



THE CANADIAN
BAR ASSOCIATION

2017 CBA Law Firm Leadership Conference
November 2, 2017 | St. James Cathedral Centre
65 Church Street, Toronto

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2

8:00 | 9:00 Registration and Breakfast

9:00 | 9:40 Session 1: Surviving Retirement/Succession Planning/Transition

The baby boom is passing through the legal profession as it passes through the general population. Many firms are experiencing retirements at a rate never previously experienced. This includes departure of firm founders or builders. These departures can create many challenges to maintaining our competitive positions. There are risks of loss of strong client relationships, knowledge and leadership skills and experience. Remaining lawyers may not all be as committed and loyal to the firm as founders or early builders. There can be various reactions by those retiring, those they work with and clients to be managed. Share ideas and strategies to remain strong and competitive while your firm and others address this demographic reality, including succession planning and alternative relationships with retiring or senior partners.

Facilitator: Doreen Saunderson, Field Law

Speakers: Heather Gray-Grant, Heather Gray-Grant Consulting

9:40 | 10:20 Session 2: Managing Partner Innovative Strategies

The business of law is changing at an incredible rate and managing partners must be able to move quickly when seeking to implement innovative strategies designed to achieve successful results. This panel will have 3 managing partners each discuss an innovative strategy that they successfully implemented at their respective firms. The discussion will focus on the objectives giving rise to these strategies, the internal or external obstacles which had to be overcome in order for them to succeed, the techniques used to obtain buy-in, and an assessment as to why these strategies were ultimately successful. Attendees will be encouraged to provide their own examples of successful leading strategies or the lessons learned from strategies which failed to take hold. In the end, this discussion will provide attendees with ideas and tips on what works (or does not work) when it comes to implementing innovative strategies.

Facilitator: Bobby Sachdeva, Pallett Valo LLP

Speakers: Peter Auvinen – Toronto Managing Partner, Miller Thomson
Joëlle Boisvert, Managing Partner, Montréal, Gowling WLG



10:20 | 10:45 Refreshment Break

10:45 | 11:25 Session 3: Growth Strategies

We continue to see consolidation in the legal industry in Canada. National firms have joined global firms. Independent local and regional firms have joined national or global firms or merged to create super-regional firms. This trend has leaders of historically strong independent firms considering their position in the legal market. At the same time, we have seen some new boutique firms spin off after global mergers. Hear from other law firm leaders and discuss options and considerations related to mergers or growth strategies including lateral recruiting. How do you assess the options? How do you tell if a merge will be culturally comfortable, or if your lawyers' practices will succeed after a merger? How can you attract individuals, groups or small firms to join your firm? What are the issues when considering these strategies?

Facilitator: Lydia S. Bugden, Stewart McKelvey

Speakers: Alan Ritchie, Loopstra Nixon
Bruce MacEwen, Adam Smith, Esq.

11:25 | 12:05 Lessons Learned From Heenan Blaikie - A Talk with Norman Bacal

Norman Bacal, former co-managing partner of Heenan Blaikie, will share his insights on lessons learned from Heenan Blaikie and how each managing partner and law firm leader can learn from Norm's experience.

Facilitator: Stephen Shamie, Hicks Morley

12:05 | 1:25 Lunch Address: Michael Copeland, President and CEO of the Toronto Argonauts

1:30 | 3:00 Practicing Law at the Speed of Light

Practicing law in today's rapidly changing, highly complex environment is more challenging and potentially more stressful than ever before. Furthermore, research has shown that the kinds of people who become lawyers have a number of highly atypical personality traits which equip them very well to practice high-quality law. But the very same traits can make it difficult to cope with the increasing change and stress. Luckily, the fields of behavioral science and neuroscience have provided solutions to all these challenges. Dr. Larry Richard, founder of LawyerBrain LLC, is an organizational psychologist (and a former practicing lawyer). Dr. Richard has spent the last 30 years studying lawyers and law firms with an eye towards improving productivity, profitability, work satisfaction and stress management. In this presentation, he will explain the 6 unique personality traits of lawyers, and how they can both help us and trip us up. He'll then explain the four scientific principles (and the four simple practices for each)



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that can enable lawyers to build collegial cultures, reduce stress, inoculate against future challenges, and improve profitability in the bargain.

Speaker: Dr. Larry Richard, LawyerBrain LLC

3:00 | 3:15 Refreshment Break

3:15 | 4:45 Case Studies and discussion

What steps have some law firms taken to address firm culture concerns? Four short case studies will be presented, and discussion will follow. The successes and failures of each of the initiatives will be explored. The goal of the session is to provide information that will arm the participants with practical ideas that they might tailor to fit their own firm dynamics.

Facilitator: Michael Milani, Q.C., McDougall Gauley

Speakers: Gary Luftspring, Ricketts Harris LLP
Bruce MacEwen, Adam Smith, Esq.

4:45 Closing Remarks

5:00 | 7:00 Reception at Vintage Conservatory
100 Lombard St, Toronto