

## December's Feature

### Outside Counsel Spending to Drop Again in 2010

A recent BTI Consulting Group study anticipates a 4.3% drop in outside counsel spending next year in addition to the 10.8% drop in 2009. And according to Eric Press, Editor in Chief of [The American Lawyer](#), "Law firms and their lawyers are in the throes of choosing whether to adjust to, resist, or embrace the fallout from the economic calamities." (November, 2009).

[New Business Development in the Red Zone »](#)

### Closer's Group Website - Red Zone Links

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### Guest Article: Strategic Partner Bob Gero

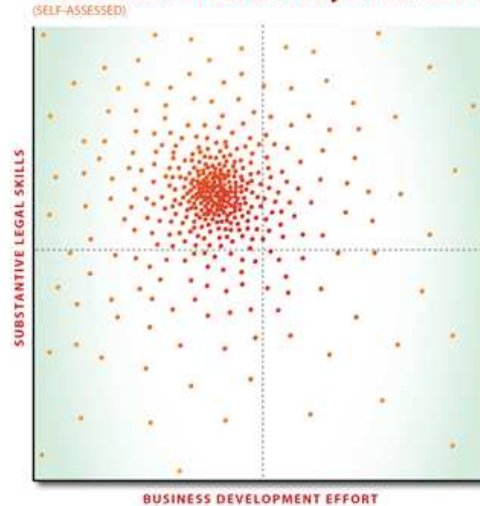
#### 49 Steps to Integrating Laterals

One of the most potentially rewarding transactions — and arguably the most challenging, frustrating and disappointing transactions — for law firm management and partners is the effective integration of lateral hires, whether they be equity or non-equity partners, counsel or experienced associates.

All too often, law firms aggressively (not to mention the high cost in time and dollars) recruit poaching an attorney from another firm or the corporate world, introduce him or her at a partners meeting, have them fully processed through HR's regimen, handle the basic marketing needs like bio, website presence and press release, and then send the attorney out into the world to bring in loads of new business.

[Lateral Attorneys & New Business Development »](#)

### Distribution of Partners by Skills/Effort



### Guest Article: Strategic Partner Jonathan Asperger

#### Making Your Garden Grow

To Increase Yields, Tend to Your Business Development Plan

A good business development plan can help a lawyer identify opportunities, set priorities, leverage strengths, and maximize the return on his or her investment of marketing time. But the time spent preparing a business plan is non-billable and the end product is never seen by the client, so many lawyers view marketing plans as little more than administrative busy work. As a result, most plans, if they exist at all, are not very good.

That's unfortunate. A well-done business plan can help a partner manage the single biggest investment he or she makes each year — the hundreds of hours spent on client service and business development.

[Read More on How to Make Your Garden Grow»](#)

#### Tip of the Month

Some firms, in a cost-control panic, toss every dime they can lay hands on into the equity pool, figuring that, if they can just keep per partner profits marginally higher, their best people won't rush for the exits.

[Legal Marketing When Funds Are Tight»](#)