



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Everyone can be great, because everyone can serve.

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Please, for a moment, consider the mayonnaise jar and 2 beers. A philosophy professor filled a mayonnaise jar with golf balls and asked his students if the jar was full. They agreed that it was. The professor then poured a box of pebbles into the jar and shook it lightly. The pebbles rolled into the open areas between the golf balls. The students then agreed that the jar was full. Next came a box of sand poured into the jar. The students once again agreed the jar was full.

The professor reached under the counter, pulled out two beers, and poured them into the jar. The students laughed. "Now," said the professor, "I want you to recognize that this jar represents your life. The golf balls are the important things – your family, children, health, friends, favorite passions – if everything else was lost and only these remained, your life would still be full. The pebbles are other things that matter – like your job, your house, your car. The sand is everything else – the small stuff. If you put the sand in the jar first, there is no room for the pebbles or golf balls. The same goes for life. If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are the most important to you. Set your priorities." One student asked what the beer represented. The professor smiled and said, "The beer just shows that no matter how full your life may seem, there is always room for a couple of beers with a friend."

The Nominating Committee is preparing a slate of officers for your consideration. I cannot encourage you enough to say "yes" when asked. You will find that being a Board member or Committee member will enrich you both professionally and personally. In fact, don't wait to be asked. Take the initiative and let a Board member know where your interests lie and how you would like to be included. Consider your service to SCALA to be at least a pebble, if not a golf ball. There will always be time for a couple of beers with your SCALA friends.

As my year as SCALA President is closing, I want to thank the Board and the entire membership for the support and encouragement I have received throughout this year. The experience has been one of true value, of immense learning, and incomparable networking and sharing. We have seen a marked increase in membership this year, have had excellent speakers, have revamped the Business Partner Program, have just finished a successful weekend with the South Carolina Bar Convention, have made personal contacts with our membership in each region of the state, have a highly professional website and newsletter, and most importantly have doubled, if not tripled, the number of conference scholarships awarded. We should all be very proud of SCALA and everyone who has worked to make it an enviable chapter of ALA.

Please plan to attend the March 20 meeting at the Clarion Hotel in Columbia, lunch at noon followed by speaker Kyra Cavanaugh, President of LifemeetsWork. Kyra works with organizations to

improve and implement flexible work programs that attract the best talent and maximize productivity and profitability by recommending small, realistic steps that make a lasting impact.

Next year is already looking like a great one. Margaret Glassman takes over as President on April 1. SCALA will benefit greatly through Margaret's leadership.

My sincere thanks to Margaret Glassman, Mimi Love, Heather Niemi, Rhonda Amick, Kim Maddox, Angie Black, Clark Reifsnider, Jane Todd, and Shawn Payment for work well done throughout the year. Also thanks goes to Brenda Stewart, who served part of the year as Director-at-Large, and who served SCALA for many years in various other capacities. We wish Brenda only the very best in her new endeavor, Stewart Marketing & Consulting, our Platinum Business Partner Sponsor.

Clara Godshall

President, 2011 - 2012



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2012 Schedule

January 18, 2012

Selling Blue Elephants:
Client Marketing, Retention and Loyalty (LI)*

February 22, 2012

Employee Handbooks
For Law Firms – Careful, Careful! (HR)**

March 21, 2012

The Art of Active Listening (CM)*

April 18, 2012

The Role of Legal Administrators in
Legal Project Management – Unprecedented
Opportunities & Current Challenges (LI)*

May 16, 2012

Safe Stress! (CM)*

June 20, 2012

Technology Management:
The Good, the Bad and the Ugly (IT)**

July 18, 2012

Change Leadership: A Boot Camp to
Drive Organizational Change (OD)**

August 15, 2012

Records Management: The Bermuda Triangle (LI)*

September 19, 2012

Of Foxes, Hedgehogs and Law Firm Profitability (FM)*

October 17, 2012

Marketing on a Shoestring Budget (LI)*

November 14, 2012 (2nd week of November)

Dealing with Substance Abuse
in the Workplace (HR)*

* 60 minutes

** 120 minutes

WEBINAR Wednesdays



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Mark the 3rd Wednesday of the month
on your calendar for ALA Webinars.

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SC Chapter News

Chapter Networking Events

On Tuesday, March 20, 2012, Kyra Cavanaugh of *Life Meets Work* will present "Strategies for Managing Flexible, Global or Dispersed Work Teams." The chapter meeting will be held at the Clarion Hotel at 1615 Gervais Street, Columbia, SC.

Visit the LifemeetsWork web site for other articles relating to the topic of creating a flexible workplace:

[Communicating with Flexible Workers](#)

[Is Flex Your Red Headed Stepchild?](#)

[Pain at the Pump Translates into Perks for Employers, Employees](#)



ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Kyra Cavanaugh, who is the president and founder of Life Meets Work, works with organizations to start (or often revitalize) workplace flexibility programs. She has consulted, coached and trained HR and work/life professionals and managers at universities, non-profits, Women's Bureau, U.S. Dept. of Labor, and corporations like McDonald's, Bank of America and Sara Lee Corporation.



Early Bird Conference Discount Ends February 6, 2012

So, you missed the Super Early Bird conference discount. Drats! There is still time left to capitalize on the Early Bird registration fee for the [2012 ALA Annual Conference & Exposition](#), April 22-26 in Honolulu. Don't miss out on this prime opportunity to save **\$200** off the regular Conference registration fee!

The Annual Conference Committee is hard at work confirming session topics -- the same level of [quality and relevant education](#) that you've experienced in the past. As soon as the educational program is finalized we will be contacting you with the full details.

In addition to cost savings you'll receive with the Super Early Bird discount, ALA has negotiated a special room rate of **\$199 per night** at the Hilton Hawaiian Village. [Make your reservations now](#) and take advantage of this incredible offer.

Looking for help justifying your attendance in 2012? Be sure to review the [Justification Tool Kit](#), including a budget spreadsheet, useful tips and a cost comparison of ALA Annual Conferences from 2007 to 2012.

Join us in Honolulu and "Ignite Your Future ... Renew Your Spirit."

The Serious Subject of Stress and Burnout

By Barbara Braunstein



Stress is defined as “the non-specific response of our body to any demand made upon it.” In other words, something happens which causes us

stress. It could be an event, something someone says or something someone does. How we individually respond to it is what is called stress. Not all stress is bad – in fact, a certain amount of stress is good! Clinically, good stress is called “eustress.” Good stress means your adrenaline starts pumping and your heart rate goes up temporarily - I call it your “get up and go.” For example, your alarm clock goes off in the morning, you wake up, remember who and where you are, what you have going for that day, your heart rate goes up a bit, the adrenaline starts pumping, and you get up and go. Once you are on your way, your heart decreases and the adrenaline pumping abates. That’s good stress!

Bad stress is too much stress. This is called overstress or distress, but we commonly just say stress. Your

heart is overpumping all or most of the time, and about 10 stress hormones are pumping relentlessly through your arteries and veins – stress hormones such as adrenaline, norepinephrine and cortisol. This is dangerous and will eventually result in poor physical and mental health.

You’ll know you are beginning to suffer the consequences of overstress when you begin to experience minor, but recurring mental and physical health problems. There are many of these, including the physical symptoms:

- ◆ stomach problems
- ◆ headaches
- ◆ muscle or joint aches
- ◆ skin outbreaks such as psoriasis, dermatitis and cold sores
- ◆ hair thinning or loss - in men and women!
- ◆ lowered immune system
- ◆ obsessive behavior
- ◆ klutziness, tripping, falling, minor accidents
- ◆ irregular sleep patterns
- ◆ overeating, under eating, or specific food eating
- ◆ tired and worn out all the time

Or the symptoms could be mental:

- ◆ irritability, chronic crankiness, picking, snipping and snapping at people

The Serious Subject of Stress and Burnout

(Continued...)

- ◆ forgetfulness
- ◆ lack of focus or concentration
- ◆ spacing out
- ◆ overemotional outbursts
- ◆ giving up hobbies and leisure activities
- ◆ avoiding friends or social activities

Therefore, it is critical that you pay attention to what your body and mind are telling you! Don't just ignore it, thinking "I can't understand why this keeps happening...oh well, I guess it's nothing...." Recognize your own individual warning signs, start to deal directly with the events or triggers causing them, and then double your efforts in the area of stress management! Because if you don't pay attention to these warning signs, they don't go away, they just get worse. Now you have to go to a doctor for the very things you didn't pay attention to when they were minor: your stomach disorder is now irritable bowel, colitis, spastic colon, etc. Or, over the counter medications don't help your headaches anymore and you need a prescription. I'm not minimizing clinical and hereditary illnesses, but if you ask your doctor (and I hope you do) she or he will tell you that 70 to 80 percent of all doctor visits today, whether for illness, accident, injury or disease, are stress related – certainly not caused solely by stress, but stress related.

I am not trying to scare you. I am asking you to take the subject of stress management seriously. Too many people think it just means a little deep breathing, or taking a day or two off from work now and then. Some professions are inherently more stressful than others, and yours



is certainly one of them! Learn more about the subject of stress, and begin to practice some of the many stress management techniques recommended by experts in this field. The techniques are not difficult, don't take up a lot of time, and may save your life.

For more information, be sure to visit www.barbarabraunstein.com.

Business Partner Spotlight

Stewart Marketing & Consulting

Strategic Planning — A Critical Process for Firms of All Sizes



Over the past few months, I have been surprised by the number of times I have been asked certain questions by attorneys in small or solo firms.

“Should a small firm like ours have a strategic plan?”

“Is it too late in the year to develop a strategic plan?”

For me, this could indicate a lack of understanding regarding the strategic planning process and the benefits that can be achieved from developing a strategic plan regardless of firm size or time of year. A firm’s strategic plan should be evolving, reviewed frequently, and revised to reflect changes in the firm and economic conditions.

In its simplest form, strategic planning is the process by which a law firm determines (or affirms) the overall direction of the firm (mission), what needs to happen to achieve a desired direction, and how to execute or implement specific tasks designed to lead the firm toward the primary vision or goal. The strategic planning process does not have to be complicated, in fact, the more complicated you make the process, the less likely you are to complete it and be successful with follow through and implementation. The process, when executed properly, should unite your firm and provide focus and direction for the future.

Who should participate in the strategic planning process?

All partners in a firm should be involved in the strategic planning process. In larger firms participation may include completion of assessment surveys or questionnaires. In smaller firms partners may attend meetings to work through the process and provide input. Whenever possible, associate attorneys should be included as well. Their insight into issues, both external and internal, can sometimes be very enlightening. Not to be overlooked is the involvement of non-lawyer administrative staff. The office manager, legal administrator, or executive director of the firm (titles will vary from one firm to another based on size and other factors) should have direct involvement and participation in the entire process. In many small firms, the administrative manager, along with the managing partner, are responsible for implemen-

tation of specific action items that are generated from the planning process. Their involvement in the development of the plan will give them a better understanding of the goals and increase their ability to facilitate the action items established.

What format should the strategic planning process take?

To ensure that the strategic planning process is a positive experience and one that will result in an executable plan, I recommend that firms consider using the SWOT analysis model. Using this model, participants in the process will review and analyze the firm’s strengths (S), weaknesses (W), opportunities (O), and threats (T). For the process to be successful, attorneys need to put aside personal goals or issues and consider the needs and goals of the firm as a whole.

During the planning process, there are some key questions to ask and the answers to these questions will form the basis for the development of the firm’s strategic plan. Some key questions include:

- What is the firm’s mission?
- Is there internal buy-in for this mission?
- What is the firm known for in the business community?
- Does the firm’s external reputation align with the firm’s mission? If not, how can we correct it?
- Why do clients work with our firm?
- What are the attorneys doing (individually or within practice groups) to advance the mission of the firm?
- Of the practice areas we currently have, are there any which should be eliminated? Are there any which should be of increased focus given the client base and increased demand for specific services?
- Do we want to grow in size or add new practice areas?
- Does our firm have established business development goals or objectives?
- How much time and resources (personnel and financial) does the firm spend on marketing, advertising and business development?
- How could marketing and business development funds be better allocated to achieve stated goals of the firm?
- Who are our biggest competitors for legal work?
- How do we stack up against the competition based on quality of work and reputation?
- What is our target revenue for the firm and per partner for the current and coming year?

Business Partner Spotlight

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Strategic Planning Continued...

- Are we using technology to maximize efficiency in all areas of the firm?

All of the questions above are designed to help the firm work through the SWOT analysis and start to identify a path for development of a strategic plan. Below is an example of a SWOT analysis for “Law Firm ABC.”

<i>Strengths:</i>	<i>Weaknesses:</i>
<p>Highly specialized attorneys</p> <p>Reputation in specific industry as the “go to firm”</p> <p>Excellent use of paralegals and other staff (leveraging)</p>	<p>Firm has only one big rainmaker</p> <p>Attorney retention with regard to diversity</p> <p>Fee structure</p>
<i>Opportunities:</i>	<i>Threats:</i>
<p>Increased demand for specific services based on changes in state laws</p> <p>Potential client base growing with new companies moving into local market</p>	<p>Expansion of other firms into local market</p> <p>Client demands for pricing discounts</p> <p>Expectations of clients regarding diversity staffing of their matters</p>

How do you get the strategic planning process started?

Once the decision has been made to embark on the journey of strategic planning (and it truly is a journey), a simple questionnaire should be created and distributed to all attorneys. Questions like those listed earlier should be included as well as others that are specific to already identified issues or concerns in the firm. The surveys should be completed and returned to a designated person, in many cases the executive director or administrative manager. The results of the survey should be summarized for review in the strategic planning session.

How do you conduct a strategic planning session?

A strategic planning session should be scheduled well in advance, and attorneys should commit to attending and participating. The meeting does not have to be long and laborious; it can and should be, a fast paced fact finding meeting in which attorneys work through the SWOT analysis (using the summarized survey information) to start to identify key issues and develop goals for the future. In firms that I work with to develop strategic plans, this part of the process can take from 2-4 hours. Much longer than that and you are guaranteed to have declining participation by attorneys and probably even see some eyes rolling back in their heads!

The outcome of the strategic planning session should be a list of realistic and attainable goals. For each goal there should be a strategy for achieving the goal. Each strategy should then be broken down into multiple action items or specific steps to be completed. STOP! This is where many firms fall short and are unable to implement their strategic plan. Historically, large firms have spent substantial sums of money hiring consultants and a significant number of non-billable hours to develop a plan that ultimately is not executed. Each strategy should be assigned to a key person in the firm who will be responsible for the execution of the strategy, keeping in mind that everyone still has their normal responsibilities. Specific action items should also be assigned to individuals responsible for execution. This brings accountability into the process and greatly improves the likelihood that the process will continue to completion. Remember not to be too aggressive in setting goals. Consider allocating the time and resources needed to achieve the top five goals. With support from management and careful selection of those responsible for implementation, your firm can work through the process successfully.

Can you conduct a strategic planning session without hiring a consultant?

The answer to that question will vary from firm to firm and depend largely on the ability of a firm to work through the process carefully with an emphasis on implementation of action items developed. Involving the appropriate administrative staff or managers will increase the chances for success as they are often the ones assigned the critical responsibility to implement strategies developed. Many firms find that it is beneficial to use a consultant to facilitate the process. For some firms it's helpful to have the outside perspective of an experienced consultant, and they can play a key role in helping the firm identify issues and develop goals. Consultants can be used to streamline and facilitate the process, but their involvement does not have to be excessive.

Business Partner Spotlight

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Strategic Planning Continued...

What are some of the benefits of strategic planning?

There are many benefits to strategic planning in law firms, but probably the most significant one is the development of a firm mission, vision, and values that are supported and understood by all attorneys and staff. Other benefits include:

- Consistent messaging from partners and associates reinforces firm brand
- Agreement among attorneys regarding the firm's goals
- Increased focus and direction
- Refinement of marketing and business development initiatives
- Successful implementation of specific goals previously not accomplished
- Increased use of tools to monitor results and evaluate the same



Once your firm has completed the strategic planning process, you have really only just begun. This is not a one shot deal – it's a process that must be worked and evaluated over time. As conditions in your firm and the marketplace change, the plan should be revisited and goals adjusted accordingly. The key to a successful strategic planning process is to keep it simple and start slow. Including as many people in the development of the firm's vision and goals for the future will

help to ensure that it is infused into the firm culture. There is much to be done, so resist the temptation to take on too much. Allow others in the firm (attorneys and staff) to participate in the completion of identified goals. This builds firm loyalty and allows the firm to benefit from the creativity and talents of everyone. Remember to celebrate your accomplishments internally and objectively assess those initiatives that are not working.

Yogi Berra said it best when he said, "If you don't know where you are going, you will wind up somewhere else." The strategic planning process should be used by firms of all sizes to provide direction and to position the firm for success in the future!

About Stewart Marketing and Consulting

Stewart Marketing and Consulting is a woman-owned consulting firm specializing in providing marketing, administrative and strategic planning services to law firms ranging in size from sole practitioners to midsize law firms and legal associations. The firm provides an inside knowledge of law firm administration, management and marketing while bringing an outside perspective to clients across the southeast. For more information visit www.stewartmarketingandconsulting.com.



The SCALA Scoop

The "SCALA Scoop" is the newsletter of the Association of Legal Administrators, South Carolina Chapter, and is published 4-6 times per year and distributed to over 50 legal administrators, vendors and other legal professionals throughout South Carolina.

Direct questions or submissions to:
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