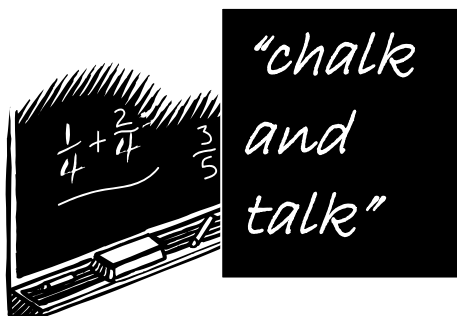




legal education & training group



LETG Newsletter Summer 2007 Special edition

we've also got lots of insights from members, our training provider friends and lots more....

Inside this Summer edition....



Table with 2 columns: Content and Page numbers. Includes News (p 1-3), SPECIAL SUMMER FEATURE: Development Frameworks (p 4 - 5), LETG member sharing (p 6), Recent LETG events (p 7 - 8), LETG events coming up! (p 8 - 9), Your HELP needed (p 9), Member in the spotlight - this edition, Jan Springthorpe (p 9-10), A day in a trainer's life - this edition, Robert Mowbray of Macintyre Hudson (p 11), Free articles (p 12-24)

LETG News

Committee news: another new addition to the fold!

The merry band that is the LETG committee has been joined by new member Liz Byrne of Jones Day. Welcome to Liz, who has already started eagerly beavering away, as have Rebecca from Allen & Overy and Margaret from Shearman & Sterling who (as reported in the Spring Chalk and Talk) also recently joined us!

Development frameworks

"This packed Summer edition is dedicated to the black art of designing and implementing development frameworks in law firms.



Where do you start? What benefits do they bring? Are they worth the time and effort?

Plus, delve inside to hear the latest on LETG events over the summer, which are fantastic ways to build your networks and learn from others' experience. The LETG is passionate about promoting best L & D practice in law firms, so why not come to our inaugural Law Firm L & D awards at our Annual Dinner - your reply to our invitation is eagerly awaited! And

LETG meet to discuss a group response to LPC, WBL consultations

Allen and Overy played host to an energetic discussion among LETG members of the SRA's consultation papers. Aply chaired by Bernard George from Decherts, Liz Byrne from Jones Day and our vice-Chair Patrick McCann, the discussions highlighted a number of issues causing LETG members concern. The long list included the proposed minimum period of the new work based learning requirement, reduction in the overall amount of academic training required to become a solicitor, and the practical requirements of the learning log.

The LETG is submitting a response on behalf of its members to both the consultations, but Pauline Holland, our LETG Chair, encouraged all our members to submit individual/firm responses to the consultations to ensure the strength of feeling was properly felt at the SRA.

Jim Daniells, SRA to meet with LETG Committee

As part of our ongoing efforts to maintain a positive dialogue with the SRA, we're pleased to inform you that Jim Daniells accepted our invitation to the next LETG Committee meeting in June.

LETG launch new L & D awards for training professionals in law firms - your chance to shine!

As part of our commitment to promoting best practice in law firm learning and development, the LETG this year announced that the LETG Annual Dinner this year, on Thursday 28 June at Swissotel The Howard Hotel, Temple, London will play host to the inaugural Law Firm L & D Awards.



With four awards created to recognise the contribution that learning and development professionals make to their law firms, the LETG have assembled a committee of eminent HR and learning and development professionals will decide on the worthy winners!

More details in our Events section on page 8.

Other news...



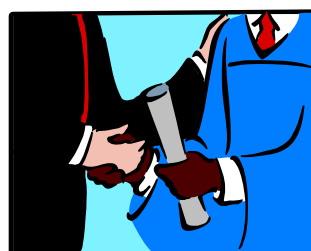
SRA consultation on solicitors acting for buyer and seller

In the interests of keeping our members informed of various SRA consultations taking place, if your property or conveyancing departments aren't already aware, the SRA is consulting on whether the conflict of interest

rules on acting for buyer and seller on property related matters require revision.

Please encourage relevant property, real estate or compliance people in your firm to look at the detail (see [link](#)) and have their say!

In-house training should be awarded state funding, says QCA head



When business invests significantly in in-house training for its people, this should be recognised by state funding and should lead to nationally recognised

qualifications, said the head of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, Ken Boston, at a recent speech. This represents a shift from the previously oft-held view that job-specific training was unlikely to have the right elements to lead to formal qualification within the QCA framework. Check out the full article as reported in the Financial Times, by following this [link](#).

New teaching reforms at Harvard



It's really interesting to note that the quality of undergraduate teaching and tuition is being closely examined at one

of the world's most prestigious establishments, Harvard. Some of our LETG members send their practice group heads and partners on their Leading professional service firms programme. This interesting recent article in The Independent explores why Harvard is looking to improve its undergraduate teaching, and the role inquiry-based learning has to play at this level of education. Follow this [link](#) for the full text article.

Older female workers get worse deal on training and development?

Although released a few months back, it's worth taking a look at this short summary of a recent study that the University of Surrey undertook into how equally training and development was made available to differing sections of the workforce. Older, female workers came out worse. Click here for more [detail](#).

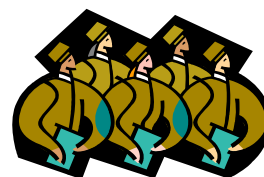


University will offer just 6 degrees, with the option to take a further professional degree. To read more, and find out about the debate this has sparked over here, click [here](#).

Fujitsu trains over 2500 managers at its Management academy - and without using expensive business schools...

Find the prospect of rolling out leadership and management programmes to a large workforce daunting?

Put off by the cost involved in engaging business schools? This FT article makes interesting reading in its detailed analysis of how Fujitsu Services is managing, across 13 countries, to deliver management training through its Management Academy to junior, middle and senior managers. Click [here](#) for the full text article.



The fight to recruit the right young graduate men and women for the job



Organisations are having to be more and more innovative in the recruitment strategies they employ to secure the best candidate. An interesting article

from the Telegraph (click [here](#)) examines how companies like IBM, Toyota and Rolls Royce are playing hard ball in the fight for top quality graduates - the results of the National Graduate Recruitment awards are also outlined, with mentions for Allen & Overy and Lovells. This all makes interesting reading in the wake of the LETG Pre Qualification mini conference happening soon! (More details in our Events section on page 8)

What do our young lawyers want from a career?



This recent Times articles looks at how firms are having to think outside of the box when it comes to attracting and motivating young lawyer talent. Lack of breadth and depth in undergraduate study and on the LPC is leading providers to market their part time Masters as benefits that firms can

offer, as well as other development programmes and benefits. Find out what other firms are doing to keep lawyers from walking...click [here](#).

Increasing the breadth of undergraduate study - making waves down under

The breadth and depth of what our graduates study is of course the subject of great debate in the training framework review being undertaken by the SRA.

But down under, the Guardian reports that Australia's second oldest university is from January starting a new regime. Melbourne



Summer Special Feature: Development Frameworks



The public sector is awash with them -development frameworks that identify where you fit, where you can head and what support you need to get there.

But what can they offer law firms? Do they help in getting people to buy into the learning and

development initiatives that we devise on a day-to-day basis by giving people a framework where it all fits? Do you need outside people to develop it or can you do it yourself?

We hope to give you lots of food for thought in this Special Summer Chalk and Talk edition on Development Frameworks, with contributions from providers who've helped firms develop such frameworks.

A definition?

First things first - what do we mean by development frameworks?

- Career development
- Performance development
- Learning and development
- Competencies

"framework, n. A supporting and underlying structure, OED.

"development, n. The action of developing or the state of being developed", OED.

There is no standard definition of development frameworks, and if you look at the above dictionary definitions, anything that provides a structure to help people develop /progress fits the bill!

Of course, the concept isn't new. Take a look at the [Investors In People website](#), which supports the IIP standard. This is one of a number of standards that seek to encourage organisations to establish structures to enable and support people to develop and prosper whilst at work. It gives lots of references to the organisational benefits of having support systems in place for your people.

What value do they bring?

But how do they work for law firms or other professional service firms (PSFs)? Lawyers, creatures often known for their dislike of concepts like structure, conformity and rigidity (pictures that the word "framework" can often conjure up), might reasonably be expected to be at best cynical, and at worst dismissive of the value that a development framework might add to a fee earner's career.

However, any look at a recent survey on associates and what motivates them (no names mentioned but the legal press loves this topic like no other) shows that keeping one's nose to the grind stone, clocking up the hours and then waiting for a corner partnership desk to become vacant is no longer what our associates desire as the path to professional fulfilment.

So, one answer to the question of what value development frameworks bring to law firms is that they help associates to manage their careers by highlighting not only how they can develop their skills and knowledge, but also where they might end up if they do so.

Skills and knowledge?

The skills and knowledge part of the equation is the area that the first of our articles on this theme deals with (see Article 1 at the end of the newsletter). Des Woods opines on how to take people from technical mastery to business mastery, and how to design L & D around these.



"Organising training and learning in a professional services firm"

How do you overcome the "producer-manager" dilemma that law firm leaders face? How do you develop a L & D programme that usefully feeds into a professional career development framework?

Des Woods is a Director of Overton Woods: a consultancy specialising in leadership development and change management through learning.

Competency frameworks?

Another way in which firms have tackled the structured development of their people is by reference to a competency framework. This can be viewed as a challenge in law firms, where analysing roles and performance levels

required can sometimes be viewed as overtly prescriptive and imposing structure on creatures who don't like to be viewed as one of a mass of people at a level, but individuals in their own right. However, crafted and developed in the right hands, with extensive links in to a firm's culture, a competency framework can provide an invaluable guide to both the firm and the individual in setting expectations of what someone should achieve, but also guiding a person to appropriate development when help is needed to achieve the required competency.

The CIPD have a useful guide on competency frameworks generally, which not only paints a historical picture of their development but also sets out practical guidance about their implementation: follow this [link](#).

For a frank view of the practical considerations in developing and launching development frameworks, see Article 2 at the end of the newsletter:



"Creating a Competency Framework - the principles and pitfalls"

Gwenllian Williams sets out, among other practical advice, guidance on a six step approach on where to start and how to roll a framework out, including brief mention of her work with Berwin Leighton Paisner.

Gwenllian Williams is a Director of deWinton-Williams Consulting Ltd. which delivers consultancy to the legal and financial sectors. Their services include competency frameworks, selection systems, training solutions and development projects.

A lot is hinged on how best to make the case for the investment in putting together a framework for developing people in your organisation. On a slightly tangential theme, have a look at this CIPD information sheet on Developing Managers for business performance - which has a lot of useful guidance on making the *economic case* for investing in management development. There are similar challenges in making the case for a development framework to your management teams. Click on this [link](#) to learn more.



On the same theme, but this time from the point of view of analysing whether development frameworks are simply a fashion a trend that everyone is following or whether they can really add value in law firms, see Article 3:

Development Frameworks - A Fashionable Trend Or A Catalyst For Progress?

Here, Sue Eccleston sets out her views on the above question, with some top tips for making them a success.

Sue Eccleston worked as the head of training in a national law firm and is a former Head of Professional Development at the Law Society. She is now works freelance and provides advice and assistance on skills and professional development to law firms and training organisations.

Another interesting article is from Ann Marie Cooper, who talks among other things about 5 core dimensions to an "integrated approach" to career development. Have a look at her thoughts at Article 4:

A M C Consulting

Learning and Development

"Enabling or restraining excellence? Can development frameworks work in law firms?"

Ann explores the concept of an integrated approach, and also gives some back ground context as to why law firms have been looking at development frameworks within the context of talent management.

Ann Marie Cooper of A M C Consulting is an executive coach and learning and development consultant specialising in the recruitment and retention of high performers in the professional services sector

In summary, all in all, there are lots of different ways in which to create and establish a development framework. Law firm culture poses in itself a challenge, in addition to the particular foibles of any one firm! We hope that some of the attached articles have given you some food for thought.....

LETG Member sharing

This edition, How the LETG helped Aideen Hanley, from Mason Hayes & Curran in Dublin, with sourcing Corporate drafting training!



"I have been working in Mason Hayes & Curran in Dublin, having moved from Kennedys in London. I am in a Training & Know-how role at MH&C.

The firm has a fairly large and disparate Corporate department which is constantly frantically busy. That seems to be the usual situation for Corporate everywhere. The firm has not had anyone who dealt exclusively with CPD Training before and asked me to begin working with Corporate to identify and cater for some of their training needs.

One of the needs that arose was a Corporate drafting course to bring all of the junior lawyers' skills to the same level and explain the context of drafting to them. Trying to organise a training session for a busy Corporate department was a challenging puzzle in itself.

One of the issues was the question of time for training in the context of people who were working eighteen hour days in some cases. We initially decided to hold the course over a weekend but the resounding lack of enthusiasm and deafening groans meant that that would not work.

Then there was the question of where to pitch the session and most importantly, which external trainer to choose. Corporate is not my area so I had to look for some help.

"I was delighted with the outcome"

Patrick McCann of the LETG was so helpful in finding a trainer who was practical and

thorough and had a good solid background in Corporate work. He gave a strong recommendation of Giles Proctor of the College of Law.

Giles came to Dublin to give the course and was very accommodating about timing and structure. We chose to begin the training day at 1 and carry through until early evening.

This gave people a chance to deal with urgent tasks and meant a better attendance rate. Giles put the emphasis on training the junior lawyers and spoke to the partners first of all to explain his aims. The exercise was especially about gaining confidence for the juniors and he asked the more senior people to step out for one of the exercises in case it affected the juniors' contributions and confidence.

The day worked extremely well. Giles broke the group up into smaller gatherings and gave them practical exercises to complete which were very realistic. They also had the element of advising clients on risks and realities. When they attended, the more senior people mixed in to help out and advise the junior lawyers. There was a great spirit of teamwork and collaboration. The lawyers had time and space to make some valuable contributions.

Giles kept everything very fresh and enjoyable for the participants with lots of Q&A. He also ran very helpful feedback sessions with a breakdown of the exercises and why particular answers would not work in a practical client focused reality.

The day finished with home made pizza and garlic bread, the lure to keep everyone going until the end. The feedback forms made very happy reading. The Corporate people all praised Giles' knowledge and expertise, the interactive, fun nature of the day and rated his teaching as excellent. The partners were very pleased with the course and it was also a good teambuilding exercise as there was so much sharing of knowledge and cooperation. The more junior people saw the realities of advising clients and drafting on the spot. There were lots of suggestions for follow-ups and more training requests.

I was delighted with the outcome as there was a degree of reluctance among some of the lawyers about attending drafting training. Giles managed to make it a very active, fun, participatory day which was also serious in its intent."

Kindly contributed by Aideen Hanley.

Don't forget to check out the [LETG website](#) to see the really useful answers to LETG member newsflash queries - there's a wealth of helpful hints and recommendations from other members there!

Recent events report

Great member networking and sharing of experiences at the Personal Effectiveness for Law Firm L & D Administrators workshop, 28th February



Ably led by Phil Parry and Tamsin Eedle from JSB, with additional contributions from LETG member featuring Belinda Scott of Watson Farley & Williams, a bumper 26 people attended the half day workshop held at Charles Russell's office.

Aimed at the L & D administrators who help to make it all happen, we've had some great feedback:

"I was hoping, more than anything, for an opportunity to meet people in the same role who knew exactly the daily challenges we face and how we all tackle them. I found that there was so much variety it helped with sharing tips and experiences..... I feel more positive in my role as I now know other people face similar challenges and I now have advice on how to deal with things - including building relationships with other people and learning my own work style", *Sophie from BLP.*

"The aspect I enjoyed the most was meeting people from other firms doing a similar job and talking to them about their experiences", *Carita from Herbert Smith.*

"The key thing I took away from this workshop was a sense of having met a community of peers filling the same role as me. I thought Tamsin was an approachable trainer....Phil conveyed his points very positively....I found Belinda Scott's opening talk inspiring in that she discussed how having worked in every different role within a training department, she is now the Director of Training and Development [at WFW]", *Diana from Clyde & Co.*

Food, 360 degree feedback and the company of LETG members? What more could you ask for?! Learn & Dine -28th March



The Learn and Dine experience was really impressive. It was an informal way to network with the LETG members as well as discuss a very current and interesting issue - 360 degree feedback solutions. We were able to listen to an extremely well-informed speaker, who brought humour and interest to the subject as well as having fantastic food and wine! John Rice from Bowland Solutions was extremely personable and obviously had much experience of implementing 360 feedback into organisations.

Having already been involved in this process and having an established process at our firm, the presentation proved to be an excellent and welcomed supplement. The setting was ambient and the fact we had the whole downstairs of the restaurant to ourselves meant we were able to relax and fuel dialogue. The presentation worked nicely around our three course meal and gave us an opportunity to eat, drink and talk, without being overwhelmed with information. We were able to talk to colleagues who are facing similar challenges to ourselves, but whose situations are quite different from ours at A&O.

We would definitely attend another Learn and Dine event - the informal yet professional aspect of learning proved to be enjoyable and informative!

Contributed by Nadia Minors, Natalia Sandiford and Rebecca Fradley, from Allen & Overy.

More 2007 LETG Events for your diary

Lots of ground covered - so said LETG attendees of the Training for Long-term legal learning workshop on 24th April



With 19 people sharing in what was a packed schedule, there was a mixed audience of both training folk and PSLs at the workshop led by Paula McMullan of the McMullan Partnership at Clifford Chance's offices.

Again, a great opportunity, as are all LETG events, to meet others who face the same challenges and learn from them, a lot of ground was covered, with delegates crying out for more time!

Check out some of the following comments from members - we'll be taking on board their thoughts for improvements and future workshops and putting this into our planning going forward!

"Session was hugely interactive which was great and it gave me lots of ideas as to how we could run our own training sessions", *Karen of Denton Wilde Sapte*

"Paula was excellent, funny and down to earth presenting style which put us all at our ease. It was incredibly useful to exchange ideas with others of similar experience", *Katy of Shoosmiths*

"It was very useful to hear about practical ideas for training - especially how to make dry legal training more interesting - and ideas that have worked for others....Excellent course", *Alyson of Burges Salmon*.

The demand for this first workshop led to a second workshop to cater for numbers on 17th May. It's great to know that we're delivering what you, our members, want!


School's definitely NOT out for Summer!



Summer 2007

Before hitting the beach, make sure you hit one of the fantastic events that we're planning over the summer- don't miss out!


June:

Wed 13 th June 2007	BPP Law School, 137 Stamford Street, Waterloo London SE1 9NN	The Pre-PQE Conference: Finding and Forming the Lawyers of the Future" £125 - LETG law firm members (includes lunch) £150 - non-LETG law firm members (includes lunch) £100 – second/additional delegates	
<p>This workshop is not limited to LETG members but is also open to Graduate Recruitment and Development Professionals working in the legal market.</p> <p>This one-day conference will explore the process of graduate recruitment and development in the law firm context including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · attracting the best candidates · engaging recruits between offer and start date · developing trainees during their training contract so that they are properly prepared for qualification · the future training framework with an update from the Solicitors Regulation Authority. <p>Participating law firms include Clifford Chance, Cobbetts, Berwin Leighton Paisner, Wragge & Co, Addleshaw Goddard and Bevan Brittan. They will be joined by speakers from Pricewaterhouse Coopers, Legal Week Intelligence, DeWinton Williams, Sherwood PSF Consulting and the SRA.</p>			

June

Thurs 28 th June 2007	Swissotel The Howard, Temple Place, London	Annual Dinner and Inaugural LETG Law Firm L & D Awards! £55	
<p>You should have all by now received your invitations to this, and hopefully will have been busy preparing submissions to our first ever Law Firm L & D awards! We're very excited by the prospect of recognising the best in law firm L & D practice, to be judged by a very experienced panel of law firm and industry experts.</p> <p>We hope to see as many of you there as possible for what's looks set to be a key event in the LETG calendar!</p>			

July:

<p>Wed 18th July 2007</p> <p>8.30am</p>	<p>Berwin Leighton Paisner</p>	 <p>Breakfast briefing: "Future Learning and Development Needs of Tomorrow's Successful Lawyers"</p> <p>£50 - LETG law firm members £70 - non-LETG law firm members</p>
<p>Ever wondered what exactly they talk about in your law firm's board room? Not always privy to the highest-level strategic discussions? Want some insight into what your development priorities will be over the next few years?</p> <p>Taking the form of a "Question Time"-type panel session, this is your chance to ask leading law firm leaders what they think the L & D priorities in your firm ought to be. The panel will be chaired by Stephen Mayson and the panellists are: Neville Eisenberg, Managing Partner, Berwin Leighton Paisner; Guy Beringer, Senior Partner, Allen & Overy; Andrew Tubbs, Chairman, Shoosmiths; Nigel Knowles, Managing Partner, DLA Piper; Michael Shaw, Managing Partner, Cobbetts</p> <p>Just like the TV show, we'd like you to send in your questions ahead of time - the deadline is Wednesday 4th July 2007. We will sift through these and pick out the best ones to be asked on the day. The best one will receive a prize of £50 Theatre vouchers from the LETG.</p> <p>Questions we think you might want to ask include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · How do law firms differentiate themselves these days? · What are clients wanting from their lawyers? · What will the key critical skills be for successful lawyers? · What role does effective career management play in the strategic priorities for law firms? · What should law firms' L & D departments be prioritising? But you probably have better ones. Surprise us! <p>For full programme details and booking form please click here</p>		

and LPC Accounts Online. These online resources will consist of various types of interactive exercises, but the OUP also want to feature some short interviews with practitioners, saying why that skill is important and how a trainee might use that skill. If you would be interested in being involved in this project, or think that any of the lawyers in your firm would be interested in taking part, please contact Lucy Graham, Commissioning Editor, Vocational Law, OUP.

lucy.graham@oup.com

Tel: 01865 353848.

This issue's "Member in the spotlight"!



**Jan Springthorpe,
Training and
Development Manager
at Thompsons solicitors.**



Current role?

My job title is Training and Development Manager and my role, in conjunction with one of our senior partners, is to look after the learning and development needs of the firm in a way that helps us to meet our business objectives and provide high quality services to clients. I have been in this role since November 1998.

How long have you been an LETG member?

I joined LETG in 2004 and have attended the 2005 and 2006 national conferences which I thoroughly enjoyed, especially meeting and networking with people from other law firms.

Typical day?

My work is a real mixed bag and I don't think I have a typical day! At any one time I might be designing a management development programme, creating a new course or on my feet delivering training.

I also act as an internal consultant, working on initiatives and projects such as Investors In People, developing competency frameworks, developing performance standards or

Can YOU help?



Can you help the Oxford University with input into its online LPC student products?

The Oxford University Press is looking for practitioners who would be willing to help with a new project. They are developing two online products for LPC students: LPC Skills Online

conducting audits and research into learning and development.

What's your office like?

Oohh - it's huge, elegant and really posh! Actually, as I work from home, it's a walk in wardrobe that has been converted into a "compact and bijou" office! I've been home based for the past 9 years and although it was a bit strange at first I find it suits me really well.

In reality, I am away on my travels around the UK quite a bit as we have 20 offices nationwide so my "office" often tends to be meeting rooms within our branches or conference rooms at off site venues - when I can find them cheap enough!

How many in your team?

I now have a team of one - me! I am self sufficient and do all my own administrative and secretarial work and document production. I sometimes have an off day and fall out with myself but generally I get on really well with myself!

Biggest challenges?

How long have you got! I have lots of them but probably the most demanding and important one is trying to make sure that training solutions are appropriate, cost effective, have a positive impact on performance and add value to the business.

Also, keeping my training courses fresh, active, interesting and memorable is an ongoing personal challenge.

Greatest triumphs?

For me, my greatest ongoing triumph is getting positive feedback and genuine thanks and appreciation from people that I train and develop. It makes all the effort and anxiety so worthwhile.

Any training room nightmares?

My worst nightmare is when people have been "sent" on a course by their line manager and either don't think they need to attend or don't want to. I usually manage to engage them but it involves being flexible and quite inventive to try to find ways of gaining their commitment to the event (thrusting £10 notes into their hands usually helps!)

If you had a magic wand, what would you make happen?

I have a passion for performance excellence so I would place training and personal development for individuals at the top of every line manager's agenda and create 100%

commitment to coaching and mentoring people to achieve their full potential.

People can achieve amazing things and there is never enough time (in any organisation) to dedicate to helping them be the best that they can possibly be. Can you send me my magic wand as soon as possible please?

If you could be anywhere in the world, where would you be?

Believe it or not, I wouldn't be anywhere other than exactly where I am now! I live on the beautiful North Wales coast between the mountains and the sea and I wouldn't swap it for anything - except maybe a bigger house, with an even better view of the sea!

Person you'd call in an emergency?

When I am in the thick of designing management training to roll out dreaded HR policies and am stuck for case studies or meaningful content, I frequently call upon my colleague Frances Longmore. She is our HR Manager and I don't know what I would do without her HR expertise and great sense of humour!

Favourite training provider?

I don't really have one as we tend to use outside providers very rarely.

One word of advice to new members?

Get involved with LETG, attend the national conference even if you can't travel all the way to London for the smaller events, get to know people in the same line of work as yourself, network, put something in if you can and you'll certainly get something out of it.

Any help you'd like from providers?

Not at the moment.

If the LETG could do one thing for you, what would it be?

Help me to get a LETG Northern Region group off the ground!!!

I've tried to launch this in the past but have been thwarted by busy diaries, problems with availability, preparedness to travel within the north etc. If anyone, anywhere, is genuinely interested in being a member of a Northern Region group please contact me by e-mail janspringthorpe@thompsons.law.co.uk and let's see if we can really get something going this summer.

A day in a trainer's life!

Robert Mowbray, Macintyre Hudson,
www.macintyreHUDSON.co.uk

Robert became a partner at MH in 1988. Since the early 1990's he has devoted his time to the development of Macintyre Advisory Services Ltd, the training and consultancy arm of Macintyre Hudson. His clients are almost exclusively law firms ranging from the small to the largest international firms. He is an expert in law firm profitability and in particular time recording and transaction management. Robert believes in giving practical down to earth advice that not only works but delivers results.



How long have you been a trainer? 23 years

What did you do before/in a previous life? - Chartered Accountant but only when I realised I wasn't good enough to be a golf professional.

Main topics you train? Anything to do with financial management ... in fact anything to do with helping lawyers to make money.

How long have you been an LETG friend? Since it was formed.

A typical day? Well today I left home early to get to Newcastle to train all day; then I have a meeting with another client in the evening in Newcastle before hopefully travelling in the morning to work for another client in Budapest ... it is not always as glamorous as it sounds.

Biggest training challenges in your field? Staying fresh, up to date with developments in the legal market and engaging very demanding lawyers.

Greatest triumphs? Being voted the first LETG Trainer of the Year and continuing to work with so many large law firms over such a long period of time.

Any training room nightmares? Going deaf during a course and having to guess what people were asking me - nobody seemed to notice which was rather strange!

Your perfect training venue? A banana plantation in January in Jamaica! No I am not

dreaming it did happen but it seems like a dream now.

What would a perfect law firm client look like? The perfect law firm client for me is ambitious, keen to learn and wanting to be challenged.

Any secret habits/interests? Sudoku, golf

If you weren't a trainer, what would you be? I cannot imagine doing anything else. I am lucky to be able to do what I do.

Want more from this newsletter?

Contact [Karen Aubrey](mailto:karen.aubrey@letg.org.uk).

Your LETG committee

[Pauline Holland](#), Chair, Annual Dinner, Law Society ETC

[Patrick McCann](#), Vice-Chair

[Peter Carrick](#), Website development

[Sandy Boyle](#), Treasurer

[Karen Aubrey](#), Newsletter

[Jenny Pugh](#), Website development

[Tracy Clegg](#), Gifts

[Shannon Campbell](#), Annual Conference

Rebecca Fradley

Margaret Dunmore

Liz Byrne

[Jane Cochrane](#), LETG Administrator

www.letg.org.uk

Article 1

Organising training and learning in a professional services firm

Des Woods

Professional services firms (PSF's), many of which operate as partnerships offering sophisticated services in areas such as law, banking, accounting and consulting face a different challenge to mainstream corporate business in the area of learning and training, most of their people are recruited because they are seen as 'talent'. The firms often have an 'up or out' culture where those who are not promoted or aspire to partnership leave the firm to take up successful careers, or opt for different lifestyle choices elsewhere.

All PSF's work on the basis of a 'leverage hierarchy' (i.e. the ratio of associates to partners), as this is a key determinant of the firm's profitability. Leverage ratios vary widely, depending on market position and on the nature of the professional work. For people to remain in the firm they must master a progression of roles as they develop their career. (See fig. 1) Their level of demonstrated mastery determines their reputation as a professional and underpins their continued rise up the hierarchy towards partnership.

Professional Roles:

Individual Contributor

- Apply Technical skills learned during professional training.
- Work on (possibly multiple) project teams.

Case/Project Manager

- Structure the workflow for a team.
- Manage team performance by delegating and coordinating activities of the team members.
- Enhance team performance by creating a support/challenge culture in the team.
- Apply professional knowledge commercially.
- Develop sound judgement and business sense.

Client Manager

- Develop broad and deep relationships.
- Use negotiation skills.
- Position the firm in brand and reputation with clients.
- Sell additional firm services.

Figure 1: Progression of professional roles

Role/Career progression in a PSF					
	Individual Contributor		Case or Project Manager	Client or Relationship Manager	
Law	Associate		Mid-Level	Senior Associate	Partner
Investment Banking	Associate		Associate	SVP Exec Director	Managing Director
Strategic Consulting	Associate		Associate	Client Manager	Partner
Accounting	Junior Staff	Senior Staff	Manager	Senior Manager	Partner

A second and very significant characteristic of PSF's is that the people who work within them are typically exceptionally talented and motivated to high levels of achievement. Such people have many choices in pursuing a career and have self-elected into their profession. The psychology of professionals does differ from that of the population in general and this effects how learning can and should develop in a firm.

Successful professionals in practice typically (but not always) have a dominant set of characteristics:

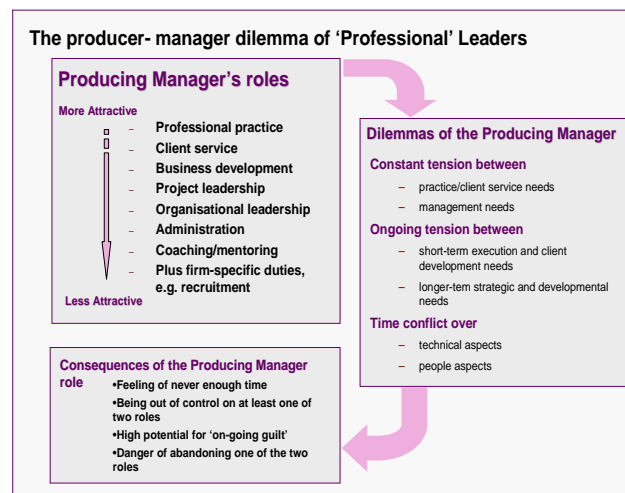
- **Intelligent**
- **Achievers**
- **Focused on task control and completion**
- **High need for 'real time' feedback**
- **Impatient**
- **Successful**
- **Autonomous (but)**
- **Want to be involved**
- **Overloaded agendas**

In summary:

Professionals may be slightly insecure, ego aware, over-achievers who need control at task level. They may constantly worry about how they are doing compared to peers and who feel guilty about the things they cannot do.

These characteristics lead to a development issue that is peculiar to PSF's and to client facing professionals:-The concept of the **producer-manager**.

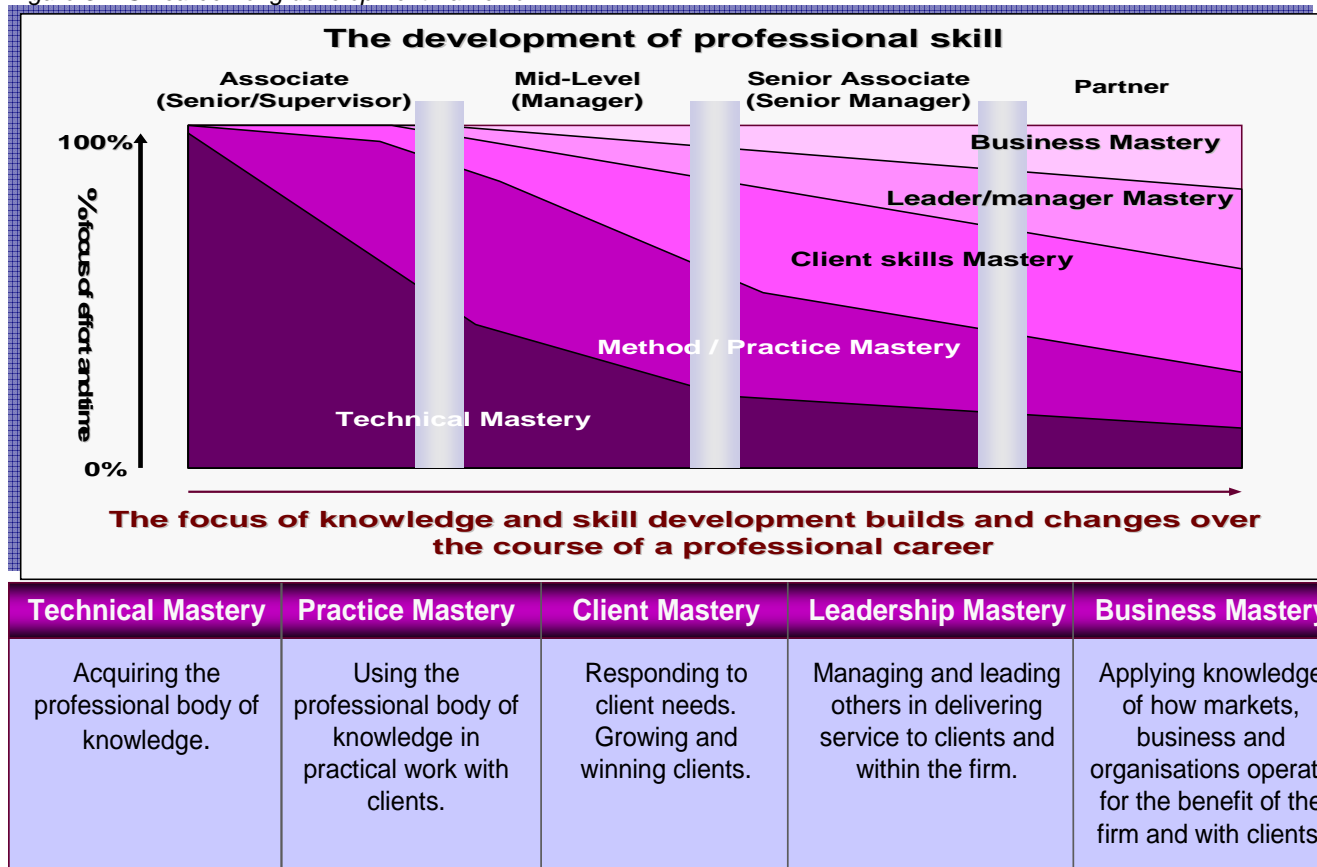
Figure 2: The Producer-Manager Dilemma



If one puts together these two fundamental concepts of career role transition in PSF's and the issues that lead to the development of the producer-manager dilemma. It is possible to construct a development framework that can (roughly) predict when a client facing professional should focus on different areas of learning. The framework detailed in figure 3 below, teases out the various different types of learning and development experienced by professionals over

the duration of a career in the firm. The precise sequencing of learning will differ between different professions to some extent and will also differ between cultures or business models within firms. But for each firm it should be possible to get a good fix on the development sequence.

Figure 3: PSF career long development framework

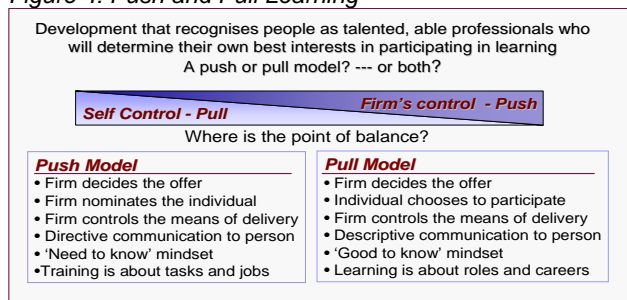


In designing specific learning and development interventions there is one other major consideration that needs to be taken into account. This is the interplay between the motivational characteristics of professionals, who are typically achievement oriented and independently minded as against the culture of the firm, which naturally seeks to control the investment of time and money invested in development activity. This dynamic tension plays out as the firm on the one hand attempts to impose learning in a structured form, sometimes even making it compulsory while on the other, allowing people the freedom to choose learning that they believe will be useful to their careers. Figure 4: below explores the balance between the 'push' and 'pull' provision of learning.

As one looks around different firms it is possible to see that learning and development activities have been designed in different ways because of this tension. Accenture, for example, has a primarily 'push' style which matches it's culture and it's ethos of a 'one firm firm' while Ernst & Young has a strongly 'pull' style matching its more diverse style.

Clearly, there is no universal 'best fit' in designing learning and development for professionals. What is possible in one firm may never be replicated in another. The competitive and independent nature of the professionals who work in these firms means that the point of balance between 'push' and 'pull' is always a moving target.

Figure 4: Push and Pull Learning



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Article 2

Creating a Competency Framework – the principles and pitfalls

So you want to develop a competency framework? Where do you start?

Step one: Be clear about why you want it

Competency Frameworks have many business benefits. A well-constructed framework will:

- Create clarity and transparency about what is expected of lawyers at different career levels. This will deal with activities they do and the skills they need in order execute those activities well
- Create a foundation on which to build selection, talent management, development and performance-management processes
- Enable accurate analysis of training needs thereby ensuring that training is focussed and relevant
- Assist change and development of culture and business focus

However, trying to sell a 'catch-all solution' to partners can be difficult. It is important to be very focussed and clear about exactly what you want your Competency Framework to deliver to the business. For example, Berwin Leighton Paisner identified the need for a Career Development Framework as a cornerstone of their award-winning project on career management. Because the framework had a focussed business purpose with a clear application, the firm bought into the concept and fully supported it. That framework can now be applied across other areas of the firm such as:

- Selection
- Training
- Development
- Performance appraisal
- Induction and transitioning lateral hires

Step two: Get sign-off for excellent technical advice

Competency Frameworks look simple – that is why they are easy to use and apply to the business. However, the construction of the framework needs expertise to ensure that the right data is collected, the right approach is taken for buy-in, the principles of design are applied and the final framework is fit for purpose. It may be cheaper – but it is rarely wise - to coble a framework together and send it out unless you have in-house technical expertise. There are too many technical pitfalls, such as confusing activities with skills, poor definitions or complex structures that will make your framework very hard to turn into a usable foundation for either HR or training solutions.

Step Three: Select your advisor well

There are many consultancies and consultants who claim expertise, but be sure to select one that knows the legal sector and how such frameworks work within a firm. Also important is the style of the consultancy. Pick a consultant who works as an extension of your team not as the 'Competency Guru'. The framework should support the strategy of HR and L&D in the firm – not advance the consultant. Be aware that many consultancies sell a Competency Framework which really is a pathway to larger IT solutions such as HR Databases. This may be right for

you, but check that the framework will meet your needs, your culture and your strategic objectives.

Step Four: Design with your firm's strategy and style in mind

Before embarking on any data collection, have an in-depth design meeting to agree approach, deliverables, style, logistics and timeframe. A functional competency framework should be linked to the strategic goals of your firm and must drive those goals by focussing people on the activities and skills required for success. In addition, the style of the Competency Framework needs to reflect the style and culture of the firm – or the firm you want to be. A good legal Competency Framework must be in the language of the firm, the terminology of the firm and be constructed from the words used by those who contributed to it. Off-the-shelf products rarely work – lawyers see them as 'not relevant to us' and put them back on the shelf to gather dust!

Step Five: Create buy-in by inclusion

The more people involved in creating the framework, the more people will feel ownership and the better the buy-in. Data gathering for the framework should include as many people as possible, within time and cost parameters, at all relevant levels. Data can be gathered through interviews and focus groups. To reduce costs and ensure transfer of skills, ask your consultant to train your HR and L&D professionals in data gathering techniques then have the consultant monitor for quality and depth of output.

Be strategic when deciding who to interview. Make sure you include 'champions' who will help you 'sell' the framework internally. Just as important – include those who may be negative towards the project. They are very likely to identify with their own words and input and thus become a positive force in the framework implementation

When your consultants design the Competency Framework from the data gathered ensure they are appraised of any sensitivities. Be very much involved at this stage to ensure that the output is what you want.

Step Six: Roll out and act fast

The consultants should deliver a draft framework for you to review, adjust and amend with their guidance and help. This process should be as quick as possible to ensure that all the people who contributed to step five are not left wondering what happened to their time and effort. Try to have it finalised within a month of data collection.

Once finalised, the Competency Framework needs to be rolled out to the firm. Where possible this should be through a series of briefings which not only promote the Competency Framework but also educate the lawyers in how it will be used to make improvements for them. Essential to success at this stage is to engage your champions in raising the profile of the Competency Framework.

Finally, turn your Competency Framework into a solution as fast as you can. The sooner the framework is seen to deliver business results and drive performance the more you get from your investment.

Gwenllian Williams is a Director of deWinton-Williams Consulting Ltd. which delivers consultancy to the legal and financial sectors. Their services include competency frameworks, selection systems, training solutions and development projects. If you want to talk about competency frameworks or any other project call deWinton-Williams on 0207 372 4997

Article 3

DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS – A FASHIONABLE TREND OR A CATALYST FOR PROGRESS?

WHAT ARE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS?

Development frameworks seem to have become the new ‘must have’ in law firms. Is this simply a current fad or are they actually useful?

Development frameworks set out the standards or competences expected from people within a firm at each stage of their career development. If properly constructed and properly used a development framework becomes the solid foundation and platform for the firm’s training and HR strategy. A development framework provides:

- objective standards against which performance can be measured for development and ongoing improvement;
- the opportunity to plan training to focus and make the most of resources;
- a structure on which to base rewards for performance against objective standards;
- assistance in recruiting people with the appropriate level of knowledge and skills;
- a recognised pathway for developing people within the firm and,
- a way to ensure people have the right knowledge and skills to take the firm’s business strategy and objectives forward.

HOW CAN YOU MAKE IT RELEVANT?

A successful framework must be relevant and specific to the firm, be immediately applicable and user friendly to the individuals within it. The framework should reflect the firm’s values and business objectives and make clear what is expected of the individuals covered by it at each stage of their careers.

The standards (or ‘competences’) need to be clear enough to provide certainty with sufficient flexibility to allow for individuals with different strengths. The framework may set the minimum standard desired by the firm whilst recognising that individuals may excel in certain areas. For example, the framework may include minimum standards for a lawyer in client care, legal advice, managing a team. The individual may be an impressive lawyer and magnificent with clients but may not be a great people manager. The framework and/or the guidance and materials based on it should be flexible enough to ensure that, whilst the lawyer can be measured against the minimum standard for managing others, the system can formally recognise the excellent legal and client skills. This may be done by guidance in appraisal or in the framework itself by providing standards to reflect excellent, good, satisfactory, needs development and disappointing performance. If the different levels are not recognised in some way then individuals will not necessarily find the framework relevant to them. Furthermore, if it appears that the minimum standard is acceptable in all areas there is no motivation to excel. It is a question of finding the right balance.

GETTING BUY IN

In my experience, one of the most important contributors to success is to ensure buy in from **everyone**. This means that the partners must support it and see it as worthwhile. If those at the top do not ‘own it’ then no one else will bother. The individuals involved must find it clear, relevant and unambiguous. It should inform all the developmental activities in the firm and be referred to in all relevant material e.g. appraisal documentation. The process of developing and using the framework must be transparent. This entails ensuring that there is sufficient

information disseminated in the most appropriate way before it is developed, whilst it is being developed and once it is being used.

It is particularly important to ensure people are kept informed at the earliest stages to make sure it becomes embedded in the firm in a positive way. It is easy to create an atmosphere of resistance. It is not enough, for example, to inform members of the firm that consultants are coming in to talk to them about the knowledge and skills needed to do their jobs without explaining the reasons for the proposals and the anticipated benefits. The potential for success may be further limited from the outset if some of the partners have not been involved in the planning process and feel excluded. Not surprisingly, in these circumstances, those developing the framework may be met with suspicion and time is needed to break down barriers before the constructive work of building up the framework can start.

STRUCTURE AND CLARITY

Development frameworks include knowledge, skills and behaviour. There are various ways to structure a framework and to present this information, for example:

- Setting out excellent/good/satisfactory/development needed/disappointing performance.
- Setting out standards or competences with underpinning knowledge.
- Including the range of situations in which the standards might apply.
- Setting out standards or competences that incorporate knowledge, skills and behaviour.

You need to decide the structure that works for you, your people and your firm.

However the framework is structured it is essential it is easy to follow and it uses clear language. If people do not understand and/or do not recognise where they fit in they will become nervous about the framework and how it will be used. They may be concerned that it is not going to be used positively for development but may be used against them. The framework will be viewed negatively and with suspicion and may end up not being used at all.

ACHIEVING SUCCESS – A BALANCING ACT

From my experience, developing a framework to have the right ‘look and feel’ for the individual firm and people is notoriously difficult. Getting it right is the fundamental challenge and makes the investment in time and design all the more satisfying as it evolves with the changing dynamics and business strategies of the firm. In my view, if introduced well, development frameworks are more than a fashionable trend and can indeed be a catalyst for innovation, change and, ultimately, success.

TOP TIPS – MAKING DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS A SUCCESS

Here are a few tips for developing a framework:

- Make sure that you have support and buy-in from the key decision makers.
- Link the framework with the firm's business strategy, ethos and values to make it relevant i.e. it should not be a stand-alone initiative.
- Raise awareness: communicate effectively with everyone. Do not assume people understand the purpose of the framework.
- Regular updates: keep everyone informed from day one about what is being done and how it will affect them.
- Decide on the structure and the terminology and stick to it.
- Make the wording clear and immediately relevant to individuals in the firm.
- Consult on the draft so people feel included and its relevance is tested.
- Make the framework as flexible as possible, treat it as a 'living' document. Review it regularly and keep it up to date to maintain its relevance.
- Make sure that all material and procedures relating to development and performance relate back to the framework e.g. appraisal documentation, reward/bonus schemes.
- Provide guidance on evidence to support the standards in the framework so people understand how they apply. This will ensure consistency of interpretation and implementation.
- Make sure everyone uses it i.e. there are no 'opt outs'.
- Ensure there is appropriate training for those using the standards e.g. those conducting appraisals.

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Article 4

Enabling or restraining excellence? - can development frameworks work in law firms?

Development frameworks: the very phrase conjures up images of bureaucratic, inflexible structures and hierarchies traditionally associated with large corporates. But CIPD research shows that competency frameworks (an essential component of any development framework) are embedded in 60 per cent of organisations and another 20 per cent are planning to introduce one in the next two years. Development frameworks exist to harness the talents of individuals and help them perform and progress. The benefits will come in the form of more motivated, secure, loyal, capable, confident people who are more able to make an ever increasing contribution to the business.

Within the legal sector, many partners I talk to value the lack of hierarchy, the "friendly, informal atmosphere" in partnerships. But does this provide associates with what they need to progress? The foundations of the traditional development framework in law firms consist of the master -apprentice relationship (partner - trainee/ associate) and years served post qualification (PQE). This model can be hugely effective assuming the quality of recruits, the quality and consistency of workflow and the quality of working relationship between partner and trainee/ associate. As law firms have grown in size, this traditional approach with all its dependencies has not been sufficient to develop and retain on a consistent basis the pool of talent. Whilst the concept of path to partnership has always been there, what's often been lacking is meaningful dialogue about development - about career goals, work objectives, the all important feedback on performance. At worst a capricious development environment can emerge where progress and fulfilment of potential depends on luck, in terms of who you work with, the quality of their deal flow and their commitment to coach and develop junior lawyers.

Moreover, younger generations of lawyers have grown up and been educated in a less deferential, more questioning society. They tend to expect more information about the business they are in and more transparency about career paths and opportunities open to them. The expectations of associates today are very different from those of previous generations. In order to motivate and retain young professionals, law firms need development frameworks that offer greater certainty of continuing opportunities to learn and progress. The challenge is to implement a more systematic, transparent and consistent approach to development whilst retaining essential characteristics of the partnership culture where individuality and flexibility are valued.

In recent years law firms have been talking more about talent management and the value of different career streams. The best firms have belatedly embraced the concept of an integrated approach to career development and put it at the heart of HR strategies and processes.

There are five core dimensions to this integrated approach:

- A culture that encourages challenge, responsibility, open dialogue and feedback
- A career path that shows individuals how they progress from trainee to partner and what they have to do to achieve excellence at each stage of development
- A performance management system that incorporates the agreement and review of objectives as well as a formal opportunity for acknowledging contribution and discussing performance in the context of career goals
- Focused training opportunities that prepare individuals for increased responsibility and provide them with the skills and knowledge to give them the best chance of success
- An equitable remuneration system that rewards people for their contribution

Top Tips for successful implementation

If those are the core dimensions, then these are the lessons drawn from various firms' implementation of an integrated career development framework.

- Align career paths and resourcing strategies with the business strategy and needs of the firm
- Interview influential and respected partners to identify and document what excellence means at different stages of development
- Don't underestimate the value of promotional steps in motivating and retaining high performers
- Recognise and value contribution and ensure underperformance is dealt with promptly and fairly
- Keep training relevant, valued and business-focused by involving partners and senior fee earners in developing and delivering training
- Ensure all documentation used to support performance reviews is simple and supports key principles of continual learning and progression
- Consult and communicate extensively with the business to build support and ownership for all development initiatives

Monitoring and refinement

It is important to monitor the effectiveness of development strategies to keep them relevant and identify appropriate change.

- Incorporate development strategies in recruitment literature and monitor acceptance rates during the recruitment process
- Review your development and competency framework every two - three years to monitor the upward shift in the capability of lawyers (the same principle can be applied to support staff)
- Adapt your training programmes and all development initiatives to respond to the increasing capabilities of your staff and the changing needs of the business
- Monitor attrition rates and the reasons for attrition through exit interviews
- Initiate staff surveys or discussion groups to gain qualitative feedback from staff about what they need to progress and maximise their potential and contribution
- Establish regular opportunities for reporting progress and discussing change with the business to ensure development is always aligned to business strategies and needs

The legal sector attracts outstanding young professionals who are innately ambitious and driven to achieve excellence. However, major firms report attrition rates of up to 25% at the 3 years' PQE stage. Many of those defecting leave the legal professional altogether – a colossal waste of talent and investment. Getting the salaries right may avoid some dissatisfaction but this alone will not be enough to retain the best people and differentiate firms in the recruitment market. A systematic, transparent and integrated, development strategy does not detract from the benefits of the traditional on-the job learning experience, but will provide greater certainty that the talent of young professionals is nurtured and harnessed for the benefit of the business as a whole.

Ann Marie Cooper

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