

## Lessons in law firm leadership from an all-woman partnership

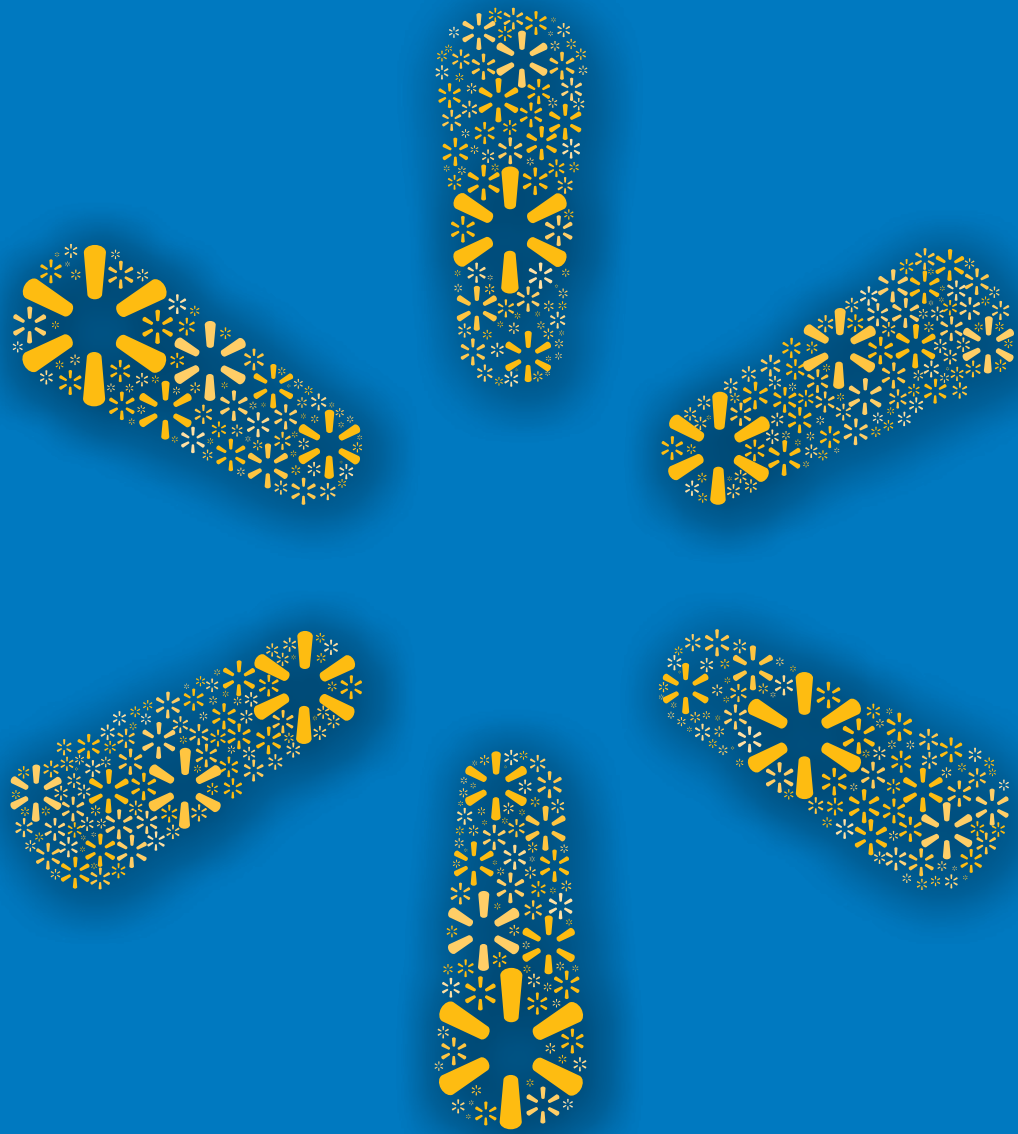
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Ms. Chubb is a registered patent attorney who focuses her practice on patent and trademark litigation involving software, medical devices, food products, consumer goods, and mechanical devices. With experience in trade secret and licensing litigation, patent and intellectual property licensing, and disputes related to such agreements, she advises clients on developing, enforcing, and maintaining patent and trademark rights in the U.S. and internationally.

Ms. Murphy's expertise lies in pharmaceutical litigation, where she has helped the firm achieve key victories in numerous cases for innovator clients. Her particular interests lie in the intersection of science, technology, and law and how these three areas influence the evolution of the pharmaceutical industry.

Ms. Chubb and Ms. Murphy join two women partners who currently lead FLH practice groups. Dr. Sandra Kuzmich heads the firm's life sciences practice and is a leading member of the firm's partnership. She also sits on the Federal Circuit Bar Association's International Series Committee and, most importantly, serves as a mentor to the firm's women associates. Marilyn Matthes Brogan heads the trademark group and dedicates her time to recruiting new talent. She is an active member in the International Trademark Association.

Dr. Kuzmich sums up the special contribution that FLH's female lawyers make to the firm and its clients: "The women attorneys at FLH are unique in that not only are they experts in the practice of intellectual property law, but they also have training—and in many cases practical experience—in a diverse range of scientific disciplines."

FLH proudly supports the professional development of its women attorneys as well as their involvement in the firm's management and in the legal community, as evidenced by its participation in and leading sponsorship of organizations such as the National Association of Women Lawyers.

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## About NAWL

The mission of the National Association of Women Lawyers is to provide leadership, a collective voice, and essential resources to advance women in the legal profession and advocate for the equality of women under the law. Since 1899, NAWL has been empowering women in the legal profession, cultivating a diverse membership dedicated to equality, mutual support, and collective success.

### BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

- Access to career development and continuing legal education programs at reduced member rates.
- Opportunities to build a national network via programs that bring women together, opening doors to an array of business development opportunities.
- Leadership development through NAWL committees, affiliations and strategic partnerships.
- Advocacy via NAWL's *Amicus* Committee, which reviews requests for participation as *amicus curiae* in cases of interest to NAWL members.
- Community outreach through Nights of Giving.
- Continued learning with the *Women Lawyers Journal*®.

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## Take heart; there are reasons to be encouraged

*Women are in focus and are part of our national conversation.*

**By Kristin L. Bauer**

**Many male leaders, including Mayor Mike Rawlings of my hometown of Dallas, are changing the conversation about violence against women, involving other men in efforts to change how we approach the problem and working visibly within their communities to effect change.**



DURING THE 2016 ELECTIONS, more than 50 years since passage of the Civil Rights Act, allegations of sexual harassment and sexual assault dominated media attention. Despite statistics that show women are gaining in positions of power and leadership, inside

and outside the legal profession, progress is disappointingly slow with respect to equality at the top. Regardless of your political sympathies, that our nation's first female presidential candidate from a major political party reached for that highest office and failed may seem a symbolic setback for women.

Take heart. There are reasons to be encouraged. A record number of women of color were elected to the U.S. Senate in November. The world's largest foundation – the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation – has focused on gender as a key component in reaching its goal

of eradicating disease and lifting the world's most vulnerable populations out of poverty. Many male leaders, including Mayor Mike Rawlings of my hometown of Dallas, are changing the conversation about violence against women, involving other men in efforts to change how we approach the problem and working visibly within their communities to effect change.

Within the legal profession, the ABA passed Resolution 113, creating a uniform diversity survey

for corporations to use with their outside counsel. The Resolution sends the message that, as purchasers of legal services, corporations are dissatisfied consumers – dissatisfied that law firms have not embraced gender balance and diversity to the degree that they and others have, and at all levels of the law firm model. The ABA also reset the norms for the ethical practice of law, adopting Model Rule of Professional Conduct 8.4(g), making it an ethical violation to knowingly discriminate or harass anyone on the basis of race, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status or socioeconomic status. To engage in such behavior now has not only legal, but also professional ramifications.

To echo the observation of NAWL's president, Leslie Richards Yellen, delivered at this year's Twelfth General Counsel Institute, women are in focus and are part of our national conversation. The prominence of digital and social media gives all communities a platform for a larger discussion about cultural norms, the role of bias – implicit and explicit – and their impact on opportunities for advancement. Beyond legal protections, until cultural norms change, and gender balance and diversity are embraced and valued in all respects – not only in aspiration, but in practice; not because we are compelled to do so, but because it is second nature to do so – progress will remain slow and incremental. ■



Kristin L. Bauer is a principal with the Dallas office of the national workplace law firm Jackson Lewis PC. Bauer represents management exclusively in workplace law and related litigation. In addition to handling an active employment litigation docket, she counsels management on preventive strategies, including termination decisions, investigations, employment agreements, non-compete and non-solicitation agreements, wage and hour laws, policies and handbooks, and other issues affecting the workplace. In addition to her current role as a board member for the National Association of Women Lawyers, Bauer has served as pro bono general counsel to The Family Place — a nonprofit agency serving the victims of domestic violence and their families—since 2005.





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## Gender equality is a realistic goal

*Unlike what the suffragettes experienced, many of the indifferent onlookers have joined the parade.*

**By Leslie Richards-Yellen**

AS NAWL PRESIDENT, I'M DELIGHTED – and extremely proud – that after 117 years, this wonderful organization of ours is more vital than ever – more committed than ever to advancing all women in the legal profession. Strongly woven into the very fiber of our organization is the tradition of women standing firmly for each other's success.

NAWL has been a dynamic organization since before women could vote. Its legacy has been assured by the leadership provided by an unbroken line of strong women leaders. Marsha Anastasia, our immediate past president, is one of the most gifted of these leaders. Although Marsha has a huge job as vice president, deputy general counsel – The Americas for Pitney Bowes, she works unceasingly towards gender equality. She is a visionary extraordinaire, organizer in chief, unabashed promoter of other women and a dear friend. Marsha is the epitome of the leader you look up to and trust as she has worked to make NAWL an even stronger organization.

And, of course, I have to thank Marsha's husband, Roger, and their children, Lauren, Eva and Nathan, for graciously sharing Marsha's time and talents with NAWL.

And while we are thanking wonderful people, I want to thank my own wonderful family for understanding the time it will take and applauding the result that we know it will create.

A few months ago, during NAWL's Atlanta program, I was thrilled by how our members are becoming proficient with the tools in their proverbial toolkits. Participants actually worked together and built a bridge that linked them together. The breakout

group was a brilliant microcosm of the wide range of talents, passion, and commitment of our members. The lawyers at my table included millennials new to practice, seasoned practitioners seeking capital partnership, a managing partner of a law firm and a woman who had recently restarted her career. I was struck by how each woman used her unique perspective to enrich the conversation.

As I think about women leading by example and helping each other, my mother is the first person that pops into my head. She was a social worker, not a lawyer. But her personal integrity, compassion, tireless commitment to her clients and to her community taught me everything I needed to know, not only about being a lawyer, but about the importance of contributing to society as a whole. I'm extremely lucky to have been the beneficiary of that powerful commitment to make a difference!

There's another wonderful woman, Professor Sheri Lynn Johnson, the winner of the 2016 M. Ashley Dickerson Diversity Award, who used the tools and experience she possessed to provide immeasurable and much needed support for me while I was in law school. Her unwavering belief in me helped tremendously when I questioned whether I actually "fit into" the legal world. She gave me the gift of her time, to share what she'd learned, an ear to listen to my hopes and dreams, doubts and fears and her heart to encourage me when I might have lost mine.

Thanks to my mother and Professor Johnson and their  
*cont. on page 10*



Leslie Richards-Yellen is director of Inclusion – Americas at Hogan Lovells. She previously served as Hinshaw & Culbertson's chief diversity and inclusion officer, in addition to her public finance practice, for almost a decade. Richards-Yellen has more than 30 years of experience as in-house counsel and in private practice. She was a member of the National Association of Bond Lawyers' Steering Committee. In 2014, she was appointed to the Illinois Supreme Court Commission on Professionalism and serves as the chair of the ISCCP's Diversity Committee. She is on the Boards of the Chicago Committee on Minorities in Large Law Firms, Cornell Black Lawyers Alumni Network, the Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation, as well as the Advisory Board of the Institute for Inclusion in the Legal Profession.

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*cont. from page 8*

unforgettable examples of commitment, will and courage, I was able to become a finance attorney – and to deliver on my commitments as Hinshaw & Culbertson’s chief diversity and inclusion officer.

The legacy of women standing for each other begins with NAWL’s suffragettes! They used their skills to advance effective strategies – whether it was

**The task that falls to us is to maintain the sense of urgency and energy that infused the suffragette movement by reimagining their protest in 21st century terms.**

marching under a blazing sun to support suffrage in front of an unsympathetic crowd – or by participating in hunger strikes evolving to NAWL working to address the unique challenges of our sisters in the minority and LGBTIQ communities.

There is an image of NAWL suffragettes taken in 1913 that resonates deeply with me. There are three central women in the image – dressed in stark, black robes. Wearing academic robes seems to be a strategy to force the world to acknowledge their professional status. These three remarkable women look straight into the camera, as if to size you up, with eyes that boldly hold your gaze and affirm their power – despite the span of 100 years.

Their unsmiling, determined faces make you reflect upon how much their efforts cost them on a professional – and personal – level. Their expressions reveal the acceptance that, although they will not reap the rewards of their efforts, nothing will keep them from continuing on their challenging path. Nothing. The only acknowledgement these women demand is that you become one of them – and use the tools you have to finish the job of advancing women under the law. Every subsequent generation of NAWL leaders – every one of us – seeks to be worthy of these magnificent women.

The torch that passed to us in 1913 is blazing – and melting away the lingering residue of history that would impede the ascendance of women in the law. The task that falls to us is to maintain the sense of urgency and energy that infused the suffragette movement by reimagining their protest in 21st century terms.

NAWL uses contemporary, as well as time-honored strategies. These include the NAWL “One-Third by

2020 Challenge” to increase the number of women in leadership positions; the “NAWL Challenge Club,” which connects corporations with talented women on track for equity partnership; and the “NAWL Survey” which holds the legal profession accountable for advancing gender diversity, while also highlighting the best practices to achieve our goal.

There is a strong business case for gender equality! Many women collaborate to broaden the prospects of the organizations that employ them to nurture relationships and to have unique networks. Let me say it in a different way: in the words of our fabulous immediate past president, “women make things better.”

There is much to celebrate. We can affirm that achieving gender equality is a realistic goal! Women got to this point by individually and collectively using the instruments at hand to make little – and big – changes. Women got to this point by using our muscle and grit to work toward changing institutions and laws. Women got to this point because our daughters and sons have been willing to stand with us, and carry the suffragette’s torch when we are no longer able. Women got to this point by collaborating with talented, enlightened men who help us challenge the gender status quo.

Will you join us? Will you use the tools at your disposal – whether it’s sponsoring NAWL, joining the “NAWL Challenge Club,” or working to increase the prospects and promotion of women in your organization? Or all three?

In 2016, unlike 1913, many of the indifferent onlookers joined the parade and the blazing sun has softened. At this moment in time, many more men and organizations are eager to play a part and swell the inevitable tide that will rush in to propel women to equality.

Will your deeds earn a spot for you at the joyous celebration that will be held at the end of the parade? Will you be there when women and men of all ages, races, sexual orientations and different abilities and disabilities install the suffragette’s torch at the monument that marks the end of the old world and the beginning of the new world – a world in which gender equality is a cornerstone?

I have no doubt you will. ■



Photos courtesy of **MPM Photography LLC**

## Join the Club!

The **NAWL Challenge Club** is welcoming new corporate legal department members committed to increasing the number of women equity partners in law firms. Join us at an upcoming networking event to learn more about the initiative, mingle with top female law firm talent, and catch up with your in-house colleagues. Do your part to increase gender parity in the profession while also building new business relationships and making connections.

Law firms gain access to the **NAWL Challenge Club** through memberships available to NAWL Sustaining Sponsors.

To learn more about the Club or Sustaining Sponsorship, contact **Caitlin Kepple**, NAWL's Marketing and Development Director, at [kepplec@nawl.org](mailto:kepplec@nawl.org).





# LESSONS IN LAW FIRM LEADERSHIP FROM AN ALL-WOMAN PARTNERSHIP

**How to build a workplace where it is possible to achieve goals efficiently, while still having full lives outside the office**

**By Susan L. Dawson**

**THERE'S BEEN A LOT OF TALK** in the legal press about the dearth of women in law firm leadership and what to do about it. At Waltz, Palmer & Dawson LLC, women are the leadership.

The Chicago-area firm, with a fast-growing \$2 million integrated family and business law practice, is something of a laboratory for creating a new model of firm management as three female named partners oversee a diverse staff of 15 professionals.

When we founded the firm, my partners and I were very focused on the idea that we would

have a different kind of organizational culture than a traditional law firm. We wanted to allow people the flexibility to live their lives, while still practicing law at a high level of professionalism and focusing on serving clients well. So we thought about what was important to measure; we set standards for how quickly you respond to a client and, of course, billable hour requirements to make sure we'd be productive enough for the firm to succeed financially. Once we established those measures, we set about building a workplace

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Susan L. Dawson is a partner and founder at Waltz, Palmer & Dawson, a full-service law firm in suburban Rolling Meadows, Ill. She focuses her practice on corporate and business matters, including litigation, real estate transactions and employment law. With a particular emphasis on the needs of manufacturing and industrial clients, Dawson is well versed in the issues facing business owners today, such as the need for effective succession planning and the importance of streamlined processes for global licensing and distribution agreements. Susan serves as a planning commissioner for the Village of Arlington Heights, Ill., and is the current president of the National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO) in Chicago.



## Wherever possible, business is paperless, so people are better able to work from home

where it would be possible for people to achieve their goals efficiently, while still having full lives outside the office.

Wherever possible, business is paperless, so people are better able to work from home, accessing whatever they need electronically. That's true for the attorneys and for the administrative staff.

People set their own hours. Attorneys get unlimited vacation time, as long as they are meeting their billing requirements.

It was important to communicate that this was not just about women or about people with kids. There are people in the office who aren't parents. They still have lives; they're equally deserving of flexibility. That principle – not making value judgements about how people use their time – is central to our culture. We don't separate a “mommy track” or “flex-time for working parents,” it's just how we all work. You can leave because you need to attend a school event or you can leave because it's a gorgeous day outside and you'd rather sit outdoors with your laptop than be in the office. If you don't have to explain or apologize or ask permission, there's no stigma attached.

That said, we value honesty and transparency as well as professionalism. So we ask people to be up-front about their needs, to communicate what their parameters are. We encourage someone to say, “I am home with a sick child today, so, while I can be on this call, there is a

possibility that I'll be interrupted.” Clients value that: we're demonstrating our commitment and offering them a choice to continue or reschedule. My perspective on this comes from my own experience. I can vividly remember shutting myself in my bedroom to take a call while my sick child was crying in the other room and I had to pretend that it wasn't happening. At the time, I thought that was what was necessary to serving

one's clients. Now, with more maturity and confidence, I see that I wasn't necessarily serving anyone well by being so conflicted and distracted. As someone who bills by the hour, I know my clients want my full attention when I'm with them. They deserve that.

So far, we have focused on enhancing efficiency and flexibility within the traditional billable hour structure. For the future, we are looking at moving away from that single unit of measure, and instead

evaluating our performance in profitability terms. We are also exploring the possibility of providing clients with alternative fee arrangements that emphasize performance over hours.

We consistently see returns on our policies in the form of increased productivity. When you treat people as the professionals they are, that's how they act. If someone takes time off in the middle of the day, they might work late into the night so they can still meet a deadline. As a partner in an office like ours, you have to have a lot of faith in your associates, that, even if you're not watching them work, they will deliver for

*We don't separate a “mommy track” or “flex-time for working parents,” it's just how we all work.*



you. This has made us perhaps more careful and thoughtful in who we hire. As a smaller firm, we're not in a position to just take a chance on someone. We have made a few mistakes and have hired employees who didn't work out, who mistook the flexibility for the opportunity to take days off and leave early and not ever make up the work.

In retrospect, we were very idealistic when we started out. Clearly, we are not the first firm to try to do things differently and we've certainly made mistakes. As a partnership, we have moments sometimes when we realize, collectively, there's a

reason other firms have a rule about that or there needs to be a written policy about this. We have to make sure the phone is covered. We have to have a rotation of work from home days, so that the office is not just completely empty on, say, summer Mondays and Fridays.

We were conscious of not recreating what we felt to be the unnecessary hierarchy of many law firms, but, initially, we over-corrected that. There is the notion that women leaders are more inclusive and egalitarian and, in a lot of law firms, it's often essential for a woman to be seen



## Attorneys get unlimited vacation time, as long as they are meeting their billing requirements

as the ultimate team player if she's going to join the ranks of leadership. Starting out, my partners and I embodied that. We were explicit that it was included in our jobs, as it was in everyone else's, to water the office plants and carry dirty dishes to the office kitchen.

I do remember the moment when that changed. I was coming out of an extremely stressful meeting with my partners – we were not making our numbers that month – and I walked into the kitchen and popped something into the microwave. An associate was standing there and, noticing that I hadn't covered my food before reheating it, she told me we should talk about setting up a rotating schedule for everyone to pitch in cleaning the microwave. I was thinking, "You're reminding me to cover my food and I'm worrying about how I'm going to pay your salary."

I'm learning now that because I am the boss and the buck does stop with me, I can't always be the good guy. That's a significant challenge for me as a woman leading a firm: To do what needs to be done, but also to wear the responsibility lightly enough that we can still have the culture we want. People will receive a lot of emails from me late

at night because that's when I sit down with my computer to get things done. I had an associate who, when she first started, felt like she had to respond to those emails as soon as she got them, so I'd get emails back from her at one o'clock in the morning. I had to be explicit about the fact that I was fine waiting until the next day for a response. I've stepped in and handled a client emergency on behalf of an associate because it was her daughter's fourth birthday and they'd made plans to celebrate.

It can't always be the case that our personal lives come first. We're a full-service firm with

many entrepreneurs and key business executives for clients. Sometimes work does come before family or even yourself. But we do provide more opportunities to put yourself and your family first than the traditional law firm.

In the beginning, we assumed that the workplace we were building would appeal only to women attorneys. As we've grown, though, we have hired a male associate who truly appreciates our culture as well. Our recruiting efforts are totally gender-neutral; we'd love to hire more men. We are, and aspire to continue to be, simply a great firm – and a great place to work, no matter who you are. ■

*I'm learning now that because I am the boss and the buck does stop with me, I can't always be the good guy. That's a significant challenge for me as a woman leading a firm: To do what needs to be done, but also to wear the responsibility lightly enough that we can still have the culture we want.*



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# DATA-DRIVEN ANSWERS TO ACCELERATE SUCCESS FOR WOMEN

How to identify and make the most of key differences in character, mindset and behavior that help women associates succeed in making partner.

By Lori Berman, Heather Bock and Juliet Aiken



**YOU'RE SMART. AND YOU WORKED HARD** in law school, preparing thoroughly both for class and exams. As a result, you earned grades as good as – if not better than – anyone else in your class. You know the law well and if someone read one of your briefs they wouldn't know if it was written by a man or woman. After all, you were trained the same way as all of the men in your law

school class; and you've succeeded by doing the right things – the same kinds of “right things” men do to get ahead. But to get ahead as a woman in a large law firm – to get promoted to partner – can you continue to do exactly as your male counterparts do, or do you need to take a different strategy to excel? On average, fewer than 20 percent of partners in large firms are women, so



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there must be something that 20 percent are doing differently, right?

Right. We conducted a large-scale empirical research study on the characteristics, mindset and behaviors that predict who in large, top-tier law firms will be promoted to partner, feel like they are flourishing in their career and stay healthy in the process. We surveyed and interviewed more than 300 lawyers. Our results, recently shared in full in *Accelerating Lawyer Success: How to Make Partner, Stay Healthy, and Flourish in a Law Firm*, published by the American Bar Association, show that while there are some consistent findings between men and women who make partner, male and female partners are not necessarily cut from identical cloth. Overall, we found a good amount of overlap between what men and women need to do to make partner. But the key differences that helped women succeed highlight where aspiring female associates might best focus their energy and, more importantly, adjust their mindset if they want to make partner. This article focuses on those differences.

Associates looking to get promoted to partner typically understand the importance of having strong working relationships. But what does that look like? For one, we found that lawyers who made partner in ten years or fewer were more likely to invest in relationships that are good for their career compared to lawyers who had been at a firm for 11 years or more without making partner. However, we found that the nature of these relationships was different for women and men. While both men and women who make partner strategically invest in relationships that are good for their career, women who make partner go the extra mile and form meaningful, authentic friendships at work. In other words, women who make partner prioritize interpersonal relationships in addition to working relationships. We also found that the importance of both planning and setting boundaries was different for men versus women.

### EMBRACING AND ENJOYING TEAMWORK

Lawyers are always working in teams to solve complex problems for their clients. While you may expect being a team player would be helpful if you are working in a big law firm, a preference for working in teams was

statistically significantly related to success for female but not male lawyers. In particular, 65 percent of women partners in our study said that they liked teamwork, compared to about 50 percent of female nonpartners and male lawyers (whether they made partner or not). In other words, a preference for teamwork affects female lawyers' chances of ascending the career ladder compared to men.

### STYLES OF RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

The types of relationships that female partners tend to build look different from their male counterparts and other women lawyers who did not get promoted to partner. The women who made the effort to connect with colleagues in a deep, authentic way and enjoyed making friends at the office were also the ones who were more likely to make partner. For example, nearly half of the female partners in our study told us they make friends at work, while fewer than 20 percent of female nonpartners and male lawyers (whether they made partner or not) said the same. Perhaps it makes sense that lawyers with a number of friends at work are likely to be selected as partners—they are valued in the office, and existing partners will take note of this when expanding their ranks. But why isn't cultivating friendships at the office, and not just collegial relationships, a similarly strong indicator for male partners?

The answer may lie in the tendency to stereotype women as either caring but incompetent or competent but cold.<sup>1</sup> Research on women in corporate America has found that to be successful in the workplace, women must find a way to be both warm and caring while remaining strong and decisive. In other words, competence and high-quality work are not enough for women to get ahead; they must also be likeable. Women exhibiting warmth without competence may be met with paternalism, while competence without warmth is often greeted with envy. To reconcile these

**Women who make partner prioritize interpersonal relationships in addition to working relationships.**

## Partners were more likely to say that they actually plan everything in advance and stick to those plans

positions, women must often balance cultivating workplace relationships and embracing responsibilities that establish their competence without appearing cold. In short, some traditionally feminine traits, such as making an effort to connect with colleagues in authentic ways and enjoying teamwork, are often more necessary for women seeking promotion than they are for their male counterparts.

### INFORMAL MENTORS

Female lawyers who are promoted to partner use these relationship-building skills for more than just making work friends. They are strategically used to foster mentoring relationships as well. Women who are promoted to partner are able to cultivate their own mentors, rather than relying on a formally assigned mentor by the firm. In our sample, 67 percent of female partners indicated that they had three or more helpful informal mentors while only 51 percent of male partners stated that they had as many. Perhaps more telling is that only 20 percent of women who had not made partner after over 11 years in a firm had more than three mentors. Why might this be? Often, women hoping to secure promotion

need to have both male and female mentors, with each serving different purposes.<sup>2</sup> For example, male mentors may provide access to resources and power, while female mentors are likely to know the obstacles less-experienced women will face or how to manage work-family balance. As such, women need to develop more mentors to achieve the same promotion as their male colleagues.

### SETTING BOUNDARIES

Another key characteristic that we found distinguished female partners was their ability to set clear boundaries throughout their career. Only 12 percent of female partners in our study reported struggling with setting boundaries, compared with 27 percent of female nonpartners, male partners and male nonpartners. This trait may be more important for women in part because they tend to take on more family and home-related tasks than men.

But setting boundaries is also important because making conscious choices on how they spend their time can impact the path and sustainability of their practice. For example, despite constituting only one-fifth of the partners in large law firms, at least one female partner in the firm is likely expected to take part on each committee, meaning that women may be asked to contribute their time more than men. Setting boundaries in this situation gives female lawyers a way to ensure that they devote a sufficient amount of time to all facets of their practice. Similarly, one female partner told us:

“If you have no boundaries, you will take whatever work walks in the door. But what comes in the door may not help you stretch your skills. The women who make partner figure out how to bob and weave in a polite way to keep options open because there are a limited number of hours and you are going to be tagged for a lot of things. Clients have to take up the biggest piece of the pie, so you have to know how to prioritize client demands. The women who make partner figure that out, or else you are drinking from a fire hose without any deliberation. In addition to women being asked to do more things, they are also more likely to volunteer. I have to literally tell myself

**Some traditionally feminine traits, such as making an effort to connect with colleagues in authentic ways and enjoying teamwork, are often more necessary for women seeking promotion than they are for their male counterparts.**

not to volunteer for something until it is something that actually matters to me.”

As this experience shows, if women hope to become partner, they should learn how and when to say “no,” not just when to say “yes.”

## PLANNING

On top of all this, creating and sticking to a plan also sets women partners apart from the other lawyers in our study. In particular, we found that while the majority of lawyers in our study said they are most

comfortable working with a well-prepared plan, the partners were more likely to say that they actually plan everything in advance and stick to those plans. And, female partners had a slightly easier time sticking to their plans than did their male counterparts. So, while all lawyers need to establish a plan if they hope to achieve promotion, it may be even more critical that women make, and stick to, such plans.



### WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Our findings suggest that the path to promotion looks somewhat different for female versus male lawyers. Female partners were more likely to embrace relationships with team members and informal mentors, make plans they could stick to and set boundaries when necessary. There are many behaviors and ways of thinking, however, that both men and women need in order to make partner. For example, we found that both men and women need to take actions and modify their thinking to be “masters of their own fate.” And, equal to being promoted to partner, it is important to feel like you are satisfied and flourishing in your career and to stay physically healthy. For some help with how to do that, you’ll have to read the book. ■



## ENDNOTES

- 1 Biernat, M. & Kobrynowicz, D. (1997). “Gender- and Race-Based Standards of Competence: Lower Minimum Standards but Higher Ability Standards for Devalued Groups.” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 72, 544–57; Biernat, M. & Vescio, T. K. (2002). “She swings, she hits, she’s great, she’s benched: Implications of gender-based shifting standards for judgment and behavior.” *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 28, 66–77.
- 2 Ibarra, H. (1992), “Homophily and differential returns: Sex differences in network structure and access in an advertising firm.” *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 37, 422–47.



# New Model Rule 8.4(g) makes knowing discrimination and harassment a black letter ethical violation

**It provides model language and sends an essential strong definitive statement about what is a minimum standard of conduct for all lawyers.**

**By Wendy Wen Yun Chang**

At the ABA's Annual Meeting in August, the House of Delegates passed Model Rule 8.4(g), making knowing discrimination and harassment a black letter ethical violation under the Model Rules of Professional Conduct (model rules). The rule's strong passage gave testament to the substantial effort that brought the

proposed rule, Resolution 109, to a successful vote on the House floor.

The pathway to the rule was neither fast nor easy. The rule, as passed, was the fourth official draft of the rule, which had gone through a two-year transparent and



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## New Model Rule 8.4(g)

It is professional misconduct for a lawyer to ... (g) engage in conduct that the lawyer knows or reasonably should know is harassment or discrimination on the basis of race, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status or socioeconomic status in conduct related to the practice of law. This paragraph does not limit the ability of a lawyer to accept, decline or withdraw from a representation in accordance with Rule 1.16. This paragraph does not preclude legitimate advice or advocacy consistent with these Rules.

collaborative effort. The Rule's sponsor, ABA's Standing Committee on Ethics and Professional Responsibility (SCEPR), started its work in May 2014 after SCEPR received a joint letter from the ABA's four Goal III Commissions: the Commission on Women in the Profession, Commission on Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the Profession, Commission on Disability Rights and the Commission on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity. SCEPR was tasked with developing a proposal to amend the Model Rules to better address issues of harassment and discrimination and to implement the ABA's Goal III, "Eliminate Bias and Enhance Diversity."

For two years, SCEPR went through an extensive national formal and informal comment process and continued to refine the rule based upon the ongoing conversation with numerous stakeholders. These extended efforts resulted in the fourth and final version of the rule released on August 3, and approved on August 8.

The Rule was, and continues to be, subject to significant debate and scrutiny. NAWL participated in the public support effort leading up to the vote, making a strong case for why a rule was needed. In its July 21, 2016, letter of support, NAWL wrote:

The amended Rule is necessary because explicit and implicit discrimination is still pervasive in our institutions as well as across a counsel table. Our members experience unequal pay for equal work, misogynistic comments and actions by opposing counsel, limited access to decision-makers, sexual harassment and objectification, inequitable reviews that lead to inequitable compensation, diminishing comments and behavior in meetings, and mistaken assumptions that undermine earned progression in the profession. Those who have experienced these instances of discrimination and harassment are the

ones whose careers are derailed, stalled or halted while the perpetrators continue to climb the ladder of success unimpeded in what is essentially an endorsement of their behavior.

A united coalition of the national minority bar associations, the Hispanic National Bar Association (HNBA), the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA), the National Bar Association (NBA), the National LGBT Bar Association (National LGBT Bar), and the National Native American Bar Association (NNABA), also submitted a joint letter, observing:

Our members regularly face discrimination and harassment in their day-to-day practice. There is a constant state of "otherness" that requires our members to justify their right to simply be an equal member at the bar or at the table. Far from a "presumption of competence,"<sup>1</sup> there exist

*SCEPR went through an extensive national formal and informal comment process and continued to refine the rule based upon the ongoing conversation with numerous stakeholders.*

requirements that our members demonstrate higher "objective" metrics to be taken seriously and/or to prove their value. These concerns play out in situations

## NAWL led one arm of the public support effort leading up to the vote, making a strong case for why a rule was needed

including, but not limited to, pay disparities and exclusion from case assignments, opportunities, development, sponsorship, or resources. Study after study has shown stagnant progress of women and diverse attorneys in the profession, against the backdrop of an America, and of a profession, that is becoming increasingly diverse. Unfortunately, diverse attorneys, already underrepresented in private law firms, have a disproportionately high attrition rate.

Ultimately, Rule 8.4(g)'s coalition of support before the vote included ABA Board of Governors, seven sections of the ABA, every standing committee in the ABA's Center for Professional Responsibility, five ABA

Rule 1.16. This paragraph does not preclude legitimate advice or advocacy consistent with these Rules.

On its face, the rule does not nullify application of Model Rule 1.16's provisions about declining, continuing or terminating a representation.

Comment 3 defines discrimination and harassment, and explicitly states that the substantive law of antidiscrimination and anti-harassment guides its application.

Comment 4 defines "conduct related to the practice of law," and requires a connection between the alleged conduct to the practice of law. It applies to anything that a lawyer may do in his or her professional capacity, which includes representation, legal employment and legal business-social events such as bar association events, etc. Comment 4 makes clear that Rule 8.4(g) does not apply to conduct and programs to promote diversity.

Comment 5 discusses exceptions. A trial judge's finding that peremptory challenges were exercised on a discriminatory basis do not, standing alone, establish a violation of 8.4(g). Comment 5 states a lawyer does not violate 8.4(g) by limiting the scope or subject matter of the lawyer's practice or by limiting the lawyer's practice to members of underserved populations in accordance with these rules and other law. Still further, a lawyer may charge and collect reasonable fees and expenses, and Model Rule 1.5(a) [fees] continues to apply.

The most significant changes to the final draft were the addition of a mens rea ("knows/reasonably should know") and the rewording/moving of the legitimate advocacy statement into the black letter of the rule itself, enlarging the scope slightly to apply to both legitimate advice (transactional) or advocacy (before a tribunal). The clause "consistent with these Rules" clarifies "legitimate."

Model Rule 8.4(g) is a very important step forward – but it is just a first step. It provides model language and sends an essential strong definitive statement about what is a minimum standard of conduct for all lawyers. As a Model Rule, it fosters uniformity. However,

*In the four months since Model Rule 8.4(g) was passed, mainstream media has reported positively on the legal profession's step to bring equality to the profession.*

divisions, and outside-ABA support from a large and unanimous coalition representing the national women's bar associations, and each of the major national affinity bar associations, representing a collective membership in the hundreds of thousands of lawyers.

As passed, Model Rule 8.4(g) provides:

It is professional misconduct for a lawyer to ... (g) engage in conduct that the lawyer knows or reasonably should know is harassment or discrimination on the basis of race, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status or socioeconomic status in conduct related to the practice of law. This paragraph does not limit the ability of a lawyer to accept, decline or withdraw from a representation in accordance with

the Model Rules are not self-executing, and must be adopted by each state to be enforceable in that state. The responsibility now turns to each state to take the next step to consider the rule, and either adopt a new rule or amend an existing one.

In the four months since Model Rule 8.4(g) was passed, mainstream media has reported positively on the legal profession's step to bring equality to the profession. And yet, negative articles continue to appear within the legal media, arguing that states should not adopt 8.4(g), asserting that a disciplinary apocalypse for innocent nonviolators is coming. Getting individual anti-discrimination and anti-harassment rules adopted

in each state – that are as protective as Model Rule 8.4(g) – will take some effort by lawyers on the ground in each state. This effort is not “just” a women’s issue. It is not “just” a minority issue. It is not “just” a progressive issue. Equality is a core American value. The right to self-regulate is a privilege that lawyers must exercise responsibly. NAWL’s July 21, 2106, letter provides that “[p]erhaps when the refusal to accept discrimination and harassment is literally written into the moral code of the legal profession, women and minorities will be fully accepted as colleagues, partners, bosses, and opposing counsel.” Perhaps. All eyes now pass to the states. ■

## ENDNOTES

- 1 Deborah L. Rhode, “Law is the least diverse profession in the nation. And lawyers aren’t doing enough to change that,” Washington Post, May 27, 2015.

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# Security at our fingertips

**Cyber security and data breaches are global concerns spread broadly across all industries.**

**By Debbie K. Hoffman**

NINETY PERCENT OF CYBER SECURITY ATTACKS ON ORGANIZATIONS use unique malware that create billions of dollars in cyber-crime related expenses and trillions of dollars in lost revenue opportunity. In fewer than five years, cyber-attacks will affect about 30 billion devices, such as tablets, smartphones and computers.<sup>1</sup> It is estimated that about 60 percent of security budgets will be allocated for response and rapid detection to those attacks.<sup>2</sup>

Companies and firms attempting to remain competitive are transitioning many aspects of their business processes to the cloud. This movement to the cloud has further brought the issue of cyber

security and data breaches front and center. These problems are not just isolated to one sector or industry but are, in fact, global concerns spread broadly across all industries.

## HACKER TRENDS

In the ordinary course of business, financial institutions, mortgage lending companies – and law firms – have many forms of personal information held on behalf of clients as well as employees, including Social Security numbers, tax returns, bank statements, driver licenses/government issued identification numbers and credit reports. Whether stored on the cloud or on company or firm servers, data hackers are seeking methods to access this information. They are able to access the data through both simple and more elaborate plans. As an example, in the case of the mortgage lending industry, companies all along the mortgage lifecycle could have data targeted by the hackers – including real estate agents, mortgage brokers, lenders, escrow agents, title companies, loan servicers – and the attorneys representing all of these companies.

Large, well-known companies falling victim to cyber attacks in the past few years have become commonplace. In 2014, J.P. Morgan experienced a breach in which the hackers, based outside of the United States, were able to access names, addresses, phone numbers and emails of J.P. Morgan account holders by obtaining a list of programs and applications that run on J.P. Morgan's computers. With this list hackers were able to find vulnerabilities in the programs and search for entry points into the firm's servers.<sup>3</sup> Hackers, however, are not just limiting themselves to large financial institutions, they also have moved to smaller companies such as DHI Mortgage, which experienced a breach in 2012.<sup>4</sup>

In February, the Federal Reserve Bank of New York was criticized for using antiquated cyber security practices when there was an unaccounted loss of \$81 million from the account of Bangladesh central bank held at the New York Fed. The method hackers used to take these funds was by fraudulent Society for

*In the ordinary course of business, financial institutions, mortgage lending companies – and law firms – have many forms of personal information held on behalf of clients as well as employees, including Social Security numbers, tax returns, bank statements, driver licenses/government issued identification numbers and credit reports.*

Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT) messages.<sup>5</sup>

Cyber attacks are evolving into an ever-increasing level of sophistication. For example, in the mortgage industry, hackers are now able to gain access to a customer's account and reroute the mortgage payments to offshore banks in a scam known as "the account takeover." In this scheme, the potential purchasers were sent an email by the scammer who identified himself as the real estate agent and advised of a change in wiring instructions. If the consumer wired the funds to the identified account, it was sent to the hackers' account.<sup>6</sup>

Companies that have become victim to data and cyber breaches are forced to spend an inordinate amount of time, energy and focus to repair their image and brand. In addition, they are spending billions of dollars in damages by repairing cyber infrastructure damaged by hackers, paying fines and penalties to regulatory agencies and the Department of Justice, and paying damages to consumers.<sup>7</sup> Meanwhile, the hackers are selling the information on a black market and the customers who have suffered harm have to deal with identity theft, loss of data and theft of property and funds.

## EXPOSURE

Any organization that conducts business using the internet and the cloud is at risk of facing cyber attacks.

Factors attributing to a data breach involving confidential information can be a result of a variety

## Victims of data and cyber breaches are forced to spend an inordinate amount of time, energy and focus to repair their image and brand

of factors including weak system security, out-of-date software, poor oversight of the systems and ineffective training of system users. It is not uncommon to have multiple factors being the cause of a data breach. For instance, employees can be a principal cause of a breach due to poor oversight or ineffective training. One of the most common derivations of cyber attacks stem from company employees who have not been properly trained on how to review emails for potential scams, not to click on specific links, not to answer

mysterious emails/websites and thus inadvertently allow malicious software to access company servers.

While poor system security plays a critical piece in hackers' access to a company's sensitive data, human error is one of the most significant factors leading to exposure. If employees are not trained to be suspicious, they will act in the ordinary course of business and not be able to identify key risk indicators that lead to a potential cyber scam. It is easy to play on the emotions or curiosity of a human. Computers don't have those traits. The best security systems are not able to prevent overriding by the humans who set up, control and have authority to override systems. Whether done maliciously or by accident, employees are generally a common denominator in a breach. Thus, one of the most critical steps to take in helping mitigate cyber risk is having an education, training and awareness program that alerts employees how to identify potential cyber threats.

*As part of a vendor oversight program, companies and firms should require vendors to provide them with representations and warranties that certain minimum information security protocols are in place.*

### HOW TO MANAGE VENDORS

The risk of exposing clients to cyber breaches is no longer restricted to the direct security protocols within



a company or firm, but also within all third-party vendors used by the company. Such third parties pose, perhaps, the greatest risk of exposure to a security breach because these third parties have access to confidential information provided to them by the company. Indeed, some regulators are specifically focusing on oversight of third-party vendors. For example, in the banking industry, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency stated in a 2013 release that “A bank’s use of third parties does not diminish the responsibility of its board of directors and senior management to ensure that the activity is performed in a safe and sound manner and in compliance with applicable laws.”

### THIRD-PARTY VENDOR OVERSIGHT

All companies and firms use vendors in a variety of ways – from ordering their kitchen supplies to more complex outsourcing, including services related to critical business components for efficiency in the process. It is critical that there is a partnership established with all vendors allowing oversight of the vendor’s processes and procedures, permitting auditing, allowing the firm to have insight into the type of technology protections used and, importantly, allowing the company or firm to be notified by the vendor in the event of a breach. Given that many vendor relationships were contracted prior to cyber security rising as a top risk concern, it would be prudent for companies and firms to renegotiate their vendor contracts to allow for these types of protections or, at the very least, to address them upon renewal.

As part of a vendor oversight program, companies and firms should require vendors to provide them with representations and warranties that certain minimum information security protocols are in place. In addition, there should be routine onsite assessments and audits of the vendors, particularly as technology advances and not simply at the initial onboarding of the vendor.

In conducting oversight assessments of a vendor, the company may find that there are simply not sufficient security protocols in place. This could be due to lack of

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## The vendor needs to be able to become a true partner and make necessary changes in their cybersecurity practices that align with the company

capital to sustain an effective cyber security system or an immature governance structure. A board of a small vendor may not view cyber risk as a large concern and therefore may not make it a priority of the corporate culture of the vendor. A vendor liaison is a great solution for companies to ensure that the vendor is making a good faith effort to protect against breaches. The vendor needs to be able to become a true partner and make necessary changes in their cyber security practices that align with the company and, without such, the company should look to other vendors who are more attune to security protocols.

### **SOLUTIONS AND RESPONDING TO A BREACH**

Unfortunately, the question no longer is “Will there be a breach?” but “When will there be a breach?” Thus companies and firms must focus on being proactive and having policies, procedures and an action plan in place. Acting in a timely manner may be the difference in how a company is perceived by its clients – and the media – ultimately affecting client confidence, company brand and revenue.

Although there are many steps involved in a breach, companies and firms can foster a proactive cyber security culture to help prevent breaches.

*Simultaneous with hiring forensic experts, it is critical to have a public relations plan in place and a unified approach in how to address customers.*

The top measures to be taken include the following: (1) identifying where data is stored – such as on the cloud, e-mail, servers, third-party vendors, (2) determining the type of data that is vulnerable to being compromised – such as W-2s, Social Security numbers and credit reports, and (3) remediating data in unauthorized locations by relocating, encrypting or deleting files. It is also advised to implement a virtual private network (VPN) that can be used by authorized individuals only. Preventative maintenance also should

be performed as it is important to constantly test the data security of self-service portals and servers.

Upon either confirmation or suspicion that there has been a data breach, it is critical that the company or firm take immediate action. The first step is to alert a preappointed incident or cyber breach response team so that an internal investigation can be commenced. Such cyber breach plans can be prepared internally or with the guidance of law firms who have expertise in this area. The plan should include a response team that consists of various leaders from around the firm or organization – such as from operations, finance, IT, legal (outside counsel even in the case of a law firm breach), marketing/PR and executive or managing partner representation. The team would follow a cyber security plan that has been drafted, reviewed and prepared ahead of time. This response plan could include roles and responsibilities, timelines, required actions and a list of independent vendors (including outside counsel and forensic experts). The response plan also should have template notification letters to be used for sending to clients and government agencies.

Vital in preparing the action plan, the company or firm should review its cyber security policy limits and determine if the coverage is adequate to meet contractual requirements. Insurance carriers should be consulted as to whether there is a designated list of approved forensic experts that must be used in the case of a breach.

Additionally, when hiring vendors, firms should be added to the vendor’s cyber security as “additional insured” so that the firm can make a claim directly to the vendor’s carrier. Outside counsel play a critical role in cyber security as it continues to become a widespread issue in almost every industry. In the event of a security compromise, companies will seek to hire law firms, regardless of whether they have in-house counsel; the outside counsel adds a layer of protection by establishment of the attorney-client privilege during an investigation. In fact, if a law firm itself has a data breach, it too, should consider hiring outside legal representation that can lead the investigation





and preserve attorney-client privilege. Without such outside representation, it might be ambiguous as to who acts as the lead attorney for the firm and who exactly is afforded such privilege, in a legal role as opposed to a business role. If an outside law firm is hired during a data breach, the firm should engage the forensic expert to review the situation. By having the forensic expert report findings to the outside counsel, rather than the firm with the issue, the attorney-client privilege is preserved should there be discoveries that are damaging to the firm.

Simultaneous with hiring forensic experts, it is critical to have a public relations plan in place and a unified approach in how to address customers. The PR team should have a designated point person for questions from both internal and external sources.

There needs to be a consensus on how much detail will be given and whether it will be, “We are investigating the matter,” or more specific as to any findings. While a general response of investigation is acceptable, if findings are leaked to the clients or media prior to properly communicating the breach, it ultimately will have a negative effect upon the company or firm. However, sometimes investigations are ongoing and change hourly and providing information outside of the response team simply is not prudent.

#### **TIMING**

Depending upon the state in which the information was compromised, there are different statutory requirements pertaining to the timeline for notification

## Employees can be a principal cause of a breach due to poor oversight or ineffective training.

to both the clients affected as well as to the government agencies, which notification must contain details regarding the breach. In Florida, for example, the



law requires notification 30 days from the date of discovery of the breach. However, if there is no harm to the consumer, it is entirely possible that notice may not be required at all. Of course, the question could be ambiguous as to what constitutes harm. In providing notification to customers or clients of a breach, some companies choose to offer identity theft protection services. While this is not required by law, it is one way to try to maintain client/customer loyalty despite the incident. In addition to clients, companies need to consider other reporting requirements including the credit reporting agencies and/or regulatory and law enforcement agencies, particularly with regard to potential sabotage or foul play.

During the last couple of years, averages show there are close to one billion data records compromised a year.<sup>8</sup> As the world becomes more reliant upon technology, the threat of cyber attacks will continue to increase not only in number, but with new and innovative ways for the hacks to affect day-to-day business operations. Now is the time to take a serious proactive approach and focus on preventative measures for addressing cyber attacks, and making these methods a top priority. ■

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The “Providing Full Spectrum Legal Advice: Partnering in Both Business and the Law” session, held during the 2016 Annual Meeting, was well attended.

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Kerry Herman, associate at Outten & Golden and Sari Long, associate at Faegre Baker Daniels LLP, shared a moment at the 2016 Annual Meeting & Awards Luncheon.

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**ACC** Accounting  
**ADO** Adoption  
**ADR** Alt. Dispute Resolution  
**ADV** Advertising  
**ANT** Antitrust  
**APP** Appeals  
**ARB** Arbitration  
**AVI** Aviation  
**BDR** Broker Dealer  
**BIO** Biotechnology  
**BKR** Bankruptcy  
**BNK** Banking  
**BSL** Commercial/ Bus. Lit.  
**CAS** Class Action Suits  
**CCL** Compliance Counseling  
**CIV** Civil Rights  
**CLT** Consultant  
**CMP** Compliance  
**CNS** Construction  
**COM** Complex Civil Litigation  
**CON** Consumer  
**COR** Corporate

**CPL** Corporate Compliance  
**CRM** Criminal  
**CUS** Customs  
**DEF** Defense  
**DIV** Diversity & Inclusion  
**DOM** Domestic Violence  
**EDR** Electronic Discovery  
 Readiness Response  
**EDI** E-Discovery  
**EDU** Education  
**EEO** Employment & Labor  
**ELD** Elder Law  
**ELE** Election Law  
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**ENT** Entertainment  
**EPA** Environmental  
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**EST** Estate Planning  
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**FAM** Family  
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**GAM** Gaming  
**GEN** Gender & Sex  
**GOV** Government Contracts  
**GRD** Guardianship  
**HCA** Health Care  
**HOT** Hotel & Resort  
**ILP** Intellectual Property  
**IMM** Immigration  
**INS** Insurance  
**INT** International  
**INV** Investment Services  
**IST** Information Tech/Systems  
**JUV** Juvenile Law  
**LIT** Litigation  
**LND** Land Use  
**LOB** Lobby/Government Affairs  
**MAR** Maritime Law  
**MEA** Media  
**MED** Medical Malpractice  
**M&A** Mergers & Acquisitions  
**MUN** Municipal  
**NET** Internet  
**NPF** Nonprofit

**OSH** Occupational Safety &  
 Health  
**PIL** Personal Injury  
**PRB** Probate & Administration  
**PRL** Product Liability  
**RES** Real Estate  
**RSM** Risk Management  
**SEC** Securities  
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**WOR** Worker's Compensation

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