

Jun / Jul 2016
Vol. 2016, No. 3



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Controlling Political
Talk at Work

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Five Keys for Effective
Succession Planning
Within Law Firms

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What Employers and
Employees Need to Know
About Pending FLSA
Overtime Changes

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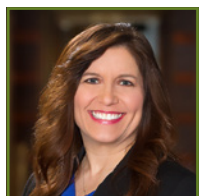


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ALAMN has adopted ALA's Mission Statement

To improve the quality of management in legal services organizations; promote and enhance the competence and professionalism of legal administrators and all members of the management team; and represent professional legal management and managers to the legal community and to the community at large.

2016 - 2017 ALAMN COMMITTEES & SIGs

ALAMN COMMITTEES serve as liaisons between membership and the respective director, representing the ALAMN Board of Directors.

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ALAMN CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JUNE

SU	MO	TU	WE	TH	FR	SA
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	1	2

- 1 Large Firm Administrators Meeting**
12:00 p.m.
Location: Larkin Hoffman
- 2 Intellectual Property SIG**
11:45 a.m.
Location: Patterson Thuente Pedersen, P.A.
- 2 ALA Webinar: Cloud Computing 2.0: The Next Wave of Technology for Law Firms**
2:00 p.m.
Location: Best & Flanagan
- 6 Pricing, Legal Project Management and Knowledge Management SIG**
11:30 a.m.
Location: Robins Kaplan LLP
- 7 ALA CLM Study Group Kick-Off**
11:30 a.m.
Location: Merchant and Gould
- 9 ALAMN Gold Sponsor Emergent Network Hosts – User Security Awareness**
11:30 a.m.
Location: Nilan Johnson Lewis PA
- 14 General Meeting**
11:30 a.m.
Location: Robins Kaplan LLP
- 15 St. Cloud SIG**
12:00 p.m.
- 15 ALA Webinar: Innovating Legal Practice through Talent Management**
2:00 p.m.
Location: Best & Flanagan
- 16 Small/Medium Group Meeting**
11:30 a.m.
Location: Town and Country Club
- 21 Facilities SIG**
12:00 p.m.
Location: Fredrikson & Byron
- 21 ALA Webinar: Working through the Bureaucratic Red Tape of Decision-Making**
2:00 p.m.
Location: Best & Flanagan
- 21 Membership Development Committee Meeting**
4:00 p.m.
Location: Yost & Baill
- 22 Communications Committee Meeting**
12:00 p.m.
Location: Robins Kaplan LLP
- 22 Simpson Shelter Meal Service**
5:00 p.m.
Location: Simpson Shelter
- 23 Diversity & Inclusion Committee Meeting**
8:30 a.m.
Location: Fredrikson & Byron
- 28 ALAMN HR Committee Meeting**
11:30 a.m.
Location: TBD

JULY

SU	MO	TU	WE	TH	FR	SA
26	27	28	29	30	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

- 7 ALA Webinar: Kick Up Your Internal Training: How Adults Learn**
2:00 p.m.
Location: Best & Flanagan
- 14 ALAMN Summer Social**
4:00 p.m.
Location: Crowne Plaza Northstar
- 19 Membership Development Committee Meeting**
4:00 p.m.
Location: Yost & Baill
- 20 Community Service Committee Meeting**
11:30 a.m.
Location: Robins Kaplan LLP
- 20 St. Cloud SIG**
12:00 p.m.
- 27 Communications Committee Meeting**
12:00 p.m.
Location: TBD

*PLEASE NOTE: SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP (SIG) ATTENDEES NEED NOT BE ALAMN MEMBERS

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FROM THE PRESIDENT OF ALAMN

Sarah Didrikson, ALAMN President



Another successful ALA Conference is complete and summer is in full swing. We had 39 Minnesota attendees at the 2016 ALA Conference in Los Angeles. This year was an extra special year, as we celebrated Laura Broomell beginning her term as the ALA President. This is an outstanding honor for Laura, and we are very proud of her accomplishments.



The Minnesota chapter helped to celebrate Laura's accomplishment by joining her on stage wearing purple boas and bow-ties while participating in the chicken dance in order to tie into Laura's theme of "just dance." We also had an opportunity to brag about Laura at the All-State Reception where ten individuals shared the "Top 10 Reasons We Love Laura." Attendees of the reception joined in the fun by using clappers provided by the Minnesota Chapter to display their enthusiasm. We look forward to the leadership she will bring to the association this year.



A special thank you to Shari Tivy, Kim Ess, Dick Nigon and Sarah Taylor for their work in preparing for the event.



The conference this year had over 1,000 attendees and included great educational opportunities for all career levels. We had countless opportunities to network with fellow Minnesota members as well as other attendees from around the world. If you have not had a chance to attend an ALA Conference in the past, I highly encourage you to attend in the future. The 2017 conference will be held in Denver, Colorado.

The Minnesota Chapter offers multiple scholarships throughout the year to help with the cost of attending an ALA conference. There are a number of scholarships available, but the following three require an application or nomination: First-Time Attendee, Outstanding Member, and Opportunity Scholarships. Watch for more information soon on how to apply for or nominate someone for these scholarships.

As summer begins and we all wonder where the year has gone, I am personally challenged to be more mindful each day on how I am taking care of myself and treating others. First, if I am not eating healthy, exercising, and sleeping well, I will not be equipped to handle the unplanned stresses of the day. Christine Porath challenged me at the conference to practice civility in my daily interactions with others. Porath explained how incivility has a negative effect on those around us and results in a performance decline. The first step in practicing civility is to be more aware of your behavior and to ask for feedback from others. I challenge each of you to find ways you can improve your civility on a daily basis.

The ALAMN Summer Social will be held on Thursday, July 14th at the Crowne Plaza. I look forward to seeing everyone at this great networking event.

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JUNE GENERAL MEETING

Attracting, Interviewing, Hiring, and Retaining Vets: Mission Possible

Annette Brechon Kuyper

Date: Tuesday, June 14, 2016

Time: 11:30 a.m

Location: Robins Kaplan LLP
800 LaSalle Avenue, Suite 2800
Minneapolis, MN 55402

Please join us for a presentation by Annette Brechon Kuyper, Director of Military Outreach, Minnesota Department of Military Affairs; Scott Mills, Director, U.S. Department of Labor; and James Finley, Director – Veterans Employment Programs, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development.

This expert panel will discuss Minnesota Veteran Employment Initiatives. We will learn more about the coordinated statewide efforts to match great Minnesota companies with highly trained Veteran leaders looking for their next opportunity to serve. Veteran employment initiatives between the Department of Labor, MN Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) and MN Department of Military Affairs has received national attention for their efforts to work together to create successful veteran employment outcomes. Annual events like Veterans Career Fairs, company tours, and business “meet and greet” events get employers and Minnesota Veterans in the same space, talking about careers. “Bet on a Vet . . . You Both Win!”

[Click here](#) for more information.



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ALAMN SHINING STAR

And the next ALAMN Shining Star is...

The Board is pleased to present Tracey Grill as the next Shining Star of our chapter. Tracey is the Office Manager at Gustafson Gluek, PLLC. She has been a member of ALAMN since 2008. Tracey has stepped up as a leader in our chapter, serving as past co-chair of the Human Resources Committee and as current co-chair of the Business Partner and Conference Committee. Thank you Tracey for your contributions and commitment to the success of our chapter!



Tracey Grill



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COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE - COOKIE CART

On Tuesday, April 12, 2016, ALAMN members and business partners had a great time working alongside the teen employees at the Cookie Cart bakery, located at 1119 W. Broadway Ave. in Minneapolis.

This was our first time directly supporting the Cookie Cart with our gift of volunteer hours. It was met by great enthusiasm by both the ALAMN members and business partners, as well as the staff and employees on location. They are looking forward to partnering with us again in the future.

Cookie Cart was started in 1988 by Sister Jean as a safe, secure and engaging space for North Minneapolis' youth. She saw the need to engage the neighborhood's young people in educational and empowering activities.

The Cookie Cart provides teens 15 to 18 years old with lasting and meaningful work, life and leadership skills through experience and training in this urban nonprofit bakery.

The bakery is a classroom that teaches essential employment skills: managing their work schedules, taking direction from supervisors, efficient task completion and other problem solving skills.

There are other classroom learning opportunities for the teens as part of the program. Some of these include: customer service training, employer expectations, resume and cover letter writing, and financial literacy training.

Thank you to the following volunteers who helped in the bakery by scooping dough for several hours alongside the teen employees, while helping them practice their interpersonal skills:

- David Elert from Complete Graphics, Inc.
- Gregg Eastin and Dan Leavitt from Loffler Companies, Inc.
- Claudett McCune from Coordinated Business Systems, Ltd.
- Dan Herman from Fluid Interiors
- Alexis Swanson and Jess Ahern from Robert Half Legal
- Tracy Smith from Smith, Gendler, Shiell, Sheff, Ford & Maher
- Norma Thayer from Zimmerman Reed, LLP
- Wendy Cornelius from Metropolitan Airports Commission
- Pat Stender from Cousineau McGuire
- Abby Rooney from Foley & Mansfield

If you are interested in helping support this great program either in person or by purchasing their cookies, you can contact them at 612-521-0855 or info@cookiecart.org.

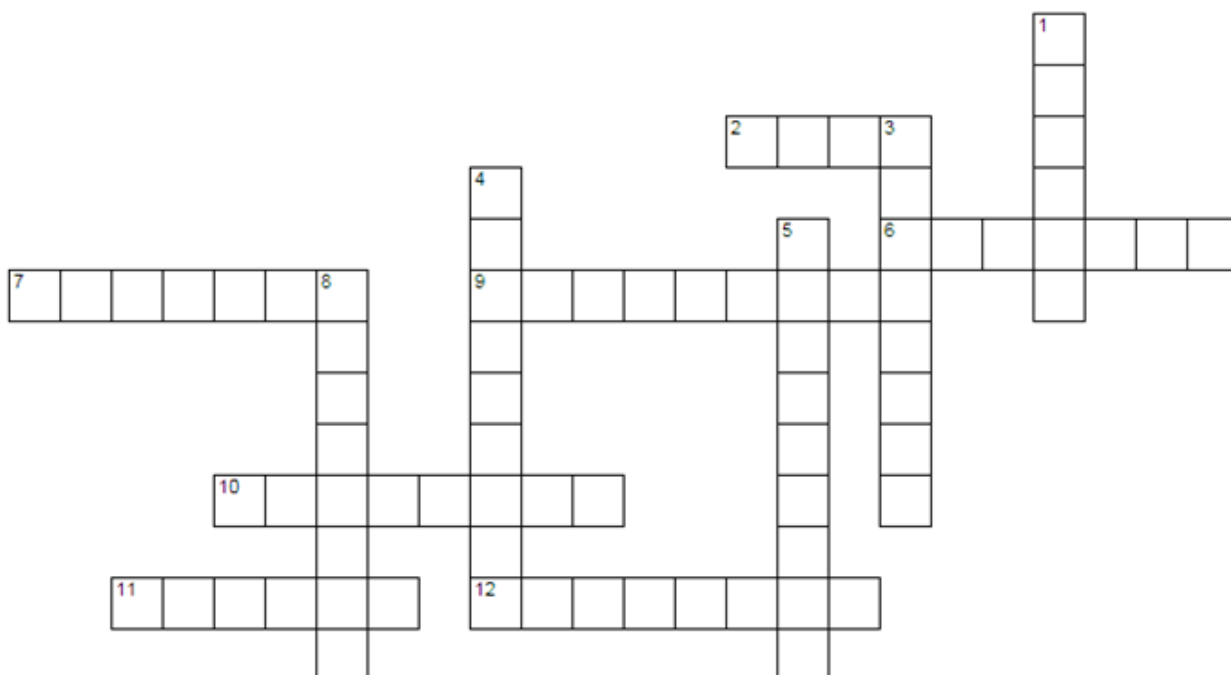
Watch The Verdict and the ALAMN website for our next Cookie Cart event and for other 2016 volunteer events and drives.



ALAMN JUST FOR FUN - CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Answers on page 16

Human Resources



ACROSS

- 2 Money paid on an hourly basis
- 6 The total amount of money paid to employees
- 7 Engage in finding and attracting employees
- 9 Collectively all employees at a company or firm
- 10 Extra perks of employment in addition to salary
- 11 The special ability of an employee
- 12 A person or business who hires people to perform a job

DOWN

- 1 An exempt employee's pay
- 3 A person who works for a company or firm
- 4 Oversee a group of workers or their work
- 5 A question and answer session with a new candidate
- 8 Education or instruction of a process or procedure

User Security Awareness

...THE MISSING PIECE OF THE PUZZLE

You've read the headlines. Unfortunately, the question now is not if your information is going to be accessed or stolen, but when.

Corporations are increasing their efforts into securing their data and infrastructure through hardware and software solutions. However, these measures are only part of the security puzzle. Your company users can be the biggest security threat to your organization if they are not well informed on the types of attacks currently happening in the marketplace and how to look for potential security threats while utilizing your corporate IT resources. Many unknowingly allow or cause security breaches that can be devastating for your company's reputation and financial health. User security awareness and training is a key component of any strong corporate security strategy.

Please join us June 9 for this informational lunch session. This seminar is designed to teach end-users the basics about the types of security threats that will help them identify a potential issue and hopefully stop it before it manifests itself.

Registration:



There is limited space available for this event so please register early to ensure your spot. Scan the QR Code to the left to register online and use the code: **SecurityAwareness**



Speaker:

Jake DeWoskin,
IT Security Strategist

Date:

Thursday, June 9, 2016

Schedule:

11:30 a.m.

Networking

12:00 Noon

Lunch

12:30 p.m.

Presentation

1:15 p.m.

Questions/Wrap Up

Location:

Nilan Johnson Lewis, PA
120 South Sixth Street
Suite 400
Minneapolis, MN 55402



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COMMUNITY SERVICE - SECOND HARVEST

Pictured left to right are the following ALAMN and Business Partners who volunteered at Second Harvest Heartland on May 10. Thank you for your service!

Sarah Hemsley Lapham, Robert Half

Michele Brauch, ALAMN member

Alexis Swanson, Robert Half

Mark Brauch, ALAMN member

Kathy Hubbard, ALAMN member

Chelsey Ritter, Robert Half

Vicky Meyer, ALAMN member

Brad Huda, Marco

Norma Thayer, ALAMN member



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COMMUNITY SERVICE OPPORTUNITY! - SIMPSON SHELTER MEAL

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10-15 Volunteers needed to cook and serve a hearty meal for 100+ shelter guests at Simpson Church located in the basement of Simpson United Methodist Church on June 22, 2016 from 5:00-8:00 pm

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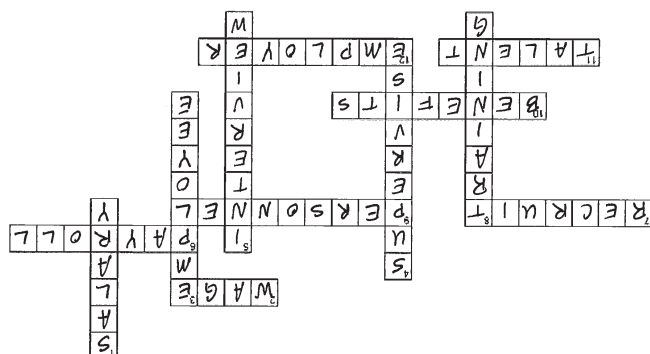


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Human Resources



	CROSS	DOWN
Money paid on an hourly basis	2	1
The total amount of money paid to employees	6	4
Engage in finding and attracting employees	7	3
Collectively all employees at a company or firm	9	4
Extra perks of employment in addition to salary	10	5
The special ability of an employee	11	5
A person or business who hires people to perform a job	12	8

DIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED

The ALAMN Diversity & Inclusion committee awarded a \$1,000 college scholarship to Zaynab Abdi from Wellstone International High School. Zaynab aspires to become a lawyer and will be working on her undergraduate degree this fall at the University of Minnesota-Duluth. Congratulations Zaynab!

The scholarship provided by the ALAMN is intended for a Minnesota high school student of a diverse background planning to study any profession that is applicable to a law firm environment. Applicants needed to be accepted at an accredited college and had to provide the committee with a short essay, two letters of recommendation, and a copy of their high school transcript. This is the first year the scholarship was awarded, and the committee is hoping to offer this opportunity again next year.

CAREER FAIR 2016

The ALAMN Diversity & Inclusion committee held its second career fair on Friday, April 15th at the law firm of Fredrikson & Byron, P.A. With the assistance of other ALAMN members, law firm employees, and legal organizations, the career fair is an effort to promote law firm professions to inner-city high school students with the hope of increasing our recruiting pipelines. A total of 33 students from Roosevelt and Washburn high schools participated this year. They were able to speak to representatives in nearly all professions that are included at law firms. Everyone was very impressed with the questions the students were asking, and it was obvious the students came prepared. The students were impressed by the wealth of information openly shared. They also said it was a fun event and enjoyed seeing the professional and beautiful environment law firms may provide.



The committee hopes to offer this event again next year with two new schools. They nearly doubled the size of student participants this year and would like to continue to grow the event. If anyone would like to volunteer for this event next year and/or would like to be a part of the Diversity & Inclusion committee, please contact Curt Okerson at 612-492-7552.



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ALAMN CERTIFIED LEGAL MANAGER (CLM) STUDY GROUP

Do you know about the CLM certification? Want to learn more? Have you thought about taking the CLM exam? Would you like an additional educational opportunity?

Then you might want to consider joining the CLM Study Group. Tracey Skjeveland at Merchant & Gould will be hosting a kick-off meeting on **June 7 from 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM** (lunch will be provided).

The ALAMN study group assists members who are planning to take the CLM certification exam and provides continuing legal education for ALAMN members. This section is open to all members of ALAMN, regardless of whether you are planning to take the CLM examination or just interested in furthering your knowledge.

Please contact Tracey Skjeveland at tskjeveland@merchantgould.com if you are interested in joining or just learning more about the CLM Study Group.

CONTROLLING POLITICAL TALK AT WORK

*Dennis Merley, Attorney & Director, Integrated Media
Felhaber Larson*

As our pre-election thrill ride continues, employers may wonder if they have the right to control the volume and intensity of political talk at work. The short answer (which we rarely get in a political season) is yes, employers generally can control how employees should interact at work. The big question is how to exert that control.

In our non-working lives, we can control our environment. Tired of the debate? Flip the channel or turn off the TV. Conversation at a party getting too heated? Join another group or go grab some snacks from the buffet.

No Mute Buttons at Work

Work is different. Employees typically cannot just leave their work stations to get away from political talk that they find bothersome, and there is no “mute” button on their co-workers. Requiring employees to remain in close proximity with others who insist on sharing their political leanings may very well be a vote for workplace conflict.

At the very least, employees talking politics are distracted and probably not as productive or efficient as they could be. That civil and reasoned discussion of foreign trade agreements and tax policy may be so engrossing that mistakes start happening and work gets sloppy. As the exchange gets more intense, the focus is increasingly on winning the argument, and work becomes more of an afterthought.

Of course, the political spotlight currently shines brightly on hot-button issues involving race, religion and gender, and people are sensitive to these topics. Employees who support a candidate who aligns with their own race or religion could begin to feel attacked when their beliefs are challenged or their candidate is maligned. On the other hand, an employee who opposes that same candidate runs the risk of being called a racist or a bigot, and may feel just as singled out. Employers may find both individuals waiting for them to file harassment claims against the other.

[continued on page 19]

CONTROLLING POLITICAL TALK AT WORK - CONTINUED

continued from page 18

Possible Liability

If one of the participants in these discussions is a supervisor or manager, the risk of liability increases significantly. What might a foreign-born employee think if he gets a warning or an unfavorable assignment just a couple of days after arguing immigration policy with his supervisor? The supervisor may have had an excellent reason for those actions, but there is now a faint hint of a possible ulterior motive, and that is all the employee needs to form the basis of a discrimination charge.

Heated political discussion could even devolve into physical altercations, just as we have seen at certain political rallies and demonstrations. Such interactions can be dangerous and disruptive, and victims might file lawsuits alleging that the employer was remiss in not protecting them from potential violence in the workplace.

Employer Sets the Rules

Employers interested in preventing these problems or in addressing them when they arise can feel confident that they have the right to regulate political speech at work. Public employers of course must be mindful of their employees' free speech rights. Even then, as we discussed in the post entitled, "Cop's Facebook Rant May Be His Ticket Off the Force," first amendment rights must be balanced with the employer's efficiency interests, which include preventing behavior that (1) impairs discipline or harmony among co-workers; (2) has a detrimental impact on close working relationships; and (3) interferes with the normal operation of the employer's business.

Private sector employers have no first amendment concerns, and employers have the right to ban political talk at work.

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CONTROLLING POLITICAL TALK AT WORK - CONTINUED

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Unfortunately, such a ban is very difficult to enforce and could be seen as an overreaction to a problem that has not yet occurred in a particular work setting. Instead, employers could consider a clear pronouncement that all employees are entitled to be treated with dignity and respect regardless of their political affiliations or beliefs. Workplace political discussions should then be monitored and should not be allowed to create strife or to impede work. When this occurs, the employer needs to step in and take appropriate corrective action to insure that such differences do not get out of hand.

Bottom Line

These issues will intensify as we get further into the presidential campaign. Employers should start thinking about how they intend to monitor and control political talk at work to make sure that ordinary and reasonable conversations are not allowed to escalate into serious workplace conflict.

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FIVE KEYS FOR EFFECTIVE SUCCESSION PLANNING WITHIN LAW FIRMS

Lisa Breiland, Esq.

Who will replace your firm's leaders when they retire, resign, or decide to leave the firm for other reasons? Creating a smooth leadership transition is an essential part of effective law firm management. While it is tempting to put off succession planning until senior partners announce their departure, it is smart to start the process much earlier – before there is a need.

Here are five tips for effective succession planning for your firm's critical legal professionals:

1. Know what you need. Update job descriptions for all key positions at your firm. Skills and expertise needed for top law firm management positions can change over time, so make these updates an annual exercise. When you have a clear idea of what abilities your firm needs from its leadership today, and probably in the future, you can start identifying potential candidates within the organization.

2. Invest in professional development. Once you have identified promising candidates for various future roles, begin the leadership training process – if you haven't already. Include them in important client meetings and high-level strategizing sessions and enroll them in professional development courses. Pair them up with wise and patient senior leaders within the firm. The transfer of legal expertise from mentors to mentees is key in preventing unrecoverable knowledge loss when partners leave. Give regular feedback as these professionals progress up the law firm management ladder. The potential results will be not only a strong cohort of future leaders, but also a more motivated and engaged legal team today.

There is another reason besides succession planning to create leadership development programs: these opportunities are one of the top incentives for recruiting and retaining legal talent, according to a [Robert Half Legal survey](#). So, if there is not a mentoring or training program for junior legal professionals at your firm already, consider starting one soon.

3. Identify more than one successor. Rather than "anointing" one legal professional for a role, consider multiple candidates. Develop and promote less specifically for succession and place several candidates into a designated group of employees who are being groomed for leadership.

4. Form a flexible understanding with candidates. You may decide to tell employees you would like to tap them for future leadership roles, or not. If you do decide to reveal this, make sure you establish an understanding that there are no guarantees, and that the situation can change due to circumstances encountered by either the firm or the candidates themselves.

5. Don't rule out external candidates. Recruiting talent is a process that should not be rushed (or take place during a management crisis), but timing often makes a difference when it comes to grooming internal candidates or conducting an external search. With a considerable amount of time, you may be able to develop an existing employee's skills. But if your need is more pronounced, you may need to look for talent outside of the firm. Consider using a specialized legal placement agency to help you locate highly skilled and experienced legal professionals.

Practice good law firm management by making succession planning an ongoing priority. Taking the time to identify and develop future leaders today can help create a more seamless transition tomorrow.

Lisa Breiland, Esq., is the Minneapolis metro market manager of Robert Half Legal, a leading staffing service specializing in the placement of lawyers, paralegals, legal administrators, and other legal professionals with law firms and corporate legal departments. For more information, contact 612-349-2810 or www.roberthalflegal.com.



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WHAT EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES NEED TO KNOW ABOUT PENDING FLSA OVERTIME CHANGES

From the Special Counsel blog (<http://blog.specialcounsel.com/>)

In just a few weeks, the revised Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) will take effect, impacting an estimated 11 million working Americans. The FLSA is the federal law that governs overtime pay, among other labor issues. Although the changes became law in May of 2016, covered employers are not required to implement them until July of 2016. The changes were made to ensure that employees receive fair compensation and to protect those employees working 50 to 60 hours per week without adequate compensation.

What are the impending FLSA changes and how do they impact employees?

Most employees fall under an exempt or non-exempt status. Prior to the changes, non-exempt employees were those employees that earned \$23,660 or less per year. The new standards raise the salary threshold for those employees who earn \$50,440 a year or less, and now classifies these employees as non-exempt. The FLSA requires that covered employers provide non-exempt employees overtime pay of time and half or more per hour once the employee has worked 40 hours of work in a workweek. A "workweek" is considered "any fixed and regularly recurring period of 168 hours" in seven consecutive days. Covered employers must provide overtime pay even if the employee did not receive prior approval to work more than 40 hours during a workweek.

What is considered a "covered employer" under the FLSA?

Not all employers are required to implement the new FLSA overtime rules; only those considered a "covered employer" are included. A covered employer is an employer that has at least two employees and is considered an "enterprise." An enterprise includes:

- Businesses or organizations that have an annual dollar volume of sales or receipts of at least \$500,000
- Hospitals or businesses providing medical services or nursing care for residents regardless of whether they are private or public
- Schools including pre-schools and higher education institutions regardless of whether the school is private, public, for-profit, or non-profit
- State and federal agencies

What should employers do to prepare for the impending FLSA overtime changes?

Human resources professionals, supervisors, and managers employed by covered employers should prepare now for the new FLSA laws to ensure their organizations do not violate federal law. Violation of the law can result in serious liability and subject the employer to litigation or an audit by the Department of Labor.

To prepare for the FLSA overtime changes, you should do the following:

- Review your current workforce to determine which employees will be reclassified from exempt to non-exempt status.
- Notify employees of impending changes and explain how those changes may impact their employment and compensation.
- Review budgets to determine how additional overtime pay will impact the bottom line.
- Determine whether to increase salaries for any newly reclassified employees whose workload or responsibilities traditionally exceed a 40-hour workweek.
- Consider hiring temporary or additional staff to assist non-exempt employees with administrative or time-consuming tasks.
- Review job descriptions to determine what tasks and responsibilities can be redistributed to other staff.
- Train newly classified non-exempt employees on timekeeping procedures and update systems or processes as necessary.

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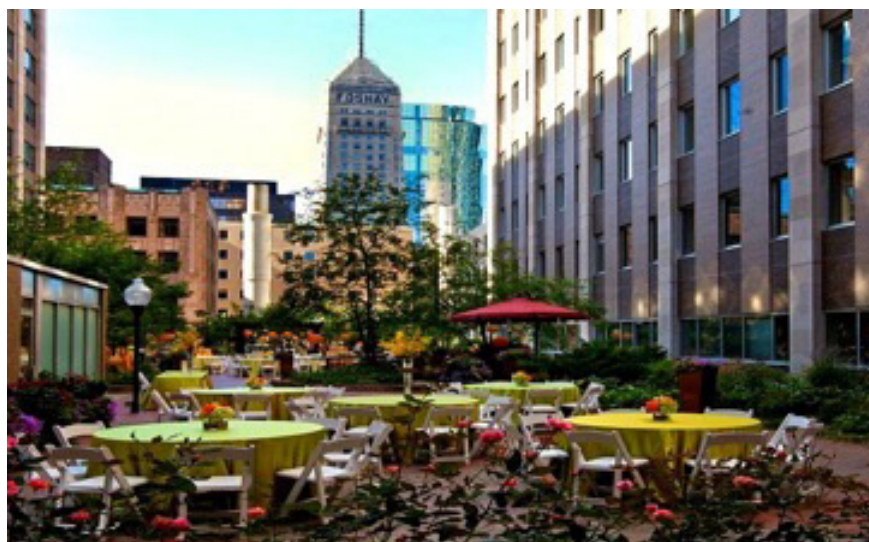
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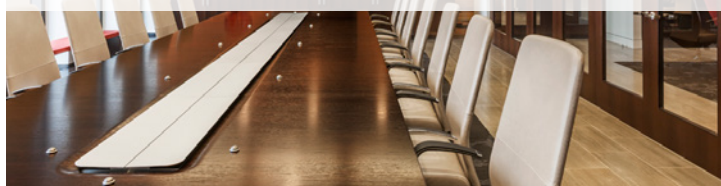
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