



Leadership in the Next Normal



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“The aim of management is predictability —
orderly results. Leadership’s function is to produce change.”

-Harvard Business School Professor Emeritus, John Kotter

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What we are going to cover



- History of leadership in law firms
- What makes a great leader
- Moving from the individual to the collective
- Creating a vision, mission and values that people want to be a part of
- Engage in inquiry on leading post COVID-19
- How to embrace change

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According to Dun & Bradstreet, what are the top 3 reasons businesses fail?



- Lack of access to capital
- Poor or no marketing plan
- #1 reason: Poor or lack of leadership

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What is the definition of a leader?



A leader is someone who:

- 1) Has followers
- 2) Inspires those who follow
- 3) Inspires those followers to create a world that has never existed in any other way before

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History of Leadership in Law firms



- 1971 The Association of Legal Administrators was created
- 1984 19% increase in the number of attorneys practicing over a four-year period
- 1990's What Dr. Larry Richard calls the "Businessification of Law"
- 2007 Release of the first iPhone
- 2007-'09 Great Recession
- 2020 Great Pause during COVID-19 & Black Lives Matter Movement protests and riots

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What makes a great leader?



- Having a vision which causes others to see the world differently
- Inspiring the followers to act
- Connecting the followers to the mission and to their role in the mission
- Caring about the team members
- Taking calculated risks
- Clearly communicating and instilling the vision, mission, and values
- Listening for the team's greatness, and trusting they want to do the best job possible

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How do you...



- Create a vision
- Inspire others to take action
- Enroll them

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How to foster leadership in your firm

- Get curious
- Train your leaders
- Increase firmwide EQ
- Be inclusive
- Set the example

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When instilling leadership, always remember the 3 “A’s”

- BE: Accountable
- DO: Articulate
- HAVE: Action

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“Organizations want to get to the accountability piece, but you can’t get there unless people feel empowered first. AND, if they don’t feel empowered, all they are are order takers. Order takers don’t take accountability.”

-Mike Abrashoff, Author of “It’s Your Ship”

Where is leadership missing in law firms?

- Willingness to take risks, stay relevant, and innovate
- Developing culture
- Training attorneys to be leaders in their respective practice areas
- Shifting from individuality to collectivism
- Having a clear mission that followers/team members feel they are a part of

What questions could we ask to foster great leadership at all levels in a law firm?

- What could I have done differently?
- What could you have done differently?
- What do you think?

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“In both law and accounting, what you sell is talent. The best talent is critical to both. The difference is that, for many reasons, it is easier for lawyers to move firms, and clients tend to be more mobile as well. That is a big difference. It emphasizes the historic individuality of the professional.”

-Beth Wilson, CEO Dentons' Canada Region

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What can law firm leaders learn from accounting and other service-based firms?



- Attracting and keeping the best talent by understanding what matters to the people in the workforce, as well as the talent entering the workforce
- Investing in technology
- Creating products in addition to services

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Inquiry



- What did leadership mean pre-COVID?
- What does leadership mean now?
- Who do leaders need to be in their organizations to navigate uncharted waters in the coming months and years?
- What are the biggest obstacles for leaders in this new normal?
- What are the biggest opportunities for leaders in this new normal?

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Breakout Groups



- What was the obstacle that you faced?
- Who were you being in the face of that obstacle?
- What feelings did you have about that obstacle?
- What thoughts or thought processes did you have?
- What actions did you take?
- What actions did you not take?

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Returning to the group



- Now that everyone has identified an obstacle and how they handled that situation, can you see that you survived it?
- Despite however difficult or messy that challenge may have been, it is important to acknowledge that you did survive it.
- Let's now add "**wonder**" to this problem

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What is wonder?

- won·der
- /'wəndər/
- *noun*
- **1.** a feeling of surprise mingled with admiration, caused by something beautiful, unexpected, unfamiliar, or inexplicable: "he had stood in front of it, observing the intricacy of the ironwork with the wonder of a child"
- *synonyms* [awe](#), [admiration](#), [wonderment](#), [fascination](#), [surprise](#)

Questions to move from individualism to collectivism:

- What do you like most about our firm?
- What do you like least about the firm?
- What would you change if you were the head of this law firm?

Ways to instill positive, lasting change:

- Discuss: what are 100 ways that we COULD have this work?
 - Play “Yes, and...” in all team meetings
 - Ask your firm, what are our key values? If you are not clear on your values or do not have defined values, create them!
 - Set the example by living those values
- *Companies who have a “Hero Factor” are value based AND operational based. They put people ahead of profits. These companies also gross more money, have happier employees, and customers who are more engaged.

Things to bring to your firm to create leadership

- Cohesive communication and synergy across divisions
- Executing safe strategies for reopening that leave team members empowered while remaining profitable
- Remote engagement
- Putting people first and having them feel supported, empowered and their voices heard
- Automating processes

Resources



ALA Podcast on White Paper on “The Changing Role of Law Firm Leadership”

<https://www.blogtalkradio.com/legalmanagementtalk/2019/12/02/the-changing-role-of-law-firm-leadership-with-jennifer-hill>

Podcast with Leadership Expert Jeffrey Hayzlett, author “The Hero Factor”:

<https://www.latalradio.com/sites/default/files/audio/Getjob-011320.mp3>

Forbes article on leadership post COVID-19

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/niharchhaya/2020/03/23/here-are-the-top-five-leadership-challenges-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/#748305db5984>

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Resources Continued...



Podcast interview with Mike Abrashoff, author of “It’s your Ship”

<https://www.latalradio.com/sites/default/files/audio/Getjob-121619.mp3>

White Paper on “The Changing Role of the Legal Secretary”

https://www.alanet.org/docs/default-source/whitepapers/the-changing-role-of-the-legal-secretary.pdf?sfvrsn=30ba45ab_10

White Paper on “The Changing Role of Law firm Leadership”

https://www.alanet.org/docs/default-source/whitepapers/ala-white-paper---september-2019.pdf?sfvrsn=bbb50ab_12

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Resources Continued...



Article on leading during & post COVID-19

<https://www.cio.com/article/3539313/ten-ways-tech-leaders-can-help-guide-the-way-during-covid-19.html>

Tut.com, 100 ways something could work

<https://www.tut.com/>

Yes, and... improvisation technique

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yes,_and...

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Radio show: "Get Yourself the Job"

<https://www.latakradio.com/content/get-yourself-job>

Weekly Meditations for the Coalition for Global Unity

<https://www.awaketvnetwork.live/coalition-for-global-unity-leaders-influencers>



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