

DISSENTING PERSPECTIVES

TALENT MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP

TOOLKIT ON TALENT MANAGEMENT

This toolkit is based on The Legal 500/GC magazine *DISSENTING PERSPECTIVES: TALENT MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP*. This was held in London on 10th May, in association with the Centre for Legal Leadership. Facilitated by Bruce Macmillan, Founder Director of CLL.

CREATING AN EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK PROGRAMME

PATRICK ROWE, DEPUTY GENERAL COUNSEL, ACCENTURE

Feedback can too often be focused around a determined value judgement ('good') and less around tools to actually grow one's abilities and improve performance.

Accenture has been actively trying to improve its culture of feedback, creating a sense of self-awareness based on the notion of continuous development and growth, rather than just thinking about improvement at certain points in the year.

Tools for an effective feedback programme

- 1 Demonstrate the importance of feedback to the culture, not as an add-on or something that has to be done in a pro-forma way. We have embedded feedback culture as a key element of performance achievement for legal.
- 2 Feedback is critical to developing self-awareness and enhancing performance. Continual reinforcement and dialogue between the team are more likely to have a positive effect.
- 3 Be specific: it is the small things that really count. On a day-to-day basis, avoid saying things like 'you are doing well' or 'that was not great' and try and to give specific examples of observed behaviour. For example: 'The way you dealt with the questions was really good, it showed that you had prepared properly for the meeting.'
- 4 Feedback is only as good as the people giving and receiving it. Train staff to understand what makes good feedback, how to deliver it and how to make use of it. Train all members of the legal team to give and receive feedback, using global webcasts and in-person training sessions.

Accenture is following up its training with communications and initiatives that reinforce these messages, together with a full set of feedback training materials available by portal.



CREATING A MOBILITY MINDSET

AMOL PRABHU, HEAD OF EMERGING MARKETS LEGAL, EMEA, BARCLAYS INVESTMENT BANK

Lawyers often focus on their professional training and expertise and want to play to that strength. However in-house practitioners' opportunities to do so are increasingly limited.

There are three aspects of career mobility that in-house lawyers should consider:

- Geographic mobility
- Role mobility – different opportunities, including non-legal ones
- Mind mobility

As technology, hiring freezes and the lack of conventional upward promotions impact the traditional career path of in-house lawyers, encouraging mobility in all these aspects is essential for organisations to really develop their talent. But how to do it?

- 1 Embed the notion of mobility in employee's expectations. Make it clear that secondments are likely to be part of their experience. This should be true for managers too.
- 2 Secondments are key in opening people's minds to the potential outside of their traditional environment, but with a safety net, because they are only committing for a fixed period. Secondments further afield can help lawyers to understand different cultural challenges in a global environment and engage a dispersed global legal team. Think about how secondments can help employees grow. They may not simply involve sending people away, but bringing people in from outside head office. It is critical to make sure that people feel supported, and to help address practical concerns, such as family commitments.
- 3 Secondments into the business, and outside of legal, can be particularly fruitful in helping lawyers develop different mindsets. They also stimulate engagement with different functions of the business from within. There are tangible advantages to business in having a lawyer embedded who understands their challenges from the ground up.
- 4 The physical mobility of geographic and role secondments leads to mind mobility, an important skill for the 21st-century in-house lawyer. The wider experience associated with improved mental agility allows lawyers to better identify risk. It develops the ability to make nuanced judgement calls – a skill that is fundamentally important as the in-house role moves away from the purely legal. Exposing your team to business leaders or general counsel who embody this mindset can be a motivating factor, and help them recognise mind mobility



TAPPING THE POTENTIAL OF A TRULY INCLUSIVE WORKFORCE

PRASH NAIK, GENERAL COUNSEL, CHANNEL 4

- 1 Channel 4 has made inclusion and the development of diverse talent one of its strategic objectives. Its 360 degree diversity charter puts this at the centre of every decision the broadcaster makes on and off screen.

Disability has been a significant focus for Channel 4, partly because of the thinking it developed during its coverage of the Paralympics.

- 2 Unconscious bias is a significant issue and everyone has it – don't fool yourself you don't. We discovered we needed to tackle recruiting in our own image first.

We did this by:

- Talent mapping to make sure our workforce reflects the communities we operate in and for. As we are a public broadcaster, that is basically the whole population.
- We need to look at both performance and potential: a diverse workplace has more potential.
- Data collection.

- 3 Getting comfortable with being uncomfortable is a key factor in ensuring there is an inclusive approach to talent management. For example, with differently abled colleagues, don't focus solely on that aspect of their identity, but also not strenuously avoiding it either.

- 4 Diversity of thought is the ultimate objective and it's something that quantifiably makes companies more successful and more profitable. Inclusion sits outside competence for most employers, but this can be tackled by making it clear that it's a strategic goal, and getting a champion from leadership to materially demonstrate that this matters.



RETAINING SENIOR WOMEN

CATHERINE MCGREGOR, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, GC MAGAZINE

The three biggest issues for businesses looking to improve in this area are:

- (i) Redefining work
- (ii) Redefining parenthood
- (iii) Redefining leadership

There's an undiscussed loss of women at senior level, partly because of the often unexplored challenges associated with balancing a senior role with children. This is counterbalanced with a lack of convincing role models in leadership for senior women. Many of the points raised are focused on empathetic working and will work for both female and male employees.

- 1 Change the way we conceptualise work focus on outcomes, rather than equating time spent in the office with good work. Get teams to define their own rules around working and hold each other to account if members of the team are not delivering.
- 2 Work smart and use technology effectively. Technology is already changing the way teams spread work around the world. Tools such as Google Hangouts are simple and free. Take realistic decisions about when face-to-face interaction is needed above all else.
- 3 Work and life need to balance, as happy employees are more productive. Managers need to take time to understand and ease pain points. Sit down with an employee that is feeling stretched and talk through the entirety of their day – school run, caring for elderly relatives, and so on – to have a constructive discussion about how the employer/employee relationship can work for both sides.
- 4 Credible role models in leadership roles are very important for senior female employees. These can be outside of the organisation if necessary. This is particularly important at senior levels, where the career path might be less defined. For those women who may be acting as role models or mentors, it's useful to show the working behind the equation (the struggle) not just the success story.

Talent management is an important battle for 21st-century employers and employees. Technology and economic changes are redefining the way we work, so patterns of work need to reflect this. The in-house role has under some seismic changes in the last ten years and this evolution shows no sign of slowing. Our workshop asked general counsel to think practically about how working models can be overhauled through both small, day-to-day steps and larger cultural change. Change is a continuous process and needs ongoing engagement.

Catherine McGregor, Editor-in-Chief, GC Magazine

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