

## **Innovative Approaches to Deepen and Enhance Law Firm/In-House Relationships**

### **1. Description:**

The practice of law remains a challenging environment for both law firms and in-house counsel teams, with ever-increasing efficiency and productivity goals running up against consistently high expectations for excellent legal services. To succeed in this environment, stakeholders must harness a range of creative and innovative approaches to deepen and enhance the nature and characteristics of law firm/in-house relationships.

Both law firm practitioners and in-house lawyers will benefit from this panel discussion of effective and cutting-edge uses of technology and information capabilities, secondments, partnerships on social responsibility and social impact causes, mentorship collaborations, and other approaches to deepening the inside/outside counsel relationship.

### **2. Theme:**

- a. Deepening and enhancing law firm/client relationships through innovative approaches to the practice of law and our day-to-day work lives, including acting on shared commitment to social issues and D&I.
  - i. This discussion addresses the improvement of professional competence and skills, particularly around delivery of efficient and competent legal services—by applying the techniques and topics discussed (including firm/in-house collaboration to provide more dynamic pro bono representation), attorneys can improve the effectiveness of services offered to the public.
  - ii. General examples of topics to be discussed:
    1. Innovative practice management capabilities and technology oriented around information-sharing between firms and clients
    2. Creative applications of the relationship—e.g., secondments of experienced attorneys as temporary in-house counsel with a client.
    3. Partnerships on specific pro bono matters—e.g., 10,000 Small Businesses with Goldman Sachs and Wills for Heroes.
    4. Executing on shared commitment and joint action on social issues like D&I in the profession and in our communities.
- b. All of these practices, and perhaps especially the fourth and final example of executing on social issues, bring law firm and in-house attorneys together outside of the traditional daily grind of practice—that deepens the connection and relationship, resulting in (i) more efficient and successful delivery of legal services and (ii) more satisfaction in the practice of law.

- c. Introduce panelists

### **3. Innovative Approaches, Generally**

- a. Law firms seek ways to be more competitive; companies seek greater efficiency; both (and public sector analogues like law departments and their agency clients) can benefit from deepening their relationships via approaches and activities that go beyond the traditional attorney-client practice relationship.
- b. Cutting-edge practice management technology and capabilities to connect firms/clients
- c. Creative, new applications of the existing relationship
  - i. E.g., secondments, deferments, shared working space, etc.
  - ii. Discussion of benefits for all stakeholders
- d. Partnerships on pro bono matters—“pro bono is the new golf”
  - i. Models for effective pro bono collaboration
  - ii. Discussion of benefits, including for pro bono service recipients

### **4. Joint Action/Commitment to Social Issues and D&I**

- a. Demonstrating/Identifying Real Commitment
  - i. Firms need to go beyond superficial check-the-box commitment
  - ii. Best practices
  - iii. Pitfalls to avoid
- b. Deepening the Relationship through Shared Commitment and Action on Social Issues/D&I
  - i. Discussion of how can attorneys and clients collaborate
  - ii. Numerous thinking-outside-the-box examples of joint action on social issues
- c. Outcomes
  - i. Discussion of the benefits for different stakeholders
  - ii. Theme of a virtuous cycle—aligned commitments to D&I/social causes builds rapport and connection, strengthening capabilities for efficient outcomes, and laying the groundwork for further collaboration.

## 5. Take-aways and Questions