

Three Tips for Taking Charge of Your Career

By Thomas S. Clay & James D. Cotterman

*The following is excerpted from a presentation on the obligations of partnership, part of a five-part Altman Weil training series, *Being a Successful New Partner*. Although it was developed with new partners in mind, we think it is good advice for any lawyer who is serious about developing a successful and sustainable career.*

1. Develop a Career Planning Habit

- ⇒ The objective is becoming more valuable in the marketplace each year.
- ⇒ Remember that skills and competencies depreciate, sometimes rapidly.
- ⇒ Increase the *value* of the type of work you do, not just the volume.
- ⇒ Everyone can create business, but in different ways. You must find your special skills and competencies.
- ⇒ Don't wait for others to help you develop your career. It is your job!
- ⇒ Be willing to question what the firm asks you to do if it is not furthering your career.

2. Be Forward Looking

- ⇒ Study and assess legal market trends
- ⇒ Anticipate change
- ⇒ Develop resources
- ⇒ Make it a habit
- ⇒ Beware of complacency

3. Answer These Questions

- ⇒ What keeps my clients up at night?

⇒ *What can I do about it?*

⇒ What are my firm's most pressing challenges?

⇒ *What can I do about it?*

About the authors

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