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Diversity and Professional Development: Strategies and Tactics that Really Work!

December 6, 2012



Diversity and Inclusion Defined

- What's included in the term diversity and why?
- What does inclusion mean?
- Pros and Cons of various approaches

FOCUS ON THE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION VALUE PROPOSITION

--Why Diversity and Inclusion considerations should be an integral part of your professional development strategy

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The Value Proposition (Law Firm)

- Law firms become better advocates because of the diversity of approaches to matters
- Law firms can recruit a broader range of talent
- Attrition rates may decrease
- Not only the right thing to do but business development is enhanced by a more diverse law firm

The Value Proposition (Client)

- Clients like exchanging best practices on diversity and inclusion with their outside counsel
- Outside counsel surveys measure D&I
- Law firm retention decisions can be influenced by D&I considerations
- Both dollars generated and hours worked by diverse lawyers matter

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FOCUS ON THE ASSOCIATE

--Associates should be advised that they must self-invest

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Make sure associates self-invest

- Take ownership
- Meet benchmarks
- First impression is paramount
- Become a first-choice associate
- Develop relationships
- Get out of his/her office

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FOCUS ON THE PARTNERS

---They are the keys to a diverse and inclusive environment

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The Partners

- Diversity commitment in time and effort should be a compensation consideration
- Diversity and inclusion education is important for all partners with management responsibilities
- Partners with management responsibilities should be held accountable for diversity and inclusion metrics within their area

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FOCUS ON THE ASSIGNMENT PROCESS

----Both the quality and the quantity of work matters

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The Assignment Process

- Practice Group Effort
- Transparent to Diverse Associates
- Monthly focus on hours, type of work and how diverse associates are progressing
- Goal: equal access to opportunities

FOCUS ON THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

Mentoring Relationships-Pros and Cons

- Formal vs. Informal Programs
- Diverse Associate Targeted Efforts
- The Matching Process
- Goal: An even playing field for all

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FOCUS ON THE EVALUATION PROCESS

--Both Associates and Partners Need Education on the Evaluation Process

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Evaluations

- Work with Partners to teach them how to prepare constructive evaluations
- Work with Associates to teach them how to prepare self-evaluations
 - How to self-promote appropriately
 - How not to self disclose every error
- Work with Associates to teach them how to receive a constructive evaluation

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AFFINITY GROUPS AND AFFINITY ORGANIZATIONS

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Affinity Groups and Affinity Organizations—An Inclusion Strategy

- The role internal affinity groups play
- Number and types of affinity groups
- Structure for internal affinity groups
- Partnerships with external affinity organizations
- Affinity groups as a business development opportunity

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FOCUS ON CLIENT RELATIONSHIPS AND BUILDING THOSE SKILLS

--It matters in more ways than you may think

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Client Relationships

- Create opportunities for your diverse associates to meet your clients
- Teach your diverse associates how to network
- Include diverse associates in pitches but be sure to use them on the matters retained as a result of those pitches

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