely to law firms to help them grow by finding ethical solutions to getting new clients and marketing their firms. In addition to marketing, Jaimie had been training and coaching her clients to become Rainmakers, growing their books of business. Now, she spends most of her time known as The_Rain_Maker. She works solely with attorneys and law firms to teach them business development and marketing skills that enable them to build big books of business ethically. She believes that every attorney can become the rainmaker they would like because as

her tag line says: "Rainmakers are not born; They are taught"™ presenting seminars and working one-on-one with clients, helping them develop strategies based on their individual personalities. The result is the ability to open doors to growing their businesses ethically, even if they have already been shut. Her seminars are always entertaining and informative and she has found a way to motivate attorneys when they can't seem to motivate themselves. Her website blog, "Enlightened Rainmaking" can be found at www.jaimiefield.com, and her website at the-rain-maker.com.

In a very weird walk down the Yellow Brick Road to the Emerald City to ask the Wizard for new clients and matters, members of the executive committee of Gale, Scarecrow, Tinman and Lion, LLP, a 100+ lawyer firm are chanting "Pandemics, Politics, and Recessions, Oh my," over and over again through their masks.

James Scarecrow, highly educated and one of the smartest lawyers on the committee, puts his finger to his forehead and thinks out loud: "The pandemic has forced us to think outside the box. We need to find new and creative ways to get new clients and matters."

George Tinman, the attorney on the committee with the biggest heart, says: "Our clients want to know we care about them. Empathy! If we can reach out to our clients, one by one, and find out how we can help them, and not just with legal work, then we should be able to maintain our relationships with them, maybe even get new work."

William Lion, who has a fear of doing the things he needs to do to obtain new clients and will use any excuse to not do the tasks necessary, turns to the group and asks: "Maybe we should go back. Maybe we shouldn't be trying to find and acquire new clients or new matters. There is a new year ahead so

what's the point? I mean, the world is going to Hell in a handbasket and no one is going to want to hire us! We can always start again next year."

Managing partner Dorothy Gale, gently holding Lion's paw, says: "But Lion, if we don't move forward with our marketing and business development now, we won't have any clients in the future. And if we don't have any clients, we won't have a legal practice. We need all of our lawyers doing what is necessary to bring in new clients and matters."

Okay, maybe I am taking this a bit too far, but the point is that yes, the world has been undergoing major changes in so many ways, but that doesn't mean that people and corporations do not need your services.

Since the pandemic began, I have been explaining that now is not the time to stop doing business development activities even though we have been working from home.

However, in a study conducted by Acritas, a legal research company, about Lawyer Productivity during the pandemic, and written about by Jen Dezso, Vice President, Acritas USA, she stated:

When it comes to remote working, 77 percent of stand-out lawyers say the number one challenge to the firm's bottom line is difficulty in developing business. Even in the best of conditions—which these are not—lawyers too often struggle to engage in business development conversations with clients. Many say this has been compounded today because lawyers are unable to leverage networking events, working lunches, and other in-person meetings.

But as our imaginary partner, Jim Scarecrow said—we have to think outside the box.

Struggling to engage in business development conversations?

The biggest issue most attorneys have is with “business development conversations,” not only during this anomalous time but since lawyers began saying “I didn’t go to law school to be in sales,” is that many believe that it is akin to the shady sales pitches that they are used to seeing in salesman/women tropes—“Have I got a deal for you!” But, the most important thing that many lawyers need to understand is that sales (yes, I used the dreaded word!) and selling do not have to be sleazy propositions.

Selling that way that doesn’t work anymore.

Nobody needs to be sold. They need to be helped. And if you think of any conversations you have with clients, potential clients, or referral sources as being of service and helping, rather than trying to sell, you will find it so much easier to obtain new business and matters.

No networking events?

There may not be any live and in-person events taking place at this time, but every day, there are virtual networking events that are taking place. Hell, I’m scheduled to attend more than a dozen this week alone. And you can find these virtual networking events just by Googling the term “virtual networking events.”

Additionally, many associations are also holding networking meetings online.

No working lunches/dinners?

Contact your current and former clients and organize a one-on-one virtual video meeting or even a telephone call. And if you want to make it even more special, send your client a meal delivery service gift card (like Door Dash, Grub Hub) and ask them to have “lunch/dinner with you”; or contact a local restaurant and order lunch for them directly, just be careful to order what they would like.

By the way, one of my favorite hacks on the Zoom platform specifically is to “hide self-view.” At the top of your picture on the right-hand side, you can mouse over three blue dots. Click on the dots and at the bottom of the list is “hide self-view.” When you activate this, your video feed will not be seen by you, but you will still be on camera for the other person (people) on the Zoom Call to see. When you are having a meeting with one person this makes it look like you’re having a true conversation with someone “across the table from you.”

Some studies say that a lot of your “Zoom Fatigue” is caused by worrying about what you look like on camera. So, if you are on a Zoom or other virtual event platform, if you can turn off your view of yourself, you will find yourself more productive on these calls.

You must continue your business development.

Many attorneys didn’t continue their business development efforts because they were stymied on how to do so. But, there are so many ways to create new business and to continue to build the relationships that turn into business that doesn’t include meeting in-person. It’s about making sure you are connecting with others and continuing to deepen the contacts regularly.

And to get back to the original allegory, if you remember from the original movie, the Wizard couldn’t give the group what they wanted. It took Glinda the Good Witch to tell Dorothy “You’ve always had the power my dear; you just had to learn it for yourself.”

It took an entire, very psychedelic trip through Oz with various teachers along the way to enable Dorothy and the rest of the Managing Committee the ability to bring in new work from new clients and old. And while you will have to do the work, you don't have to figure out how to do it by yourself. You can ask for help. Talk to the members of your marketing and business development department at the firm, pick up some books, read some blogs, or call a business development coach.

And so you know, I would be happy to talk to you—and you don't have to call me The Wizard. 🍄

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The image features a dark blue background with two rows of wooden bookshelves on either side, filled with various books. The central text is white and reads "CALLING ALL AUTHORS!".

CALLING ALL AUTHORS!

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