

It's axiomatic that graduation from law school is only the beginning of a lawyer's education. A good, practical education would focus on networking, communicating with colleagues and clients, developing business, managing your time and your career, resolving conflict, and so on.

An increasing number of law schools and bar associations have recognized the importance of continuing education and are offering skill-building courses and content in key areas. But it's still the individual lawyer's responsibility to assess her needs, anticipate the skills she needs to have to advance in the profession, and then find the most cost-efficient and expedient way of acquiring them—whether that means using a week of vacation to take an intensive management course or attending webinars at 3AM from home. This is particularly true if you don't work at a large firm that covers these areas in its professional development programs.

The time to start learning these skills is now, stresses consultant Ida Abbott, author of *Women on Top: A Woman's Guide to Understanding the Politics of the Workplace* (Thomson Reuters 2010). "The sooner you develop practical skills as a lawyer, the better," she says. "It definitely gives you an advantage, and you avoid a lot of struggling later on."

In this spirit, we've identified the key skills to take women lawyers to the next level and some of the best resources for getting them.

### **New Lawyers**

Abbott says the most important "soft" skills for new associates are emotional intelligence, time management, delegation and personnel management techniques, public speaking,

listening, and the basics of networking and acquiring mentors.

Simply put, emotional intelligence means skillfully assessing and managing the emotional component of your interactions with others, wrote Ronda Muir, a senior consultant with Robin Rolfe Resources Inc. in Fort Lee, New Jersey, in a 2006 bulletin entitled *Emotional Intelligence*. In another age, it might be called tact, diplomacy, or sensitivity. It's an area in which many young people—not just lawyers—are found wanting. "The good news is that research shows that emotional intelligence tends to increase over time," Abbott notes.

For the associate whose emotional intelligence skills need bolstering, the ABA-CLE online course, "Avoiding Common Mistakes Associates Make in Client Communications," may be just the ticket. The course, taught by Michael Downey and Barbara B. Miller, focuses on handling sticky situations, such as telling a client a motion wasn't filed on time or dealing with calls from unhappy clients

who are critical of your boss. It also tackles what might be a lawyer's worst nightmare: placating clients who inadvertently received an e-mail that discussed them in an insulting manner. See [www.abanet.org/abastore/index.section=main&fm=Product.AddToCart&pid=CET08ACMC](http://www.abanet.org/abastore/index.section=main&fm=Product.AddToCart&pid=CET08ACMC).

Then again, it may be time to hit the books—specifically, *From Law School to Law Practice: New Associate's Guide* (3d ed.) by Suzanne B. O'Neill, Catherine Sparkman, and Ronald L. Jones (ALI-ABA 2008). It offers help with running effective meetings, interacting with your clients' employees, seeking feedback on your work, managing client expectations, and more. The book also addresses career planning issues such as the demands of working at a law firm versus working at a corporation and how to develop and achieve long-term career goals. See [www.ali-aba.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=publications.bookpage&book\\_code=BK44](http://www.ali-aba.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=publications.bookpage&book_code=BK44).

Many young lawyers associate networking with offensive self-promotion.

# **Practical Education for Every Stage of Your Career**

**By Stephanie B. Goldberg**

To dispel these notions, there's "Networking Professionally and Ethically" (ALI-ABA), a course taught by Roy S. Ginsburg via webcast and seminar on April 21, 2010. Available now online, the course explains the ins and outs of networking, how to "work a room," the use of social media for networking, and respecting client confidentiality while networking. See [http://ali-aba.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=courses.course&course\\_code=RSRJ16&contenttype=10](http://ali-aba.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=courses.course&course_code=RSRJ16&contenttype=10).

### Mid-Career Lawyers

By the time you've reached mid-career stage, you've acquired a new set of concerns—project management, client development, and how to take your place as a firm and bar leader. Some of these skills can be acquired simply by volunteering for bar committees, says Linda Klein, managing shareholder of Baker Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz, PC, in Atlanta. Poised to take the reins as chair of the ABA House of Delegates, Klein recalls that she learned as she went along.

Many women, however, opt for leadership institutes that polish their management and conflict resolution skills and give them techniques for maneuvering around the classic double bind that afflicts women in power: If you're forceful, you're a shrew; if you're reserved, you're timid and mousy.

The Women in Law Leadership Academy, presented by the ABA Commission on Women in the Profession and the ABA Young Lawyers Division, compressed a wealth of knowledge into a manageable two-day program on April 29–30, 2010, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The business aspects of law were fully explored (rainmaking, business models of firms, advancement) along with alternatives to law practice and pointers on leadership from judges and women in management at law firms and corporate legal departments. This year's program featured Sunoco Inc. Chair and CEO Lynn Laverty Elsenhans and Microsoft Corp. Corporate Vice President and Deputy General Counsel Mary E. Snapp as keynote speakers. For materials from this program, go to

[www.abanet.org/women/will.html](http://www.abanet.org/women/will.html).

In a similar vein, University of California's Hastings College of the Law's Project for Attorney Retention will offer a Leadership Academy for Women on July 11–15, 2010, designed for women who are already partners at their firms. The academy focuses on

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practical situations: how to get credit for your work, increase your visibility at your firm, strengthen your relationships with clients, develop an authentic leadership style, and manage teams effectively. In addition, participants are assigned peer coaches, who do three follow-up calls during the next year to aid them in achieving their goals. See [www.pardc.org/LAW](http://www.pardc.org/LAW).

### The Returning Lawyer

Abbott notes that lawyers who are returning to work following an extended absence often need help managing the transition. They may need to relearn basic skills such as how to write a résumé, conduct a job hunt, and interview effectively. Self-assessment is particularly important at this juncture so that returning lawyers can market themselves with confidence. There are also a welter of interpersonal issues to consider, including managing your family's expectations and adjusting to being a working parent. "The home might not be so orderly and you might not be as available as before," Abbott adds. "What does it mean [to your family] when you travel?"

A number of programs speak to this situation. Pace Law School offers a

"New Directions" program developed in conjunction with the Westchester Women's Bar Association. It's a three-part program consisting of a one-week boot camp, a twice-a-week course in substantive and practical skills that lasts 10 weeks, and an externship lasting 10 weeks or longer. See [www.pace.edu/page.cfm?doc\\_id=29130](http://www.pace.edu/page.cfm?doc_id=29130).

American University Washington College of Law offers a "Lawyer Re-Entry Program" that meets for six full days over two weeks in October. The course is divided into four parts—a self-assessment and goal-setting module followed by sessions on job hunting, legal writing and research, and one-on-one counseling. See [www.wcl.american.edu/reentry/](http://www.wcl.american.edu/reentry/).

Hastings' "Opting Back In" program is more of a coaching group than a course, explains Linda Marks of Hastings' Center for WorkLife Law, who leads the 10-member group with psychologist Ellen Ostrow. The group members set goals every 90 days and then participate in phone coaching sessions twice a month with the group coordinators. Marks says the participants get together informally and form their own jobhunting networks. "We've had incredible success stories with women who were just sending out their résumés," she notes. "We teach them to get to know the hidden job market." See [www.pardc.org/Optin](http://www.pardc.org/Optin).

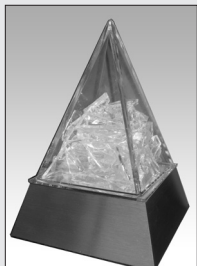
### The New Managing Partner

There are a bevy of educational opportunities for the managing partner, from seminars run by premier consulting firms to post-graduate education at a number of business schools and law schools. This was not a route chosen by Klein, who was first managing partner of a small firm and, following the firm's merger, is now managing shareholder of Baker Donelson's Atlanta office. "I learned on the job."

Today, she spends the bulk of her time on money matters: billing, collections, monitoring the firm's finances. She spends another chunk of her time airing partner concerns and operating as the defacto complaint department, as well as nurturing talent. Staying on top of technology matters is very

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## The 20th Annual Margaret Brent Achievement Awards Luncheon



Please join the Commission on Women in the Profession for the 20th Annual Margaret Brent Women Lawyers of Achievement Awards Luncheon at the ABA Annual Meeting in San Francisco, California, on Sunday, August 8, 2010, from 12:00PM–2:00PM at the Moscone West Convention Center.

The ABA Commission on Women established the Margaret Brent Women Lawyers of Achievement Award in 1991 to recognize and celebrate the

accomplishments of women lawyers. The award honors outstanding women lawyers who have achieved professional excellence in their area of specialty and have actively paved the way to success for other women lawyers. It is presented to five women lawyers who excel in a variety of professional settings and who personify excellence on the national, regional, or local level.

### The 2010 Honorees:

**Brooksley E. Born**, retired partner, Arnold & Porter LLP, and champion for the advancement of women; in Washington, D.C.

**Elizabeth J. Cabraser**, partner, Lieff Cabraser Heimann & Bernstein, LLP, and leader in the plaintiffs' complex litigation/class action bar; in San Francisco, California.

**Willie Stevenson Glanton**, civil rights activist and the first African American woman elected to the Iowa State Legislature; in Des Moines, Iowa.

**M. Margaret McKeown**, circuit judge, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, and the first woman partner at Perkins Coie LLP; in San Diego, California.

**Laura Stein**, senior vice president–general counsel, The Clorox Company, and the first woman general counsel at two *Fortune* 500 companies; in Oakland, California.

Pay tribute to the 2010 Margaret Brent honorees by purchasing a table (each table seats 10) and/or a special tribute in the commemorative awards program book. Tributes can be made to the five honorees or other women lawyers who have touched your life or the lives of those around you. Reserved tables are \$1,500, and full-page tributes are \$1,000. Corporate sponsorship opportunities also are available. For more information, contact Beverly Henderson at 312-988-5668, send an e-mail to [BHenderson2@staff.abanet.org](mailto:BHenderson2@staff.abanet.org), or visit the Commission Web site at [www.abanet.org/women](http://www.abanet.org/women).

## 2010 Report Tracks Women in ABA Leadership Positions



The ABA Commission on Women in the Profession has issued its 2010 *Goal III Report Card*, (formerly *Goal IX*), which tracks the trends of women in ABA leadership positions. The first *Report Card* in 1991 reported women's membership in the ABA and their representation

in the profession at 22 percent. Women now constitute 32.1 percent of the approximately 330,000 lawyer members of the ABA and 31.0 percent of the legal profession.

The Commission has found, however, that while women are progressing overall, the rate of that increase has stagnated in recent years. This is of particular concern with respect to lower levels such as committees and subcommittees, which are the pathways to leadership.

Download the full report from the Commission's Web site at [www.abanet.org/women/goaliii.html](http://www.abanet.org/women/goaliii.html).

## PRACTICAL EDUCATION FOR EVERY STAGE OF YOUR CAREER

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important because “if the office technology doesn't work, everyone's unhappy and you're going to hear about it,” Klein says. A minuscule but incredibly important part of her job is managing change and communication in stressful times. “It's terribly important to send the right message,” she notes. “Even a joke [about firm economics] can be misinterpreted.”

Harvard Law School has formulated its executive education programs for people who, like Klein, have many demands on their time. Two programs, “Leadership in Law Firms” (five-day program) and “Leadership in Corporate Counsel” (four-day program), are conducted twice a year. The classes use simulations as well as the case study method popularized by Harvard Business School to study strategic

planning, organizational alignment (making sure a firm's goal and its culture are in sync), motivational strategies, and other elements of effective leadership. See [www.law.harvard.edu/execed/programs.html](http://www.law.harvard.edu/execed/programs.html).

If getting away is a problem, there's online education such as videotapes from the Practising Law Institute's Law Firm Leadership and Management Institute 2010, held in February. The 14 hours of programming include sessions on leadership succession planning, the wisdom of managing by the numbers, ethics, consolidation, and client relations. See [www.pli.edu/product/cd\\_detail.asp?id=64390](http://www.pli.edu/product/cd_detail.asp?id=64390).

Good book resources are available, too. *Managing Partner 101: A Guide to Successful Law Firm Leadership* (2nd ed.) by Lawrence Green (ABA 2001) emphasizes

leadership skills, personnel issues, firm governance and structure, and practical pointers. See [www.abanet.org/abastore/index.cfm?section=main&fm=Product.AddToCart&pid=5110451](http://www.abanet.org/abastore/index.cfm?section=main&fm=Product.AddToCart&pid=5110451). Also check out *The Lawyer's Guide to Governing Your Firm* by Arthur G. Greene (ABA 2009). It is intended for managing partners, yet provides young lawyers with a concise introduction to both the macro and micro issues of law. See [www.abanet.org/abastore/index.cfm?section=main&fm=Product.AddToCart&pid=5110684](http://www.abanet.org/abastore/index.cfm?section=main&fm=Product.AddToCart&pid=5110684).

*Stephanie B. Goldberg is a legal affairs journalist based in Chicago and is a former member of the Perspectives editorial board. Her work has appeared in the New York Times, BusinessWeek, the Chicago Tribune, and many legal publications.*