



Tales (Not Tails!) from Veteran Cat Herders: *How to Succeed as a Law Firm Administrator*

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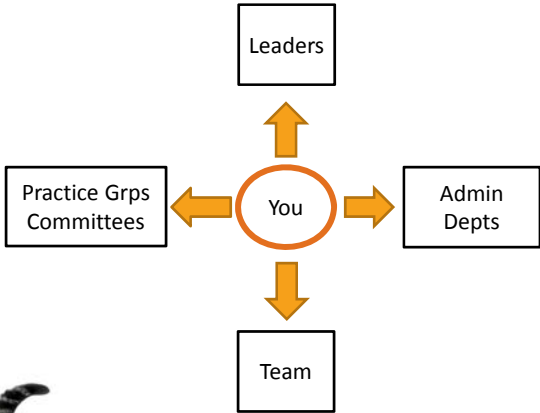
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What To Expect

- Introductions
- Table Talk Exercise
- Managing Up
- Managing a Team
- Managing Across the Firm
- Managing Yourself
- Questions?



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graph TD; You((You)) --> Leaders[Leaders]; You --> Admin[Admin Depts]; You --> Team[Team]; You --> Practice[Practice Grps Committees];
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Table Talk: Herding Tips

At your tables:

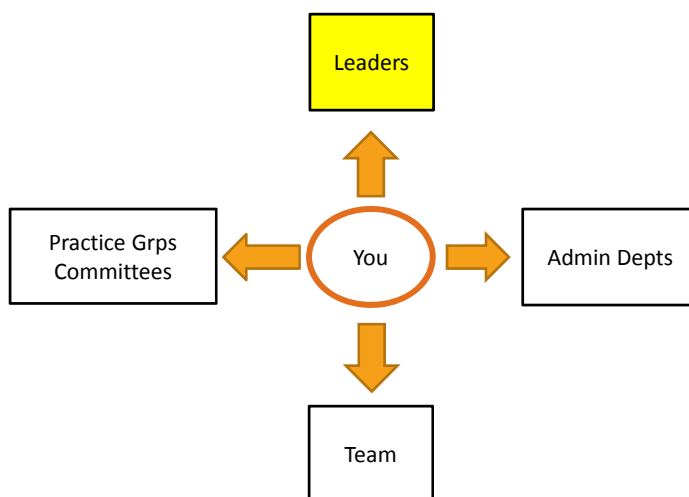
- Briefly introduce yourselves
- Share your best tips for managing up, managing a team, managing across the firm or managing yourself
- One person from each table will report back the best tips



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Managing Up



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Managing Up

What is Managing Up?

- Managing up is a method of career development that is based on consciously working for the mutual benefit of yourself and your supervisor.
- It doesn't mean avoiding work, rebelling, kissing up or trying to turn the tables on a higher-up, but instead understanding your boss's position and requirements and making yourself known as a stellar employee by exceeding her expectations and need.

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Managing Up

- Who Do We Manage Up To?
- Managing Partner
- COO/CHRO
- Other Chiefs, Directors and Managers
- Committees and Chairs
- Practice Group Leaders

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Managing Up

- How to Manage Up Effectively and with Impact
- Observe communication styles – match and mirror
- Put yourself in their place - get to know them
- Support strengths, don't search for weaknesses
- Anticipate and pitch in
- Stay strong and keep up a positive attitude
- Define success and expectations
- Understand the politics and maneuvering

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Managing Up

Can You Give Feedback to Your Boss(es)?

YES!

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Managing Up

- How Do You Give Feedback? (very carefully!)
- Your intentions must be good
- You must have the desire to help your boss
- Ask if they would like feedback – are they receptive
- Focus on your view and not background noise
- Talk about ways to improve the situation, project, relationship

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Managing Up

- What WILL Happen if Managing Up Goes Wrong
- Friction
- Mutual understanding erodes
- Disengagement
- Loss of opportunity and development
- Loss of job

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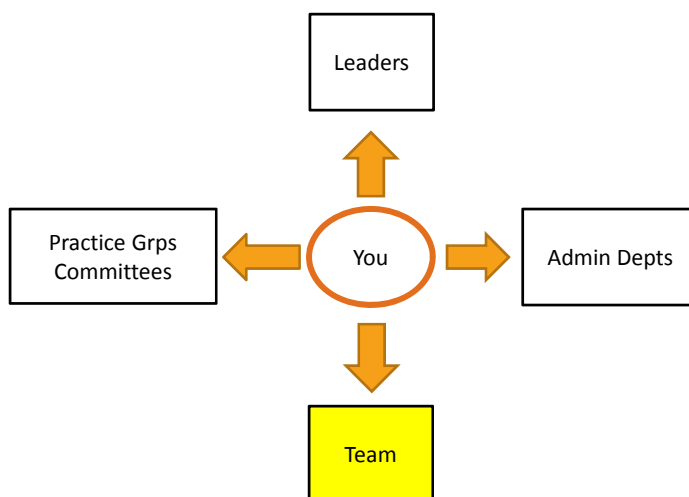
Managing Up

- Checklist for Working with New Bosses
- Set a schedule for check ins
- What are the priorities?
- Do they want to be copied on all communications?
- What is their preferred method of communication?
- Come with solutions not problems
- You add value and here's how

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Managing a Team



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Managing a Team

- Aim for no more than 7-8 direct reports
- Hire the best people
 - “Hire your replacement”
- Thoroughly integrate new team members:
 - Explain priorities and set clear expectations
 - Outline work style – “Guide to me”
 - Get to know them
- Agree on clear goals
 - Maintenance, incremental improvements, game-changers
 - Scheduled 1-on-1’s (especially if remote)

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Managing a Team, ctd.

- Develop your team
 - Put them in a position to stretch and succeed
 - Cross-office and cross-department projects
 - Make them look good; give them credit for successes
 - Have their backs -- take blame and give cover
- Give regular feedback
 - In-the-moment if agreeable
 - Debrief after large projects
 - Take notes on performance for end-of-year review

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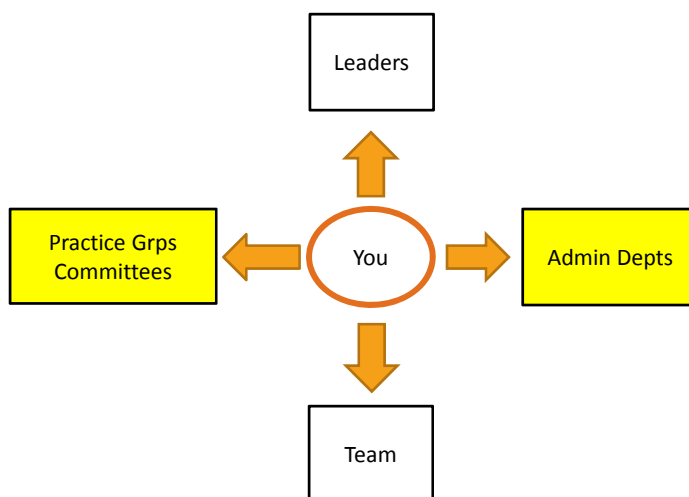
Managing a Team, ctd.

- Reward high performance with:
 - Thanks and recognition
 - Increased responsibility
 - Increased visibility to your superiors
- Address performance issues quickly and decisively

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Managing Across the Firm



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Managing Across the Firm: Committees

- Understand the committee purpose/your role
- Develop committees the way develop lawyers
 - Evaluate/assess the committees
 - Set SMART goals for the committees
 - Assign individual responsibilities
 - Raise the committees' profiles
 - Empower and reinvigorate the committees
 - Champion, reward and sponsor the members

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Managing Across the Firm: PGs

- Learn who, what, where, how
- Learn the goals and dynamics
 - Written business plan or other formal targets?
- Align your function to these
- Cultivate champions
- Meet in person where possible
- Proactively provide information and resources

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Managing Across the Firm: Attorneys

- What's in it for them? Can you take work off their plates?
- Have solutions, not problems
- Pay attention to detail
- Know their pain points
- Know their goals and show them how you will help achieve those goals
- Be responsive
- Communicate concisely, clearly, crisply and professionally

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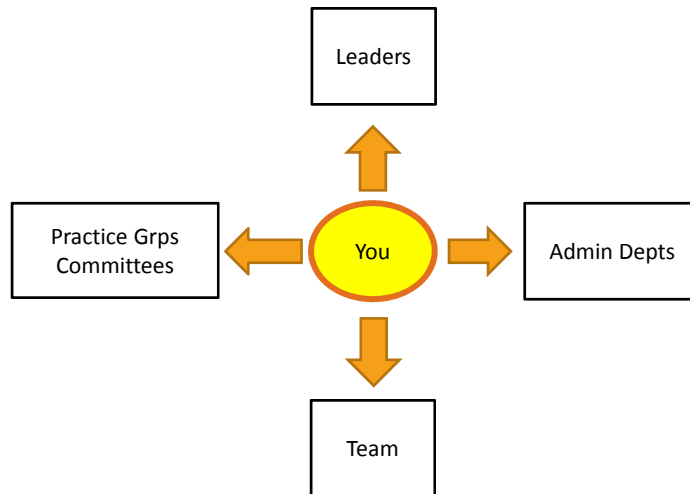
Managing Across the Firm: Peers

- Collaborate well
 - Platinum rule
 - All on the same team
 - Understand peers' goals and pressures
- Meet regularly
 - Standing meetings
 - Cross-functional projects
- "Be nice..."

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Managing Yourself



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Thank you!

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