

Business Development for Lawyers: Giving and Taking

By [Silvia L. Coulter](#) on August 28, 2014

The concept of givers and takers is an interesting one. Just the other day someone who is a taker called to ask me for some help including the tools and materials we use for a specific type of project. Over the years I've been amazed at how many times certain people will call only when they need something. It's irritating to me. If you haven't read his works, Adam Grant has built a consulting career out of his tests, presentations and books about the topic of giving and taking. Today, adding value to client and referral relationships means giving more than taking. As one GC mentioned to me recently, "it's an easy thing to do, pay attention to my company in the press and call me to discuss the topic—it shows me you care." "Call and ask me about my business and how we are doing; offer some CLE—these are ways to help build the relationship that ultimately will help you build your business."

Grant's concept is that the more you give the more you get; which of course we've all been taught over the years. The giver/taker is also constructive. Keeping track of what you've done and who owes you isn't selfish, it's just good record-keeping in some cases. But if you only take and don't give, people will be reluctant to build loyal relationships with you and ultimately a client will choose another law firm. Send a referral source a thank you note and a small gift. Call a client to show you are thinking of them. With our busy schedules it's easy to forget to do "give" something to someone weekly.

Giving means getting. It's useful to take the [online test](#) Grant uses and see how you score.