



**Don't Stop Believin'**

**Skills and Professional Development**



Did you know vinyl records have made a comeback? I didn't until a year ago, when I spoke to a friend of mine who bought her 18-year-old niece a turntable for graduation. "Seriously, a turntable?" I thought. Now, 20-year-olds raised on CDs consider vinyl to be the latest "in" way to listen to music. It's not a surprise; old things are always new to the next generation. As I spotted turntables on sale at the local Barnes & Noble bookstore, I thought about some of the old [LP records](#) in my closet that I refuse to give away.

Does anyone else have the *Grease* soundtrack? And who can forget the "totally awesome" album artwork of the Alan Parsons Project? Nothing compares to the songs of our youth that evoke a myriad of memories and emotions. When the cast of the US television show *Glee* sang "[Don't Stop Believin'](#)" by the band Journey, I sang right along with them.

Old songs from our past can invigorate us and re-instill the same sense of optimism that we had when we first listened to them. And yet, there are some old records that serve the opposite purpose. I was reminded of this when I attended a conference on "Leaderpreneurship." Having just attended the ACC 2016 meeting in San Francisco, this [Leaderpreneurship](#) conference has helped to reinforce the important legal skills that I continue to learn at ACC.

If you have never attended the ACC Annual Meeting, I *highly* recommend that you go at least once. If you have attended the Annual Meeting, then you know that it offers countless opportunities to connect with your fellow ACC colleagues. ACC sponsors generously host a variety of networking events all over the host city. One night while I was event-hopping (yes, event-hopping, not bar hopping), my ACC Small Law Department Committee colleagues and I went in search of friends and food. The first two stops were pleasant and offered light snacks. The third venue, however, was the jackpot. We were greeted by a beautiful buffet full of tasty, substantial, and filling food. As I savored

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my mini pork slider, I chatted with a long-time ACC friend and asked how she was doing. Having established a friendship through years of ACC Annual Meetings, emails, and phone calls, she gave me her real answer.

“I’m learning that I may need to let some friendships go in my life because they have been such negative voices,” she confessed. I completely understood what she meant. We meet people throughout our lives that we sometimes hold onto simply because we have known them for so long. Yet, we may learn that 20, 10, five, or even two years down the road that the friendship just isn’t what it used to be. Not only can we outgrow the latest technology trend, but we can also outgrow our relationships. Friends with whom we once shared common interests, geography, or experiences just don’t seem to “fit” who we are now or who we want to become. Conversations with them feel like an unfulfilling snack, not a real meal. Not only do they no longer “get” us, but they commiserate with us in playing old records in our head.

Records with lyrics such as:

“You are not good enough to become general counsel.”

“You are not as smart as you think.”

“You’ll never be able to fill the shoes of your predecessor.”

“You are too forward.”

“You are too shy.”

“You are too much.”

“You’ll never get a better job than you have now.”

These lyrics play in our heads because of the emotional baggage connected to our past failures, criticisms, and rejections. We need to throw out these old, scratchy records that play in our brains and stop allowing our past defeats and disappointments to replay every time we encounter a difficult situation. It’s time that we find new songs, new voices, and new people who can speak to the potential joy that we crave in our lives. If you are going to keep an old record, let it be an actual vinyl record that plays a song that reinforces your possibilities and not your limitations. Throw out these old lyrics that are stuck in your head and “Don’t Stop Believin’.”

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