

Today's New Breed of Rainmaker

By [Jim Cranston](#) on October 3, 2013

Rainmaking has changed in the past five years. Today, a new breed of Rainmaker has evolved and rules the leader board at most firms. Of the various types of Rainmakers (***The Educator, The Networker, The Relentless Worker*** and ***The Specialist***) the Educator has surpassed the Networker in overall business generated.

Let's take a look at all four Rainmaker types:

The Educator: Educators successfully push clients to think differently, using value propositions to stimulate conversations in the business development process. Educators proactively bring their clients new ideas, strategies and best practices as a means of keeping in touch with buyers of their services. Educators will lead clients outside of their comfort zone and often achieve the coveted "trusted business advisor" moniker.

The Networker: Networkers have a significant number of business contacts and have ultimately leveraged relationships to build new business. Networkers focus on building strong personal relationships within organizations, being likable and generous with their time. Networkers also tend to get involved with professional groups and organizations (the local BAR, Inns of Court, industry groups, charitable organizations, etc.) and often reciprocate with referral sources.

The Specialist: A rare combination of experience and knowledge which very few possess. Unique skills place this group in a small but relevant category of business generators.

The Relentless Worker: The tireless, overachieving service partner is simply no match for the other three categories in today's new legal marketplace.

So what caused the Networker to fall to second chair amongst the rainmaking elite? I believe a triage of market forces came into play. First, the great recession was nothing short of a perfect storm for the Networkers. Relationships only get you so far when legal budgets are significantly reduced and scrutinized. Second, a more educated and intelligent buyer of legal services emerged. Clients started asking more questions and requiring more from their favorite service providers, ultimately placing more pressure on the Networkers. Third, a more focused and diligent group of competitors has evolved. Simply put, with the challenging economy, law firms were forced to improve their overall sales acumen so RFPs replaced sole-sourced work. The Networker was simply overmatched in today's "new normal."