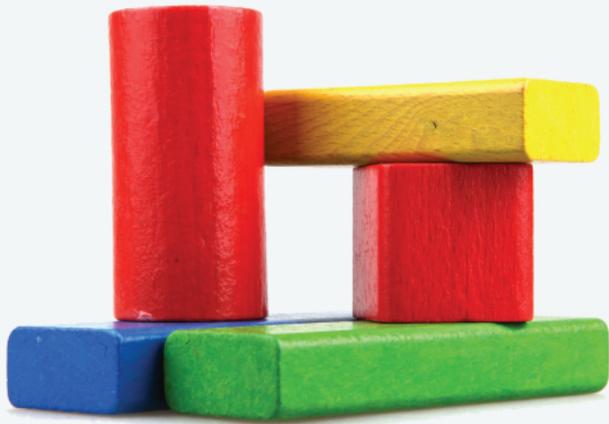


How to build a leader



Legal services is one of the few sectors where the practitioners can both lead and continue to practise. But with so much else going on, really honing those leadership skills often falls by the wayside until further down the line. It's easily done, but law firms are now waking up to the value of training and developing good leaders from the outset. In the first Best Practice Series of this year, representatives of the Wibl group's gold member firms explain how they're creating the best.

Arthur Cox

By HR director **Ruth D'Alton**

The firm takes concrete steps to develop future leaders. This is done by both investing in the partnership through traditional educational methods, and by giving people roles and responsibilities that help them to develop management and leadership skills.

The firm has engaged with the Judge Business School to run a mini-MBA series for lawyers which has been offered to all partners. Take-up has been high and the response has been very good. There is also a formal senior associate development programme in place. A third part of the programme has been the running of Talent Strategy days with the partners in

each department, which involves reviewing the future pipeline of associates so the most promising associates are given due opportunity to develop.

In addition to formal programmes, and their normal duties as partners leading their groups, the firm has a principle of assigning partners to a variety of committees and responsibilities including, but not limited to, pricing, trainee development, social, risk, IT, client experience, information governance. They also partake in formal mentoring programmes for associates. All of these additional responsibilities ensure that they become leaders in all areas of the business, not just in their particular practice area.



Ruth D'Alton

DLA Piper

By international learning and development senior manager **Barbara Philpott**

At DLA Piper, we believe that effective leadership is key to achieving our firm's vision to be the leading global business law firm. We recognise that it is only our people who can make this happen, through serving clients competently, genuinely and enthusiastically; and it is our leaders who will engage and develop our people to enable them to deliver this top quality client experience.

Our Career Academy delivers a number of programmes covering a whole range of management and leadership skills, supporting people as they progress their careers with us, from graduate to lawyer and ultimately as they step up to become leaders and partners of the firm. The programmes range from two days to a week, and those taking part are taught core tools and techniques for business development, teamwork, financial management and leading others. Sessions are led by experts in their fields, often senior DLA Piper lawyers or executives, in workshop and simulation environments. Our Career Academy

Whatever an individual's role or career level they can and need to demonstrate leadership

programmes also provide delegates with the opportunity to meet colleagues from across the global firm and to build valuable and lasting relationships.

In addition to formal learning programmes we develop and support our leaders in a number of other ways through our integrated talent framework and promotions process, global new partner induction and new partner



Barbara Philpott

mentoring and support.

Whatever an individual's role or career level they can and need to demonstrate leadership, so our approach to leadership development is tailored to provide individuals with the support relevant to them at each specific stage of their career.

Shearman & Sterling

By counsel **Helen Cook**

Being resourceful, enterprising and open to embracing challenges will go a long way in opening doors on the path to leadership. However, differentiating yourself through a personal scheme and being willing to create and navigate your way through less obvious paths can facilitate unexpected opportunities to lead.

For most of my career, I've been focused on the international nuclear energy sector – a niche and particularly male-dominated sector, with few people in the industry, including legal practitioners, who are young women (or Australian!). It is challenging to try to find tracks to leadership in these circumstances.

Having mentors who pushed me beyond my comfort zones early on in my career has helped to develop my profile in the nuclear field. When I was just starting out in this area of law, a mentor at a previous firm asked "Why don't you write the book that would have been useful to you?" So I did – I wrote a legal textbook. It took three years to write it, and more

Step up and take on those challenges – even if the opportunity seems, at the time, out of reach

weekends than I'd like to admit, but it established my personal position as a thought leader. The Law of Nuclear Energy was published in 2013 with a second edition coming out next year. It is the only book of its kind in the international market.

To women working to establish themselves as leaders in their field, I'd say step up and



Helen Cook

take on those challenges – even if the opportunity seems, at the time, out of reach. In doing so, don't be afraid to do something personal and different – even if it is a little daring or bold.

White & Case

By EMEA director of people development **Simon Walker**

Leadership skills at White & Case are developed principally through our 'milestone' programmes, together with a programme of standalone training events and coaching and mentoring opportunities.

Our milestone programmes are tailored training programmes that are organised based on career level and region. The programmes provide important opportunities for peer groups of associates to receive training, at the same time as getting to meet and work with their colleagues from different offices and practice areas to develop the personal relationships that underpin the firm's integrated approach to client service.

Working closely with our diversity team, we seek to weave content into the milestone programmes to address issues around gender and diversity in context.

In the design of our milestone programmes, we were strongly influenced by the work of Professor Herminia Ibarra, a professor of organisational behaviour at INSEAD and an ex-

We recognise there are different emphases at different stages of a lawyer's career

pert in professional development and leadership. We also recognise that there are different emphases at different stages of a lawyer's career. The initial focus of development is likely to be on their technical legal skills, although we encourage the most junior of our associates to take responsibility and be proactive in leadership where they can. More



Simon Walker

formal leadership skill training is specifically addressed in the programmes for more experienced mid-level and senior associates, while themes around leadership also appear elsewhere in the training available to our partners.

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