

Introduction

In February 2012, I wrote a paper in support of a seminar I presented to members of the Auckland District Law Society in New Zealand titled '*The Leadership Imperative*'. The paper examined the need for leadership in law firms and aimed to provide a context for better understanding leadership and its role in addressing the increasingly complex challenges faced by law firms.

In preparation for the seminar, I ran an online survey of private law firms around the globe to gauge their views about various aspects of leadership in law firms. This report summarises many of the key findings. The full results of the survey, and my paper, '*The Leadership Imperative*' are appended to this summary.

There were 106 respondents, - 61% male, 39% female. 74% were from New Zealand with the remainder coming predominantly from Australia and the United Kingdom.

Respondents were largely Practice Managers (30%), Managing Partners (24%) and Equity Partners (17%) from predominantly small and mid-sized firms. 39% were from firms with between 2 and 4 partners, and 37% from firms with between 5 and 14 partners. 37% were in the 40-49 age group and 40% were in the 50-59 age group. The results are intended to be indicative rather than definitive.



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Overview

The challenges brought on by the recent global financial crisis and the ensuing slowdown in the economy are reflected in the results of the online survey. 67% of respondents regard the challenges they face to be more complex compared with five years ago. 48% of respondents say that 'leadership' is regarded as being 'critical' to their future. According to respondents, a leader is best described as '*someone who motivates people to give of their best.*'

The three leading areas where respondents' leadership skills have been put to the test most in the last twelve months are:

1. Motivating their team
2. Delivering on change
3. Hitting targets

The three leading barriers to better leadership in respondents' firms are seen to be:

1. Reluctance to change
2. Personalities
3. Complacency

Respondents regard the quality of 'leadership' in their firms and their own leadership abilities almost equally (72% and 74% respectively).

When asked if men or women made better leaders, 71% thought men and women were both equal. 10% thought men made better leaders.

44% of respondents are committed to investing time and money in developing leadership in their firms. 22% will provide it 'if asked'.

Conferences, seminars and in-house training are the main types of 'leadership development' undertaken by firms.

Appendices

- (i) Paper – ‘*The Leadership Imperative*’

- (ii) Leadership in Law Firms 2012 - Full survey results

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Simon is a specialist in professional development and law firm growth. A former practising lawyer in London, he moved into management consulting following an MBA from City University, London and a two-year stint in the advertising world. Since then, he has spent more than 20 years working with law firms globally, helping them to achieve greater success through leadership, management and innovation. Apart from his consulting, coaching and writing, Simon addresses and facilitates conferences and partner retreats worldwide. His writing career has included articles published in professional journals globally and on-line. He has written two best-selling books, *Why Lawyers Should Eat Bananas* which has been translated into Russian and *Why Entrepreneurs Should Eat Bananas* which has been translated into Portuguese and Spanish. His latest book *Legal Eagles* was released November 2010. He is a founding member of the [Law Management Group](#).

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Introduction

This paper is about the need for leadership in law firms. It aims to provide a context for better understanding leadership and its role in addressing the increasingly complex challenges faced by law firms. Specifically, it examines:

- the changing nature of leadership in law firms
- the unique challenges facing law firm leaders
- the benefits of leadership
- the key attributes needed to lead firms effectively into the future
- 6 ways to kick-start a leadership culture in your firm

The central theme of this paper, is that law firms need a new style of leadership if they are to be effective in achieving their goals and delivering legal services in the future.

This paper is not intended to offer a comprehensive dissertation of the topic nor to teach leadership skills but rather to provide an overview of the key considerations. In preparing this paper, I have drawn not only on my own research and consulting experience but also on recent published research, much of which is cited in this paper. Additionally, an online survey of law firm leaders from New Zealand and overseas was conducted. The results are appended.

Special thanks to Richard Rowley, David Sharrock and Dean Palmer who generously shared their perspectives on leadership (also appended) in support of this paper.

The Changing Nature of Leadership in Law Firms

“Leadership is about producing change.”

- Roland B. Smith, Ph.D., Centre for Creative Leadership

The chances are that if you are reading this paper, then you will have a keen interest in the future success of your law firm. You may currently be in a leadership position or preparing yourself to assume such a role. You may appreciate the changing nature of the legal services market and have concerns about what they might mean for your law firm. You might also be wondering how to initiate change in an environment more commonly associated with the preservation of the status quo. If so, then I hope you will find this paper rewarding.

Traditionally, the word ‘leadership’ within the context of a law firm has been used to describe a person in a position of seniority – a Chairman, a Senior Partner or a Managing Partner. However, just because people have a title or a position does not make them a leader. As writer John Maxwell has observed, *‘It’s not the position that makes the leader, but the leader who makes the position.’*¹

Today’s progressive law firm leader is a very different kind of person. (S)he is aware of the dynamics affecting the legal services industry, understands the need for change and is not reliant on seniority, rank or title to qualify as a ‘leader’. As New Zealand’s former Prime Minister David Lange once commented, ‘leadership is all about encouraging people to have trust and confidence in you.’

Leadership, therefore, is a quality reserved not just for figureheads. Anyone in a law firm can be a leader. Inevitably, those that demonstrate leadership qualities will eventually become recognised one way or the other. The very word ‘Partner’ is also indicative of a law firm model that is being challenged and even outmoded in today’s competitive market for legal services. As Professor Stephen Mayson has observed, the partnership model is under threat and is arguably unsustainable.²

¹ ‘The 21 Irrefutable laws of Leadership’ John Maxwell (2007)

² Professor Stephen Mayson, Director of the Legal Services Policy Institute, 21 March 2007

“The profession would be well advised to lose its current tendency to equate the legal services market with the legal profession. The market may grow and prosper; the legal profession may not.”

While Professors Mayson’s comments were made at the initiation of recent UK Government reforms to the legal services market, they were not made in light of those reforms, but as a consequence of a number of forces and pressures, many of which similarly affect New Zealand law firms. For example, the global economic recession has created great uncertainty for law firms everywhere and intensified competition. Consumer demand, inefficient business practices and an oversupply of lawyers are but just three factors that have conspired to destabilise law firms and threaten their profitability in recent times. Indeed, some firms, unprepared for these forces, have simply folded.

These are challenging times. Indeed, 67% of those law firm leaders who participated in my recent online survey³ stated that, compared with 5 years ago, the challenges they face are far more complex. The leading three areas where their leadership has been put to the test in the last 12 months are:

1. Motivating their team
2. Delivering on change
3. Hitting targets

Some of the consequences of the growing pressures facing law firms have been well documented. Richard Susskind’s latest book, intriguingly titled ‘*The End of Lawyers?*’⁴ cites various sources who have researched the impact of the recession. From a UK perspective, he cites research by law firm Eversheds.⁵ Their work identified “a shift towards the buyer’s market, the emergence of clients as major agents of change, downward pressure on fees, new efficiencies being driven by the recession and the uptake in novel ways of sourcing legal work.”

³ Law Firm Leadership Survey 2012. Tupman

⁴ ‘The End of Lawyers?’ Oxford University Press 2010

⁵ ‘The Client Revolution: the impact of the recession on the legal sector’ (2010), Eversheds

How are law firms generally responding to these dynamics? Susskind suggests there are two camps. In the first camp are those who regard the economic downturn as a temporary disruption and that normal service will be resumed shortly. In the meantime the challenge for them is to cut costs, win as much new business as possible, keep morale up and hang on in there. In the second camp, there are those who acknowledge that the current situation has exposed many inefficient or unjustifiable working practices, that new ways of working are emerging, that the costs of repetitive work can be cut dramatically and that when the economic storm passes and the dust settles, there will be no return to past practices.

Given the close alignment of the legal profession between the UK and New Zealand, law firm leaders in this country would do well to learn from the experience of their UK counterparts. While similar reforms in New Zealand may not be on the agenda, at least not yet, the market dynamics affecting the legal services market here are very similar.

What appears incontrovertible is the extent to which technology has transformed, and will continue to transform, the delivery of legal services globally. The consequences of technological advances mean that the traditional role of lawyers will change and so, inevitably, will the role of law firm leaders.

As Professor Susskind observes:

“The market is increasingly unlikely to tolerate expensive lawyers for tasks (guiding, advising, drafting, researching, problem-solving and more) that can equally or better be discharged, directly or indirectly, by smart systems and processes.

It follows that the jobs of many traditional lawyers will be substantially eroded and often eliminated. At the same time, I foresee new law jobs emerging which may be highly rewarding, even if very different from those of today.”

The changing landscape for the delivery of legal services is activating a change in the business models being used to deliver legal services and consequently a change to the style of leadership required to effectively compete in this industry. No longer will qualification for a leadership role depend on seniority or status. No longer will the role of ‘Managing Partner’ be regarded as some kind of honorary position bestowed on whoever is willing to trade lawyering for management for a few years. No longer will the leader’s purpose or remit be to ensure the firm makes a profit (although that is not to say it won’t be important).

I predict the next generation of law firm leader will be a different character altogether; someone who takes a long term view of their business, and is concerned about the viability and sustainability of their firm's current position; (s)he will have a vision of a better future for the firm; internally, (s)he will keenly appreciate the need to balance the interests of long-serving incumbents with those of the new generation; externally, (s)he will need to be in tune with client demands and market dynamics if the firm is to stay competitive.

As Roland Smith, senior faculty member at the Centre for Creative Leadership has observed,

'...Future success will be based not only on the historic practice and transactional skills that make attorneys important but will also depend on the lawyer-leader to transform their firms and inspire the people within them⁶.

While New Zealand law firms might identify with many of the comments in this paper, they are by no means alone in finding leadership elusive. Recent research⁷ concluded that

'...the New Zealand leader is unlikely to encourage and acknowledge differing points of view, has low self-awareness and is resistant to change. They respect data more than the opinions of other workforce. It is as if their need to be 'right' overwhelms their ability to be right'. Maybe this sounds familiar?

⁶ 'The Struggles of Lawyer-Leaders and What They Need to Know ' NYSBA Journal, March/April 2009

⁷ More 'Right' than 'Real' – the shape of authentic leadership in New Zealand (2007) Levy and Bentley

The Unique Challenges Facing Law Firm Leaders

“The much bigger challenge for law firms is ensure their long-term health. This calls for leadership, vision and strength of purpose, quite different from those management skills that improve efficiency.”

- Richard Susskind, ‘The End of Lawyers?’

Over the past twenty years, there seems little doubt that the legal profession has learnt to manage itself well. Firms have had to re-invent the way they operate to compete and sustain profit margins. Management restructuring, strategic planning, quality standardisation, process re-engineering, information technology, and performance appraisal have all played their part in ensuring law firms are better run. Yet in recent discussions with law firm partners, CEOs and practice managers, I have discovered a lack of clarity about the definition of leadership and the role of the leader. Maybe this is partly due to confusion between ‘leadership’ and ‘management’. Professor Warren Bennis, highly acclaimed author on the topic of leadership usefully clarifies⁸ the key differences in this way:

Managers

Administer
Maintain
Focus on systems
Ask ‘how?’ and ‘when?’
Have eyes on bottom line
Accept the status quo
Do things right

Leaders

Innovate
Develop
Focus on people
Ask ‘what?’ and ‘why?’
Have eyes on the horizon
Challenge the status quo
Do things right

However these distinctions do not address some of the unique challenges that law firm leaders can face to a greater or lesser degree.

⁸ ‘On Becoming A Leader’ Bennis (1994)

For example:

- persuading soon-to-retire partners of the need to change habits of a lifetime
- gaining support for change initiatives
- defining the leader's role
- dealing with a difficult, obstructive or under-performing partner
- agreeing on and upholding agreed and articulated values
- dismissing a troublesome partner
- transitioning into the role of a new Managing/Executive Partner
- winning support for your initiatives
- uniting a firm to a common cause
- uniting a multi-site firm
- finding and retaining quality lawyers
- motivating all your people
- meeting the needs of the new generation
- developing tomorrow's leaders

There is no 'one-size fits all' solution to these tricky scenarios. The method of dealing with them varies from firm to firm and is beyond the scope of this paper.. However, many of them are addressed in an excellent book, '*Serving At the Pleasure of My Partners*'⁹ by Patrick McKenna et al.

Handling these situations is a test for the most resilient of law firm leaders. It requires diplomacy and a disposition that encourages their people to have trust and confidence in them. However, it is much easier for leaders to meet and overcome these challenges if two preconditions exist:

- (i) their firms have articulated their vision and values and.

⁹ '*Serving At the Pleasure of My Partners*', McKenna, Burke et al (West) (2011)

- (ii) the firm's governance or constitution defines the leadership and management roles and gives them a mandate to get on with the job.

In my experience, most firms do neither very well. Consequently, any person taking on a leadership role (appointed, self-elected, or by happenstance) will find him/herself trying to build on 'shifting sands'.

Let me deal with both issues in turn.

Vision and values

Every self-respecting business needs to have some idea of where it is going. Otherwise it will drift and be blown in any direction by market forces. It is lot easier to lead if Partners are in agreement when answering these questions: '*what do we want to achieve?*' and '*how do we want to operate?*' The questions are best answered by articulating the firm's vision and values.

The vision describes the future state of the firm, upon the successful implementation of a business or strategic plan.

The values are the firm's standards or guiding principles. They are defined not by your aspirations but what you are prepared to enforce¹⁰. (Maister)

As Maister writes in *Strategy and the Fat Smoker*

"If firms are to deliver on the visions they have set for themselves, they must address such issues as what behaviour partners have a right to expect from each other, what the real minimum standards and values are and how common values and standards can actually be attained not just preached."

Here's a recent example from a client of mine, - a New Zealand accountancy practice that recently articulated its vision and values.

Vision: *To be the preferred accounting firm in our region.*

Values: *To achieve our vision, we will expect everyone:*

* *To act with honesty and integrity*

¹⁰ 'True Professionalism' David Maister (1997) p 75

- * *To work to the highest standards of professionalism*
- * *To lead by example*
- * *To co-operate and support each other*
- * *To take responsibility for their own performance*
- * *To respect each other*
- * *To communicate openly / effectively*
- * *To continually learn new skills*
- * *To pursue a healthy work-life balance*
- * *To give credit where credit is due*

We will not tolerate those that do not observe these principles.

Note the final sentence above.

Articulation of a vision and values will assist a leader in meeting many of the complex challenges by being the ‘touchstone’ of the firm; it will send out a signal to the rest of the firm about where it is going and what it stands for.

Leader’s role and mandate

The business model for most law firms, at least historically, has been a ‘partnership’, something which I referred to earlier as being under threat. The very nature of a partnership means that most partners want to be consulted, often on matters that shouldn’t really concern them. The consequence has been that few decisions are made without consensus. As Margaret Thatcher once observed, consensus is the negation of leadership.

“To me consensus seems to be the process of abandoning all beliefs, principles, values and policies in search of something in which no one believes, but to which no one objects—the process of avoiding the very issues that have to be solved, merely because you cannot get agreement on the way ahead.”

History has shown that when law firms attempt to introduce change, it has often been problematic and painful. To be introduced successfully it needs strong leadership; to be implemented successfully, it requires strong management. While a Partnership can delegate responsibility for management, it cannot abdicate responsibility for leadership.

Those who have assumed leadership positions (typically Managing Partners/Directors) have a responsibility to oversee 3 key areas:

1. Planning
2. Profitability
3. People

While it is not necessarily the leader's job to perform these functions personally, it is his/her job to ensure these key areas are addressed. This is not a function to be performed only when time allows. In recent years, the role of 'managing (or 'executive') partner' has evolved to such a degree that, particularly in larger firms, it has become a full time role. (See for example, my interview with Neville Eisenberg in *Legal Eagles*. He no longer does any legal work. He devotes all of his time to overseeing the running of the business, just like a CEO.)

The Leadership Spin-off – is it worth it?

Given today's complex challenges demand a new style of leadership, is there any evidence that effective leadership makes a law firm stronger and more profitable? Evidence regarding the impact on law firms is hard to come by in quantifiable terms; however, there is plenty of evidence that conclusively demonstrates there is a high correlation between leadership and high performance in other organizations and professional service firms. They all agree on one thing: **motivated people perform more effectively in delivering results than demotivated people.**

AON Hewitt, widely regarded as one of the world's leading HR consultancies has, since 2001, studied the factors that drive a winning leadership culture. The annual study, recognized for its global scope and research rigour, attracts hundreds of companies around the globe that seek insights on leadership development and employee engagement. They conclude that leadership is the single largest determinant of business success.

In 2001, **David Maister**, the world's leading authority on professional service firm management conducted a worldwide study¹¹ of 139 offices of 29 professional service firms in 15 countries. His study unequivocally showed that there was a high correlation between employee attitudes and financial success. He concluded that the key to success lay not in the systems of the firm but in the character and skills of the leaders and managers of those firms.

Since 1996, **Jim Collins** and his research team have studied what it takes for a good company to become a great one. Their studies concluded that 'Good to Great' companies (i.e., those who cumulated stock returns of 6.9 times the stock market in 15 years) were distinguished by their leadership¹².

¹¹ 'Practice What You Preach' (2001), Maister

¹² 'Good to Great' (2001) Collins

Key Attributes Needed to Lead Law Firms into the Future

“Much of what is required to be truly effective in a leadership role conflicts with the very essence of what makes practising law so appealing...the skill sets are very different and yet there is little training or orientation available to ease the transition.”¹³

- Patrick McKenna, Brian Burke and Members of the Managing Partner’s LAB

It is incredible that, unlike the corporate world where CEOs assume leadership positions after years of training, experience and being mentored, law firms appoint people with little or no formal training, education or experience to assume a leadership role. Many law firm partners see themselves as adequate leaders already or they simply don’t care, perhaps believing that time is best spent billing fees rather than leading people. In many firms, leadership education has been sold as a privilege¹⁴ rather than as a necessity. Given the changing nature of leadership in law firms, this is a recipe for disaster.

The preceding paragraph implies that leadership can be learnt. Indeed it can. There may be those who think leaders are born not made. Yet there is ample evidence that this is simply not true. While it maybe true that some people may have more of an innate ability to lead than others, the skills required can be learnt, just like the skills of skiing, driving, playing rugby and so on.

As James Kouzes and Barry Posner, world renowned for their work on the topic, write, *“Good leadership is an understandable and universal process. Though each person is a unique individual, there are shared patterns to the practice of leadership. And these practices can be learned.”*

So what are the keys to successful law firm leadership? Are they the same as any other business? In principle, yes but in practice, not always.

¹³ Extract from ‘Serving At The Pleasure of My Partners’ (2011) Westlaw, pp 2-3

¹⁴ Leadership for Lawyers Blog, Mark Beese 17 November 2007

There are of course some key differences between law firms and corporate organizations. Whereas in corporate firms, leadership (at all levels) is a recognised and cherished component of a successful organisation, in law firms it is often mistaken for management, - itself is often frowned on by partners who have come to regard it as 'pure overhead, as drudgery that doesn't reflect on the professionalism that defines a lawyer. And does not generate revenue like practising law actually does.'¹⁵

If you have ever had a 'bad' boss, then ask yourself, what made that person 'bad'? Similarly if you ever had a 'good' boss, what to your mind made that person 'good'? I suspect your answers may have something to do with the boss' behaviour. In essence, the best leaders in law firms have the ability to motivate their people to perform exceptionally well and achieve results on a daily basis as well as in the longer term. They make a difference; they give a damn. They appreciate that every aspect of their behaviour and attitude around the workplace sets the standard for others to follow. They set an example, they inspire others, they challenge the status quo, they enable others to perform to a higher standard and they are driven by their heart as well as their head. They understand what makes people tick.¹⁶

Ben Heineman, Distinguished Senior Fellow at Harvard Law School Programme on the Legal Profession has described the lawyer-leaders of the future as:

"...lawyers who are not just strong team members, but who can lead and build organizations: create the vision, the values, the priorities, the strategies, the people, the systems, the processes, the checks and balances, the resources and the motivation. Working on teams and leading them are interconnected: much of leadership today is not command and control of the troops but persuasion, motivation and empowerment of teams around a shared vision."

¹⁵ 'Serving at The Pleasure of My Partners' (McKenna, Burke et al) (2011)

¹⁶ 'What Makes Us Tick?' Hugh Mackay (2010)

In his much acclaimed book *Good to Great*, Jim Collins discovered the best leaders embodied seven key traits:

1. A paradoxical mix of personal humility and professional will;
2. Ambition, - first and foremost for the company, not themselves;
3. Modesty;
4. Drive, - they do whatever it takes to make the company great;
5. Diligence;
6. Credit others for success;
7. Accept full responsibility for setbacks

Perhaps the final word on this should go to The Iron Lady¹⁷ who once said:

"Being a leader is like being a lady, if you have to go around telling people you are one, you aren't."

¹⁷ Margaret Thatcher

6 ways to kick start a leadership culture in your firm

“With the benefit of such knowledge, the challenge for most law firms is not the design of leadership programmes that can produce desired results, but rather gaining the commitment of senior partners to make the investment required.”¹⁸

If there are no people in your firm with leadership qualities, then it would be surprising. Generally there are, but they have not been given the opportunity or permission to lead.

Given the increasingly complex challenges facing law firms, it is imperative that law firms take steps to develop a leadership culture.

Often firms recognise the need for leadership and change, sometimes out of sheer frustration. Some partners become dissatisfied with the status quo and become determined to change things for the good of all concerned. However they can hit a wall of complacency or resistance and often retreat to their offices to get on with being a lawyer rather than a leader. To overcome this scenario, there are six steps that anyone can take to kick-start a leadership culture in their firm.

1. Start a discussion among partners about the future of legal services and the future of your firm. Ask questions such as:

- *what do you think are the critical issues ahead?*
- *how do you think those issues will impact on our firm?*
- *what do you think we should do to prepare?*
- *how do you think we should operate in three years time?*
- *what sort of people do you think we will need to recruit?*
- *what do you think your clients will want from us?*
- *what impact do you think technology will have on our services?*

A good scenario for such discussions is your firm retreat or even at weekly or monthly partner lunches or catch-ups.

¹⁸‘The Changing Nature of Leadership in Law Firms’, Smith and Marrow *NYSBA Journal* September 2008

2. Educate your partners. Let them understand your concerns by sharing your knowledge or experiences; for example, lend them books you have read, tell them about seminars you have attended or papers you have read on some of the critical issues.

3. Engage the opinion leaders in your firm. Talk individually with those who have influence and who are respected. Try to get them on board so that they can be persuasive in places where you can't.

4. Involve your clients. Consider having some of your clients visit the firm to discuss about the changes and challenges in their own organizations and their views about the leadership of your firm. Taking this one step further, you may even consider appointing some clients to an advisory panel. Invite 3 or 4 clients to be part of an advisory board; - a bit like a non-executive board of directors. Their brief is to offer suggestions and guidance on issues impacting your firm.

5. Appoint a non-executive chairman to oversee governance, leadership and management issues. Several firms are now doing this quite successfully by appointing a well respected and recognised local business leader.

6. Learn from your competitors. Lawyers tend to follow the leader rather than take the lead themselves. If one of your competitors has stolen the march over your firm, then study what they have done and look for ways to respond so as to remain competitive.

Conclusion

As the title to this paper implies, leadership is going to be vital for those firms wishing to thrive in the future. As Kouses and Posner remind us in *The Leadership Challenge*¹⁹,

“The domain of the leader is the future. The most significant contribution leaders make is not simply to today's bottom line; it is to the long term development of people and institutions so that they can adapt, change, prosper and grow.”

The challenge is not just a personal one but also a collective one for all involved in the delivery of legal services. The ability to lead lies within us all. It is imperative that law firms tap into that ability and rise to the challenges ahead.

As a consequence, clients will be better off and so will the law firms who serve them.

¹⁹ The Leadership Challenge, (2007) p xvi

Appendices

Perspectives from law firm leaders

A. The CEO's perspective

Richard Rowley, CEO Tompkins Wake, Hamilton



Richard has extensive legal, governance and management consultancy experience including acting as adviser to government agencies and industry bodies in the meat, energy and telecommunications industries. Here Richard offer his five perspectives:

- (i) Distributed leadership is essential in a law firm environment.
- (ii) Being accountable with measurable objectives.
- (iii) A vision needs to be believable, it needs to be challenging and it needs to be actionable.
- (iv) Don't just tell me, show me!
- (v) Do a few things at a time but do them very well.

B. The Partner's perspective

David Sharrock, Managing Partner, Sharrock Pitman, Melbourne



David is a senior lawyer and the Principal of Sharrock Pitman Legal, having practised law since 1979. He is a Business Law Specialist, accredited by the Law Institute of Victoria. He has also served on a number of Boards and is a member of the Commercial Law and Workplace Relations sections of the Law Institute of Victoria.

- (i) Passion, enthusiasm, high energy, and optimism from me as leader are infectious.
- (ii) My heart and soul is of more critical importance than all my plans and strategies.
- (iii) As leader, I am guardian of the culture and driver of the vision, consistently and constantly.
- (iv) As leader, I work hard at building trust with the team. They are watching and alert to everything.
- (v) I try to lead as a servant who has been entrusted with great responsibility and not as one wielding power and authority.
- (vi) As a leader, I do always treat my team with dignity and respect, encouraging more criticizing, exhorting more than directing, and listening more than telling.
- (vii) Good humour, gentle teasing, laughter, and fun from me as leader work like an aphrodisiac!!! Perhaps that analogy is not entirely apposite!
- (viii) As a leader, I always want the very best for my lawyers and I coach them toward reaching their full potential. The focus is never on what I can get out of them. I tell them: " My aim is to make you a better lawyer than me one day. Sadly, you're not there yet!"
- (ix) As a leader, I try hard to connect emotionally with each team member, build healthy and life giving relationships with them, and really enjoy their company. This works a treat for them and me!
- (x) As leader, I have a lot of grey hair. It goes with the job description because effective leadership requires a lot of sacrifice on my part. I sometimes think that I give more than I get. But, then again, there is nothing wrong with that because therein lies the real reward and the real reason for me aspiring to become the very best leader that I can be. The journey really does make it all worthwhile.

C. The (ex) - Chairman's Perspective

Dean Palmer, Partner, Anderson Lloyd



Prior to joining Anderson Lloyd, Dean served as Chairman of his previous firm Duncan Cotterill, for whom he spent the best part of 25 years. During his tenure, the firm grew considerably. Last February, he found himself trapped in the Clarendon Tower along with over 100 other people in last year's Christchurch earthquake.

- (i) Even now almost one year after the devastating February 2011 earthquake, Christchurch leaders more than ever need to understand the personal issues and other challenges their staff are facing and are finding themselves filling the roles of social workers, mentors, advisors and friends. Perhaps those roles should be part of a leader's true attributes anyway.

- (ii) You cannot lead by memo. It is actions which are important – staff will watch you carefully and behave accordingly.

- (iii) It is important that the firm's governing body (be it a board, a committee of the partnership or the partnership as a whole) sets proper levels of authority for its CEO or Practice Manager and sticks to them. The governing body must be careful not to be tempted into the realm of management. Its role is to set goals and policy and it must leave implementation to the executive.

- (iv) Leadership is about having a vision, sharing it with those around you and together as one seeing it through.

simon
TUPMAN
Strategic Business Growth



Through his consulting, speaking and coaching, Simon works with law firm leaders to address and continually improve the things that really matter.

For example,





- **Establishing a clear strategy**
- **Identifying what clients really want**
- **Delivering outstanding client service**
- **Leading and managing, not just administering**
- **Gaining an edge over the competition**
- **Providing learning and development**
 - **Innovating and brainstorming**
 - **Generating new business**
 - **Profitability**

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Results for: Law Firm Leadership Survey 2012






1) What is your age?

		Percentage	Responses
29 or younger		0.9	1
30-39		10.4	11
40-49		36.8	39
50-59		39.6	42
60 or older		12.3	13
Total responses:			106






2) What is your gender?

		Percentage	Responses
Male		61.3	65
Female		38.7	41
Total responses:			106

3) Which country are you from?






		Percentage	Responses
New Zealand		73.6	78
Australia		8.5	9
UK		11.3	12
Canada		0.9	1
USA		1.9	2
Other		3.8	4
Total responses:			106

4) How many Partners or Directors are there in your firm?








		Percentage	Responses
Sole Practitioner		12.3	13
2-4		38.7	41
5-14		36.8	39
15-25		5.7	6
25 or more		6.6	7
Total responses:			106

5) Which of the following best describes your position in your firm?





		Percentage	Responses
Chairman		0.9	1
Senior Partner		9.4	10

Managing Partner		23.6	25
Equity Partner		17.0	18
Salaried Partner		0.9	1
Associate		0.9	1
Solicitor		0.9	1
CEO		8.5	9
Practice Manager		30.2	32
Other		7.5	8
		Total responses:	106



6) In order of priority, which of the following statements best describes a 'leader' in your opinion? 'A leader is someone who....

		Average Score	Responses
..drives change and progress.'		2.63 / 7	106
..motivates people to give of their best.'		1.97 / 7	106
..is in a position of authority.'		5.82 / 7	106
..challenges the status quo.'		4.59 / 7	106
..develops people.'		3.50 / 7	106
..gives people a sense of purpose.'		3.37 / 7	106
..whose main priority is making money.'		6.11 / 7	106
		6.11 / 7	

7) In your opinion, who makes better leaders?

		Percentage	Responses
Men		10.4	11
Women		1.9	2
Both equal		70.8	75
I don't know		17.0	18
		Total responses:	106

8) Generally, do you think lawyers make good leaders?

		Percentage	Responses
Always		0.0	0
Often		9.4	10
Sometimes		57.5	61
Occasionally		20.8	22
Rarely		12.3	13
Never		0.0	0
		Total responses:	106

9) Generally, do you think law firm managers make good leaders?

		Percentage	Responses
Always		0.0	0
Often		31.1	33
Occasionally		60.4	64
Rarely		7.5	8
Never		0.9	1
Total responses:			106

10) How is leadership regarded in your firm?

		Percentage	Responses
Critical to our future		48.1	51
Important		42.5	45
We leave it to chance		9.4	10
We don't need any		0.0	0
We don't care		0.0	0
Total responses:			106

11) On a scale of 1-5, how would you rate the leadership in your firm?















1 Lousy	2	3 Average	4	5 Outstanding	Responses	Average Score
1 (0.94%)	4 (3.77%)	32 (30.19%)	66 (62.26%)	3 (2.83%)	106	3.62 / 5 (72.40%)
						3.62 / 5 (72.40%)

12) On a scale of 1-5, how would you rate your own leadership ability?












1 Lousy	2	3 Average	4	5 Outstanding	Responses	Average Score
1 (0.94%)	1 (0.94%)	35 (33.02%)	63 (59.43%)	6 (5.66%)	106	3.68 / 5 (73.60%)
						3.68 / 5 (73.60%)

13) Which of the following attributes do you consider to be the hallmarks of a great leader? (Click only those that clearly apply)





		Percentage	Responses
Passionate		6.5	71
Purposeful		4.8	52
Visionary		7.4	81
Values-driven		5.0	54
Ambitious		2.7	29
Exemplary		2.6	28

Influential		4.0	43
Empathetic		5.2	57
Self aware		4.6	50
Socially aware		2.9	32
Inspiring		7.0	76
Communicative		8.3	90
Challenging		4.1	45
Innovative		5.9	64
Transparent		3.3	36
Humble		3.4	37
Energetic		7.0	76
Decisive		6.9	75
Courageous		3.4	37
Collaborative		5.1	55

















14) What are the key barriers to better leadership in your firm? (Click only those that clearly apply)

		Percentage	Responses
Partnership model		11.3	33
Reluctance to change		18.2	53
Risk aversion		8.6	25
Personalities		15.8	46
Lack of vision		8.2	24
Complacency		13.4	39
Arrogance		3.4	10
Reluctance to be led		7.9	23
Collegiality		2.7	8
Inadequate professional development		5.1	15
Other		5.5	16









15) Compared with 5 years ago, how complex would you say are the challenges you now face as a leader?

		Percentage	Responses
More complex		67.0	71
About the same		27.4	29
Less complex		1.9	2
Other		3.8	4
		Total responses:	106

16) In the last 12 months, when have your leadership skills been put to the test most? (Click all that apply)

		Percentage	Responses
Firm crisis		3.6	11
Merger		1.3	4
Partner upheaval		7.1	22
Unexpected death		1.3	4
Financial crisis		8.8	27
Redundancies		4.2	13
Bad PR		1.0	3
Disaster recovery		4.2	13
Delivering on change		15.9	49
Hitting targets		13.0	40
Training others		8.1	25
Coaching others		5.8	18
Giving feedback		5.2	16
Dealing with media		0.6	2
Motivating your team		15.9	49
Other		3.9	12

17) How are leadership development needs identified by your firm? (Click all that apply)












		Percentage	Responses
Self development		22.2	56
Performance appraisal		22.2	56
360 degree feedback		9.5	24
Coaching		9.9	25
Client feedback		10.7	27
Staff feedback		16.7	42
Request		5.6	14
Other		3.2	8

18) What types of leadership development (LD) (if any) does your firm provide for its people? (As the programme only allows one answer per line, please click the category (partner, associate etc) that applies the most.)

	Partners	Solicitors	Management	Support staff	Responses	Average Score
In-house training	8 (11.59%)	37 (53.62%)	5 (7.25%)	19 (27.54%)	69	2.51 / 4 (62.75%)

External LD programme	26 (44.07%)	19 (32.20%)	10 (16.95%)	4 (6.78%)	59	1.86 / 4 (46.50%)
In-house coaching	7 (11.67%)	39 (65.00%)	1 (1.67%)	13 (21.67%)	60	2.33 / 4 (58.25%)
External coaching	21 (42.86%)	20 (40.82%)	4 (8.16%)	4 (8.16%)	49	1.82 / 4 (45.50%)
Secondments	2 (11.76%)	10 (58.82%)	0 (0.00%)	5 (29.41%)	17	2.47 / 4 (61.75%)
MBA degree	5 (33.33%)	2 (13.33%)	6 (40.00%)	2 (13.33%)	15	2.33 / 4 (58.25%)
Seminars	22 (28.95%)	48 (63.16%)	3 (3.95%)	3 (3.95%)	76	1.83 / 4 (45.75%)
Conferences	44 (55.00%)	26 (32.50%)	8 (10.00%)	2 (2.50%)	80	1.60 / 4 (40.00%)
Don't know	3 (25.00%)	3 (25.00%)	0 (0.00%)	6 (50.00%)	12	2.75 / 4 (68.75%)
None of the above	15 (55.56%)	4 (14.81%)	3 (11.11%)	5 (18.52%)	27	1.93 / 4 (48.25%)
						2.03 / 4 (50.70%)

19) In what types of leadership development have you taken part while in your current post? (Click any that apply)

		Percentage	Responses
In-house training		12.4	35
External LD programme		13.1	37
In-house coaching		8.8	25
External coaching		8.8	25
Secondments		0.7	2
MBA degree		2.1	6
Seminars		22.3	63
Conferences		23.3	66
Don't know		0.0	0
None of the above		5.3	15
Other		3.2	9

20) To what extent is your firm committed to invest time and money in developing leadership in your firm?

		Percentage	Responses
We are very committed		44.3	47

We provide it if asked		21.7	23
We are ambivalent		13.2	14
We have other priorities		8.5	9
We aren't interested		6.6	7
Other		5.7	6
Total responses:			106

21) If you would like to receive a copy of the results of the survey and my report summary, please leave me your email address

1. Name:

2. Email address: