

Case Study

Hogan Lovells

Case Study Highlights or Headline Statement

StepUp

Case Study Theme(s) Covered

Core Themes

Bridging the Perceptions Gap

Board Level Commitment

Cultural & Behavioral Change

Flexible Working

Underlying Good Practice Themes

Job Design/Headhunter Briefs

Role Models & Change Champions

Measuring & Monitoring – data, targets, tracking

Diversity as Business Imperative

Developing Leadership/Accountability

Mentoring & Training

Retention & Development

Career Progression and Opportunities

Supplier, Panels, Candidates Diversity

Public Commitments

Sharing Good Practice

Challenging Bias/Unconscious Bias

Inclusive Management initiatives

Appraisals, Objectives, Incentives

Flexible Working

Career Break Support

Internal Networks

Case Study Background

Although many women enter the legal sector, statistics show that percentage parity drops at partnership level. This pool of unrealised talent may be a longstanding problem, but addressing it head on, across all levels of the firm, continues to be a key focus for Hogan Lovells.

In 2012 our firm's Global Diversity Plan set a target to have 25% women in our partnership by 2017 and 30% by 2025. We have been raising internal awareness of the issue through multiple initiatives including our StepUp network which is run for and by trainees, associates, and senior associates.

Description of Initiative(s)/Policy Review/Process Change/etc

StepUp was designed to empower this target group by giving them the freedom to set their own objectives and broaden their skills much earlier than was previously the norm. Its strap line is: creating targeted opportunities for networking, business development, and growth.

The network began as a sub-group of our Women's Network, in order to specifically target and help our junior female lawyer population. A small working group was formed which decided to run voluntary focus groups in order to inform the network's objectives. These groups were run by an external facilitator and attracted over 60 women participants. Following the focus groups, a recommendations report was produced for StepUp and a wider committee and network were formed.

StepUp runs several internal and external networking events per year in addition to other initiatives. StepUp starts the network building processes far earlier with clients and potential clients, without any partners being present as is the usual norm.

StepUp is also focusing on professional development activities. In May 2016, we held a client event which included a talk on developing your confidence. Attendees then had a workshop on self-promotion and creating their personal brand. Our lawyers were able to network with their peer level clients while simultaneously developing their own skills.

StepUp also provides young lawyers, especially women, with a powerful voice within the firm. Susan Bright, the Regional Managing Partner for the UK & Africa, has attended committee meetings, which has given young lawyers direct access to her, affording them the opportunity of putting across their suggestions, based on the focus group outputs, and directly influencing the firm's processes and culture.

Description of Outcome(s)/Benefits/Lessons Learned/Progress Check

StepUp is already adding real substance to our diversity agenda. For participants, it helps to build their networking and business development skills, as well as their engagement with the firm and its D&I activities.

This is a positive move by the firm.

I'm really excited about this - as a junior lawyer it is a really great opportunity to

build my client skills in a friendly forum.

I was really impressed. The networking game was also very well-thought out and fun so people actually wanted to engage.

I look forward to being involved in StepUp events in the future.

Excellent idea that can only have positive outcomes for both the individuals involved and the firm as a whole.

I think StepUp is an excellent initiative. It was great to be made aware of the networking training sessions.

Feedback from clients has also been positive:

Fantastic event all around; engaging speaker with realistic advice that we can each implement via weekly challenges, followed by an interactive self-promotion session that creatively allowed us all to network while planning our "elevator pitches". – 12 May 2016 event

In addition, StepUp has now reached the end of its original two year Terms of Reference. Steering Committee members are therefore in the process of reviewing the progress made over the last two years and refreshing the objectives and focus for the next two years.
