MEMORANDUM

TO: Fred Thrasher, NALP Deputy Director

FROM: Tim Henderson, Finnegan
Jean Durling, Fox Rothschild

DATE: June 16, 2024

RE: Board Report – Legal Employer Chief Officers Interest Group

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Since our last report, we held a monthly meeting in May 2024. In addition, we hosted a Chief roundtable session at the 2024 NALP Educational Conference.
Summary Notes from 2024 NALP Education Conference program are located in Exhibit 1 below.

May 15, 2024 Meeting Agenda:

1. How many full-time DEI professionals do you have at your firm and what is the structure of the team?
2. Any fresh ideas to encourage attendance at events?
3. Does anyone have ideas as to the best leadership trainer/coach for partners?

We canceled the June 2024 NALP Chief meeting, due to conflicts with the Juneteenth holiday.

Our plan is to continue our monthly meetings through 2024.

Exhibit 1 – Notes from NALP Chief Program:

The Real Deal: Chief Roundtable Discussions
Friday, April 19, 2024: 10:30–11:45 am

Topics for Discussion

***Topic 1*: Creating and Implementing Leadership Development for Emerging Partner Leaders**
Developing leadership skills among emerging partner leaders is crucial for the success and growth of any firm or organization. This involves designing and implementing comprehensive leadership development programs tailored to the specific needs and challenges faced by these individuals. Effective leadership development programs should focus on enhancing essential leadership competencies, fostering strategic thinking, promoting effective communication, and facilitating personal growth and self-awareness. Moreover, these programs should incorporate various learning methodologies such as workshops, mentoring, coaching, and experiential learning to ensure maximum impact.

Questions to Consider:
1. What, if anything is your firm doing to train emerging leaders?
2. What are the successes of your current program?
3. What are some challenges you had in implementing the program that you would like to share with others?
4. What are the specific leadership challenges faced by emerging partner leaders within the firm and could those be used to help define the curricula?
5. What are the essential components of a leadership development program for emerging partner leaders?
6. How can the program effectively develop skills such as decision-making, problem-solving, and team management?
7. How can the program support participants in identifying and leveraging their strengths while addressing areas for improvement?
8. What are the most effective and engaging learning methodologies for leadership development programs?
9. How can coaching and mentoring be integrated into the program to maximize impact?

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Question: Are our resources best spent with associates as they transition to the partnership?
Approach with new partners:
1. 2-year leadership curriculum/training programs for newest partners.
    a. Understanding business of firms. Realization
    b. Business development training/coaching
    c. Prepping for compensation season
    d. Tactical things – people and project management.

    e. Combination of successful partners who present
2. Also focusing on specific cohorts w/in the firm. First is focusing on women partners w/5-10 years of experience.
3. Second cohort – focusing on women of color partners. Working collaboratively with DEI, talent, marketing on this program. One goal is to ascertain how we can bring these programs to a broader audience at the firm.
4. How do you identify what qualities you're looking for in leaders/partners at the firm? Are you going to more senior partners in leadership roles and asking them "I wish I would've known this when I was a new partner?" While they may have great insights, you also need to mindful that these more senior partners may not have the future focus that you want/need in developing future generations of leaders. How do you incorporate disparate views on what constitutes an exceptional firm leader. Some partners have the view that "If you're smart, you'll figure it out."
5. Lowenstein: We start with our mid-level associates and have now introduced a similar concept with new partners.
6. Venable: We did PG Leader training – 5 sessions. Talent development, giving feedback, etc. We also did DISC and Driving Forces - several of the PG Leaders then wanted everyone in their respective Practice Groups to take the assessments. Also had a session on Wellbeing. Need to be resilient. Need to understand what the firm's programs. Recently had mental health/first aid training – shocked that many of the PG Leaders have signed up (have fifteen person waiting list!)

Topic 2: **Recruiting and Retaining Talent in a Competitive Market:** Recruiting and retaining top talent in a competitive market requires strategic planning and implementation of effective HR practices. Firms and organizations must develop innovative recruitment strategies to attract qualified candidates and establish robust retention initiatives to retain existing employees. This involves understanding the needs and motivations of potential hires, creating a compelling employer brand, offering competitive compensation and benefits, providing opportunities for professional growth and development, fostering a positive work culture, and implementing retention strategies tailored to the firm or organization's unique challenges and goals.

1. Understanding the Market:
    - What do you see as the current trends and challenges in the talent market?
    - What are you seeing as the expectations and preferences of potential candidates in a competitive market?
2. Employer Branding:
    - How has your firm differentiated itself as an employer of choice?
    - What steps have you taken to enhance the employer brand and reputation?
3. Recruitment Strategies:
    - What innovative recruitment methods are you utilizing to attract top talent?
    - How have you leveraged technology and social media in recruitment efforts?
    - What role do employee referrals, networking, and partnerships (with organizations or vendors) play in sourcing candidates?

4. Compensation and Benefits:
    - What non-monetary benefits contribute to your recruitment and retention?
5. Professional Growth and Development:
    - What opportunities do you provide for career advancement and skill development that creates retention?
    - How does your firm support employees in achieving their professional goals?
    - What mentorship, training programs, and performance mechanisms have contributed to fostering retention?
6. Work Culture and Environment:
    - What initiatives have you implemented to enhance workplace satisfaction and morale?
    - What has your firm done to promote diversity, inclusion, and employee well-being?
7. Retention Strategies:
    - What are the main factors influencing employee turnover at your firm?
    - What is your firm doing to identify and address potential retention risks?
    - What personalized retention strategies can be implemented to engage and retain key talent?

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1. Expanding PD programs for professional staff. Business professionals contribute to the lifeblood/success of the firm. Affinity groups and DEI programs for business professionals (including them in affinity groups).
2. Professional respect. Feedback from associates – want to be treated like adults. Having conversations with them about the firm's business, operations – more transparency. Pathway to partnership, expectations should be clearly outlined. Different associates have one set of assumptions, partners have other assumptions. Currently, a transactional approach b/w partners and associates.
3. Hybrid workplace. In some firms – junior associates want to come in. Senior partners love coming in. Senior associates and more junior partners are not showing up/coming in. Practical idea: What does a day mean? Are there set # of hours I need to be in? Should we say – not a set # of days, but a total number of hours/week (20 hours per week in the office).
4. Mindset/boundaries. Do associates know what they were getting into when they chose the firms? Are they making decisions about their boundaries? Are they willing to work on weekends, evenings? If not, need to fully communicate expectations.
5. Precruiting: AmLaw firms had hired over 50% of their classes before OCI (using OCI to fill the balance of their classes).
6. Students at law schools are facing immense pressure and anxiety with the earlier recruiting decisions – we're going to see a trickle down of students who feel they didn't make the most-educated/well-rounded decisions because of the pressure to commit so early to a position in their second summer.
7. Some firms are NOT doing the precruit, because they don't want to disrupt/damage your relationships with the university career services offices.
8. Some law schools are reporting that students are contemplating backing out of offers they've already accepted.

Topic 3: **Managing Succession Planning:** Effective management of internal leadership succession planning and client succession planning is vital for a firm's continuity and stability. It involves identifying and developing potential leaders within the firm or organization to ensure a smooth transition when key leaders depart or retire. Additionally, client succession planning focuses on ensuring continuity in relationships and service delivery when transitioning clients between different leadership teams. Successfully managing these transitions requires careful planning, clear communication, and implementation of strategies to mitigate any disruptions to operations and client relationships.

Internal Leadership-Succession Planning:

1. Identifying Succession Needs:
    - Does your firm have a formal succession plan for leaders at the firm and how does it work?
    - How can potential gaps in leadership talent be identified and addressed?
    - What criteria are used to evaluate potential successors for key leadership positions?
2. Leadership Development:
    - What strategies is your firm using, or can use, to develop a pipeline of potential leaders within the firm?
    - How can leadership development programs be tailored to the specific needs and goals of potential successors?
    - What role does mentorship, coaching, and training play at your firm in preparing individuals for leadership roles?

Client Succession Planning:

- How does your firm currently manage client relationships and succession planning?
- What criteria should be considered when transitioning clients between different leadership teams?
- How can client needs and preferences be effectively communicated and addressed during the transition process?

Change Management:

- What strategies have been, or can be, employed to effectively manage the change in leadership?
- How can the firm address any potential resistance or disruption caused by leadership transitions?
- What communication channels and mechanisms can be used to keep employees and clients informed throughout the transition process?

Knowledge Transfer:

- How has your firm ensured the transfer of critical knowledge and expertise from outgoing leaders to successors?
- What tools and processes can be implemented to facilitate knowledge sharing and documentation?
- How have potential risks associated with knowledge loss be mitigated during leadership transitions?

Success Metrics and Evaluation:

- What metrics can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of succession planning efforts?
- How can the firm measure the impact of leadership transitions on employee morale, client satisfaction, and overall performance?
- What feedback mechanisms should be established to gather insights and continuously improve succession planning processes?
- How can feedback from employees, clients, and stakeholders be incorporated into future succession planning initiatives?

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1. Fox Rothschild – started a formal succession planning a couple of years ago. Client succession is going well. Leadership succession planning isn't as well-honed as the client succession planning piece. Jean Durling is available if folks have questions.

***Topic 4:* Refocusing and Energizing: Your Current Role or Something Else?** In the midst of daily work demands, it's crucial for professionals to carve out time for creativity and innovation, and most importantly, for ourselves. This involves navigating busy schedules and finding ways to prioritize tasks to allow for exploration and forward-thinking. Additionally, for seasoned professionals, contemplating "what's next" in our careers is essential. This could involve exploring new roles such as COO or CEO, transitioning into consulting or coaching, or considering other options within or outside their current firm or organization.

1. Time for Innovation:
   - How have you effectively allocated time for creative thinking and innovation amidst daily work pressures?
   - What strategies can be employed to prioritize tasks and delegate responsibilities to create space for exploration?
   - How can firms support a culture that values and encourages innovation within the daily grind?
2. Balancing Daily Deliverables and Innovation:
   - What techniques and resources can we use to integrate innovation into daily routines without sacrificing productivity?
3. Exploring Career Advancement Options:
   - What are the typical career trajectories for professionals with over 15 years of experience?
   - What new roles or responsibilities, such as COO, CEO, or other C-suite positions, might be suitable for seasoned professionals?
   - How can we assess our skills, interests, and values to determine the best career advancement path?
4. Transitioning:
   - What steps are involved in transitioning from a role in a firm to a consulting or coaching career?
   - What skills and experiences are valuable for success in consulting or coaching?
   - How can we leverage our network and expertise to establish ourselves in the consulting or coaching field?

5. Assessing Stay or Go Options:
    - What factors should we consider when evaluating whether to stay in our current role or explore new opportunities?
    - How can we assess the potential risks and rewards of staying versus leaving our current position?
    - What resources and support are available to help them make informed decisions about our career paths?
6. Personal and Professional Development:
    - How can we continue to develop skills and expertise to remain competitive in the job market?
    - What opportunities for learning and growth are available within our firms?
    - How can we proactively plan for long-term career development and fulfillment?
7. Work-Life Integration:
    - How can we maintain a healthy work-life balance while pursuing career advancement and exploration?
    - What strategies can be implemented to prevent burnout and maintain overall well-being?
    - How can firms support us in achieving work-life integration and personal fulfillment?

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1. Talent and HR are moving at a rapid pace to becoming a more strategic function at the firm. We've got teams of people/structures that focuses on the more historic model (a bit more reactive – hire when you need someone, etc.)

Topic 5: **Defining the Role of Chief Talent Officer (CTO) and Succession Planning:** The Chief Talent Officer (CTO) plays a critical role in overseeing talent management strategies within a firm or organization, including recruitment, development, retention, and succession planning. However, the specific responsibilities and expectations associated with the CTO role may vary depending on the firm's size and structure. For law firms, the CTO may have a particular focus on attorney recruitment and development, often working in collaboration with the HR department, while in other firms, the CTO role may be responsible for all recruiting as well as HR. Succession planning for the CTO position involves identifying and preparing internal candidates for potential leadership roles and evaluating their value against expertise from external candidates.

1. Defining the Role of Chief Talent Officer:
    - What are the primary responsibilities and objectives of a Chief Talent Officer within your firms?
    - How does the role of CTO differ from traditional HR leadership positions?
2. Talent Management Focus:
    - What areas does the CTO typically oversee?
    - How does a CTO ensure alignment between talent management strategies and the firm or organization's overall goals and objectives?

- What metrics or indicators are used to evaluate the effectiveness of talent management initiatives led by the CTO?

3. Collaboration with HR:
    - How does the role of CTO intersect with the responsibilities of the HR department?
    - What level of collaboration and coordination is needed between the CTO and HR to effectively address talent-related issues?
    - How can the CTO and HR work together to create a cohesive talent management strategy that supports the firm or organization's objectives?
4. Succession Planning for the CTO:
    - What steps should be taken to prepare for succession planning in the CTO role?
    - How can potential internal candidates be identified and developed for future leadership positions within the firm or organization?
    - What considerations should be taken into account when assessing internal candidates for the CTO role?
5. Preparing Internal Successors:
    - What training and development opportunities should be provided to potential internal successors for the CTO role?
    - How can mentorship and coaching programs support the growth and readiness of internal candidates?
    - What strategies can be implemented to ensure a smooth transition and knowledge transfer when grooming internal successors?
6. Assessing Internal Candidates:
    - What criteria should be used to assess the readiness and suitability of internal candidates for the CTO role?
    - How can performance evaluations, feedback, and competency assessments inform the selection process?
7. Adaptability to Firm-Specific Needs:
    - How does the role and expectations of the CTO adapt to the unique needs and culture of the law firm?
    - How can the CTO position evolve over time to meet changing demands and priorities within the firm?

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1. No reports

Topic 6: **AI in HR: Enhancing Recruitment, Retention, Engagement, Analytics, Compensation, and Performance Management:** Firms are discussing the use of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies to streamline various HR-related tasks and processes. From recruitment and retention to engagement, analytics, compensation, and performance management, AI offers capabilities such as automation, predictive analytics, and natural language processing to optimize HR functions. By harnessing AI, firms can enhance efficiency, accuracy, and decision-making in HR operations while also improving employee experiences. But what are some of the challenges?

1. Recruitment:
    - How is AI being used at your firm to automate resume screening and candidate sourcing processes?
    - What AI-driven tools and platforms are you aware of for analyzing job descriptions, identifying relevant skills, and matching candidates to roles?
    - What are some of the challenges in using AI for recruitment?
2. Retention:
    - What AI-driven products are being used to identify employees at risk of turnover?
    - How can AI be used to analyze employee sentiment and engagement levels to inform retention strategies?
    - What role does AI play in personalizing retention initiatives and interventions for individual employees?
3. Engagement:
    - Can AI contribute to enhancing employee engagement and if so, how?
    - What AI-powered platforms and tools are available for conducting pulse surveys, sentiment analysis, and performance evaluations?
    - How can firms and organizations leverage AI to identify patterns and trends in employee engagement data and take proactive measures to address issues?
4. Analytics:
    - What types of HR analytics can be enhanced through AI?
    - How does AI enable predictive analytics for forecasting workforce trends, attrition rates, and talent needs?
    - What AI-driven insights can HR departments gain from analyzing large datasets related to employee demographics, performance metrics, and culture?
5. Compensation and Benefits:
    - How does AI facilitate the analysis of compensation benchmarks and market trends to ensure competitive salary offerings?
    - What AI-powered solutions are available for optimizing compensation structures and benefits packages based on individual employee preferences and needs?
    - How can AI help firms and organizations identify and address disparities in compensation and benefits across different demographic groups?
6. Performance Management:
    - In what ways does AI support continuous performance feedback and coaching for employees?
    - How can AI-driven performance management systems facilitate goal setting, progress tracking, and performance evaluation?
    - What AI-based tools and algorithms are utilized to assess employee performance objectively and identify areas for improvement?
7. Implementation and Considerations:
    - What challenges and barriers may arise in implementing AI technologies in HR functions, and how can they be addressed?
    - What ethical considerations should firms take into account when using AI for HR-related tasks, such as data privacy, bias mitigation, and transparency?

- How can firms ensure that AI-driven HR initiatives align with their values, culture, and strategic objectives?

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1. Have seen candidates use AI during virtual screening interviews. Candidate can use AI to prepare an interview answer using AI. During one of the interviews, the AI response was written in the third person, alerting the firm to the fact that the candidate was using AI. The firm created a disclaimer saying that the use of AI (for interviews and writing samples) would result in the candidate being disqualified from consideration.