Key Issues Impacting Women’s Success in Law

National Diversity Symposium

November 8, 2011

Deborah Epstein Henry, Esq.
Founder & President
Law & Reorder
A Division of Flex-Time Lawyers LLC
(610) 658-0836
dehenry@lawandreorder.com
www.lawandreorder.com
dehenry@flextimelawyers.com
www.flextimelawyers.com

© Copyright 2011, Flex-Time Lawyers LLC.® All rights reserved.
2 Misconceptions about Women in Law

1. Women’s challenges are solely about work/life balance.

2. Women’s challenges are only women’s “fault”.

© Copyright 2011, Flex-Time Lawyers LLC.® All rights reserved.
Henry, LAW & REORDER, 2010
Solutions for Women

• Solutions for Women Involve Two Aspects:
  1. Women’s Individual Action Steps
  2. Structural Change to Legal Employers

• Five Areas of Focus:
  1. Development & Promotion
  2. Work/life Balance
  3. Mentoring & Sponsorship
  4. Business Development & Compensation
  5. Leadership
Development & Promotion
Ineffective Model: Underutilization or Lack of Utilization of ½ the Talent Pool

• Women represent 40 – 50% of law school classes for 25 years
• Women represent 15% of law firm equity partners; 27% of non-equity partners; 36% of counsel; 46% of associates
• Women of color – 1.9% of all partners
• Women are 18% top legal officers of Fortune 500 Companies
• 31% of women lawyers leave the profession at some point
• Changes in law firms - potential impact on women’s careers:
  – Risk of further mommy tracking due to non-partnership roles
  – Risk of increased bias due to merit based systems
  – Opportunity in alternative fees when measure of value is not hours
Work/Life Balance
Stigma & Changes for Work/Life Balance

Work/Life Needs & Interests are High; Usage Rates Low

• #1 for women & among top 3 for men leaving law firms
• 6% reduced hour law firm lawyers, 70% are women

Changing Work/Life Players:

Boomers (76 million born 1946–1964) - 70% of law firm partners
  – Challenging traditional retirement & succession planning

Gen X (46 million born 1965–1979)
  – Work/life issues on both ends (aging parents & young kids)

Gen Y (80 million born 1980–2000)
  • Making work/life issues gender & reason neutral

Changing Work/Life Factors:

• Move from reduced hours to flexibility – no revenue impact
• Economics; Globalization; Technology; Going Green

© Copyright 2011, Flex-Time Lawyers LLC.® All rights reserved.

Mentoring & Sponsorship
Focus on Sponsorship

Herminia Ibarra, Professional relationship chemistry – factors:

– Intelligence; Attractiveness; Similarity; Frequency; Power/Status

Focus on Sponsorship – someone who, at a minimum:

1. Uses chips on your behalf;
2. Advocates for your next promotion; and,
3. Comes through in at least two ways:
   – Expands your perception of what you can do; Makes connections for you to senior leaders; Promotes your visibility; Connects you to career opportunities; Advises you on executive presence; Makes connections for you outside of your employer; Gives you career advice

• Men are 46% more likely than women to have sponsors
• People with sponsors are more likely to ask & be better compensated
Business Development & Compensation

• Rainmakers among 200 largest law firms in 2010:
  – 46% of firms had 0 women in top 10 rainmakers; 33% had 1; 17% had 2

• Business development success & compensation link in 2009:
  – 0 women in top 10 rainmakers, median female comp. - $81,000 less
  – 3 or 4 women in top 10 rainmakers, median female comp. $11,000 less

• Compensation among 200 largest law firms in 2010:
  – Female equity partners earned 85% of male equity partners
  – Female non-equity partners earned 94% of male non-equity partners
  – Female counsel earned 88% of male counsel

• Employer Strategies
  – Increasing presence of women on Executive & Compensation committees
  – Transparency to pitch, origination, inheritance, credit & comp. processes
  – Reducing origination focus - increasing focus on teamwork & expansion
  – Providing & improving business development & networking training
Leadership
Leadership

Women’s Leadership - 2011 Best Law Firms for Women:

• Chairpersons (10%); Managing Partners (12%)
• Committees: Executive (19%); Compensation (18%); Promotion (23%)

Leadership Targets

• NAWL 2006 - 30% equity partners & chief legal officers & tenured faculty
• HBR 2006 – Clear shift when boards have 3 or more women

Leadership Solutions

• Create greater transparency & openness in the leadership pipeline
• Groom women leaders for key roles & representation
• Provide economic incentives to serve on governing committees
• Provide opportunities for shared leadership roles
• Provide leadership training & executive coaching to high potential women
• Seek external recognition for women leaders & celebrate publicly
• Partner with outside organizations to provide leadership opportunities
Deborah Epstein Henry, Esq.
Founder & President
Law & Reorder
A Division of Flex-Time Lawyers LLC
(610) 658-0836
dehenry@lawandreorder.com
www.lawandreorder.com
dehenry@flextimelawyers.com
www.flextimelawyers.com

Author of LAW & REORDER:
Legal Industry Solutions for Restructure, Retention,
Promotion & Work/Life Balance (ABA, 2010)