

What Law Firm Practice Leaders Need Now: An Essential Handbook for Success

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Introduction

In the complex and ever-evolving world of law firms, the role of a practice group leader is crucial. Like a symphony conductor, practice group leaders are accountable for bringing together talented individuals to create harmonious outcomes. However, many law firms lack proper training and support for these leaders, often leaving them with unclear responsibilities and limited guidance. Recognizing the significance of this role, "[The Practice Group Leader's Handbook for Success](#)" has been revised and updated to provide invaluable insights and advice to practice group leaders. This article highlights the key points covered in the book and emphasizes the importance of these leaders in driving the success and sustainability of their practice groups.

The Critical Role of Practice Group Leaders

In medium and large law firms, the management of complex operations cannot be handled solely at the firm level. Effective management at this level is essential to attract and retain talent, meet increasing client demands, and ensure financial accountability. Functioning as business units, practice groups bridge the gap between the firm and its people, clients, and projects. Unfortunately, many practice group leaders lack adequate training, clear job descriptions, or defined responsibilities. Consequently, they often feel frustrated and prefer to focus on their practice rather than their leadership role. However, practice group leaders play a pivotal role in engaging lawyers and legal professionals, enhancing firm profitability, and securing the future sustainability of the business model.

The Role of "The Practice Group Leader's Handbook for Success"

"[The Practice Group Leader's Handbook for Success](#)," first published in 2005 with input from managing partners, practice group leaders, and professionals, became a trusted resource for countless practice group leaders across multiple firms. The newly released edition incorporates insights and advice gained from 30 years of collaboration with firm leadership and practice group leaders to drive the success of their groups.

The Challenges and Rewards of Practice Leadership

While the role of a practice leader is not without its challenges, it can also be incredibly fulfilling. Practice leaders have the opportunity to assist their colleagues and contribute to their firm's thriving success. The handbook aims to inspire practice leaders by highlighting the possibilities for effective practice group management today. It is dedicated to supporting practice leaders and equipping them with the tools they need to succeed.

Benefits of Successful Practice Leadership

When practice leaders thrive in their roles, practice groups become strong and highly effective, yielding numerous benefits for the firm:

1. Achieving Firm Strategy: Practice group leaders help position the firm to achieve its overall strategy.
2. Cultivating Strong Engagement: Members of the firm develop a strong sense of allegiance and commitment to one another and the group.
3. Proactive Work Management: Proactive work management leads to less stress and burnout and enhanced profitability, as tasks are handled proactively rather than reactively.
4. Business Development Success: Effective practice group management increases business development success and improves the firm's position in the marketplace to identify and leverage new opportunities.
5. Decreased Attrition, Soaring Morale: Talent development, workload management, and business planning techniques engage employees, reducing lawyer attrition and boosting morale.
6. Risk Mitigation: Leaders can effectively anticipate and mitigate risk through consistent monitoring activities.
7. Strengthening Client Relationships: The firm can leverage and strengthen critical client relationships through the efforts of the practice group.
8. Market Adaptability: Practice groups that anticipate trends and evolve with the market ensure their sustainability and success.
9. Solid Succession Planning: The firm can develop robust succession plans and cultivate next-generation leadership.

Keys to Success

This book provides the information practice leaders need to have a more positive impact on the firm's profitability today and sustainability for the future. These are a few of the keys to success for practice leaders:

- Practice leaders play both a leadership and management role. Most people are not equally good in both, and lawyer leaders are no different. Understanding the differences and in which area your strengths lie is important for practice leaders. Practice leaders need to create "shared leadership" with other partners in their group to fulfill the major responsibilities of the group so each plays to their strengths.
- Practice leaders need to be "change agents." A leader must shake complacency and keep the group moving forward – not resting on its laurels or past success. Today's rapidly changing and hyper-competitive marketplace means practice leaders must ensure their members are aware of external forces and regularly adapt or change to ensure competitive capabilities.
- Creating strong cohesion in the practice group is critical – versus being a group of lone cowboys under a common label. The most important step to create cohesion is sharing common goals, typically developed in the group's annual business planning process. Getting partner buy-in to a small number of measurable goals is one of the hardest but most important things a practice leader does. The book outlines the process of developing effective PG business plans, including leading the group through the process of obtaining buy-in.
- The most successful, cohesive practice groups have regular (usually at least monthly) meetings about the "business of the group." Running meetings that members want to attend and actively participate in is not natural to most lawyers, but it is also not difficult once you learn the right approaches.

The "rules of engagement" literally have changed. What motivated people in the workplace many years ago – perhaps when you were an associate – is not the same today. Understanding how to create engagement with your group members – partners, associates, and other valued professionals, is a new currency for building strong teams.

Embracing the Exciting Role

Practice leadership presents an exciting opportunity during challenging times. To gain a comprehensive understanding of

the strategies and insights necessary for success, order your copy of "[The Practice Group Leader's Handbook for Success](#)" today by [clicking here](#).