

Law firm failures aren't always spectacular implosions that produce dramatic headlines. Many firms are suffering a slower, more insidious death through worker disengagement. Lawyers are not alone in the search for personal fulfillment through meaningful employment. But today's attorneys are suffering disproportionately from its absence. In *Positive Professionals*, former BigLaw partner Anne Brafford blends psychology, biology, social science, and personal narratives to develop practical solutions. A must-read for every law firm leader (are you "toxic" or "transformational"?), Brafford offers recommendations that, if followed, will enhance the quality of lawyers' lives and improve the profession.

—Steven J. Harper, retired partner at Kirkland & Ellis LLP, columnist, and author of several books, including *The Lawyer Bubble—A Profession in Crisis* and *Crossing Hoffa—A Teamster's Story*

*Positive Professionals* is a must-read for anyone who wants to learn more about work engagement and how to create it through practical, science-backed strategies tailored to the legal profession. It is a fascinating and useful read and offers a much-needed fresh perspective on the potential for positive pathways to productivity and profitability in the law. The book will appeal to future-facing firms wanting to become magnets for the best talent and to enable all lawyers to be their best personally and professionally. It should be on the desk of every law firm partner. Morgan Lewis is proud to claim Anne as one of its own and applauds her important contribution to our profession!

—Jami Wintz McKeon, Chair, Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP

What a gift this book is to the legal profession—and beyond! *Positive Professionals* is an impactful guide to leaders in law firms (and all professional organizations) about how to create a more engaged, committed, high-performing workforce using the best that positive organizational psychology science has to offer. Anne Brafford's deep knowledge of the practice of law shines through in her customized guidance to legal professionals who want to make their work lives and firms better. *Positive Professionals* offers a useful framework, compelling examples, and informed practices for transforming law organizations into workplaces where people and firms thrive. Anne has done a phenomenal job of putting science into action in a context that is so important to people and to society. Bravo!

—Jane E. Dutton, Robert L. Kahn Distinguished University Professor Emerita of Psychology and Business Administration, University of Michigan

*Positive Professionals* combines deep wisdom and the latest motivational science in addressing what makes for an optimal climate in law firms, and organisations more generally. Well-written and well-informed, it's an important book for anyone working in professional contexts.

—Richard M. Ryan, Ph.D., Professor at the Institute for Positive Psychology & Education at the Australian Catholic University, Research Professor in Psychology at the University of Rochester in New York, and co-developer of Self-Determination Theory, one of the leading theories of human motivation

A lot has been written over the course of the last 25 years about the level of distress in the legal profession. This is a book about what can be done about it. *Positive Professionals* is a well-written, well-researched, witty, and sobering exploration of what law firms and lawyers can do to make their work and their lives more meaningful. Anne is not just a lawyer, she is also a scientist. She does not settle for easy answers, clichéd responses, or the pablum that passes for advice in most self-help books. Her recommendations are heavily researched and empirically tested. And her narrative is an eloquent argument for how optimal performance can happen only on the other side of prioritizing attorney well-being.

—R. Michael Ethridge, Partner, Ethridge Law Group, and Founding Director of *Living Above the Bar* (South Carolina's Attorney Wellness Committee)

It is very common for the so-called “best and brightest” to ask “is this all there is?” after practicing in BigLaw for only three to five years (and once they have paid off all or most of their student loans). It is likewise common for successful law firm partners to question their values after spending many years on what has often been described as a professional treadmill. Anne Brafford's new book gives law firm managers a roadmap for overcoming these engagement and burnout problems by showing that high-energy professionals are motivated by much more than money. Big money enables many professionals to run ahead of their doubts. But using Brafford's guidelines to increase engagement is a better long-term strategy for creating lasting, meaningful careers on which we can look back and be proud. I really liked this book and its important themes, which haven't gotten enough attention in the legal profession. I hope BigLaw is ready to listen.

—Tom Sharbaugh, Former Management Partner of Operations for Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP (for nearly 15 years) and current Professor of Practice at Penn State Law

I recommend you buy multiple copies of this book. At the very least you need to buy two copies: one for your office, and one for your home. You will want to consult it often. The book is replete with sound and scientific principles to make your workplace healthier, more productive, and more engaging. Brafford expertly weaves wit with wisdom in a readable, intelligent, and astute volume. This is an excellent resource, not just for lawyers, but for every leader. Her comprehensive review of the literature, together with her own experience and expertise as a lawyer, makes a compelling case for embracing positive practices. I have thoroughly enjoyed it, and plan to use it in my own work trying to improve institutional cultures. If you buy more than two copies, make sure the third one goes to your boss, and subsequent ones go to your employees. Ask all of them to keep you accountable to the principles in the book. Your boss and your employees will thank you for the gift.

—Isaac Prilleltensky, Ph.D.

Dean of the School of Education and Human Development;  
Vice Provost for Institutional Culture, University of Miami;  
Author of *The Laughing Guide to Well-Being: Using Humor  
and Science to Become Happier and Healthier*

This is a must-read for anyone aspiring to improve engagement and the human condition in the workplace. Anne is a Multiplier and an engagement rockstar. In this book she has woven together scientific insights from positive psychology, extensive experience, and metaphor, together with her passion to improve the workplace. She does this in the context of the professional service firm to produce a book that all professionals seeking to create and sustain workplaces that are positive, inspiring, caring, creative, and profitable must read. This book includes much practical wisdom, and many tips and techniques for improving engagement that I know work because I use some of them already and now have many more to put to valuable use. This book will also repay any leader interested in improving engagement in business; the science, advice, and exercises are applicable to many organisational contexts.

—Bob Easton, Senior Managing Director, Accenture

*Positive Professionals* is fantastic—it is amazingly useful for anyone who wants to improve the law firm where they work. Anne explains the underlying issues causing workplace discontent and provides step-by-step advice about how to overcome them. As a partner who practices in BigLaw (with limited free time), I love that her advice is practical—anyone can use the methods she provides to help create a better work environment and increase retention and happiness. She asks thought-provoking questions, and figuring out the answers to them has helped me in feeling more fulfilled; as a result, I have been able to focus on ways I can create a more positive environment at the Firm. This book has made a positive impact on my life and has already started to better the experiences of those I work with.

—Chahira Solh, Partner, Crowell & Moring LLP

As Editor-in-Chief of the 2017 National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being's Report, Anne Brafford brought her considerable expertise on lawyer wellness and proved to be indispensable on that project. Now, with this groundbreaking work, Brafford demonstrates that she is one of the United States' foremost thought leaders on how to move our profession to the condition where thriving is the norm rather than the rare exception.

—Bree Buchanan, JD, and James Coyle, JD, Co-Chairs,  
National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being

Each day in my private psychotherapy practice, I hear from disheartened BigLaw associates and partners about how disconnected they feel from their work, their clients, the firm, and even themselves—feelings echoed by many lawyers in the profession. Associates too often feel that their work does not matter, their skills are not valued, and their self-efficacy is stripped away by the oppressive law firm hierarchy. With a rare combination of clarity and creativity, in this groundbreaking book, Anne Brafford draws on her background as a very successful BigLaw partner and now as an expert in positive psychology to provide hope with practical answers to many of the issues raised by my clients. Brafford writes about critically important yet often undervalued topics like engagement, connection, psychological safety, rejuvenation, and resilience. Indeed, having seen far too many associates fear taking risks that would lead to growth, my single favorite sentence in the book may be Brafford's advice to law firms that “[s]ince perfection is not possible, psychological safety is the best option.” With ideas like this, the book turns on its head the dualistic framework underlying the false belief that firms can be *either* profitable *or* humane places to work, but not both. I love this book and only wish it had published earlier when I was still working in BigLaw!

—Sarah Weinstein, JD, MA, External Director & Blog Editor,  
Law School Wellness Project at Stanford Law

With precision and practicality, Anne Brafford passionately applies principles from the science of positive psychology to the legal field. Her evidence-based, actionable guidelines and mental narratives should be used in every law firm to facilitate lawyer engagement and well-being, to reduce turnover, and to increase profit.

—Becky Reichert, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Claremont Graduate University, Director of LeAD Labs focused on leadership evaluation, assessment, and development

This revolutionary book will transform the way law firms work. Anne Brafford makes a compelling case for building organizations where professional success does not require the sacrifice of personal happiness and fulfillment. On the contrary, based on scientific research and informed by her own experience as an equity partner in one of the world's top law firms, she shows how a focus on engagement, meaning, motivation, positive emotions, and the right kind of leadership can help firms—and the individuals in them—prosper.

—James O. Pawelski, Ph.D., Director of Education and Senior Scholar in the Positive Psychology Center at the University of Pennsylvania

Anne Brafford's new book raises imperative questions for law firm managers and provides thoughtful, well-researched, long-sighted answers—all focused on sustainable productivity in law firms through organizational design and implementation strategies. Brafford's book also provides guidance to law firm associates and law students searching for the right kind of environment to bloom their careers. Whatever readers' angle in the legal profession, all will find much to stimulate thought. The book's breadth and scope, the variety of studies explored, and the proposed process improvements will provoke reflection—and hopefully positive change. Lastly, anyone involved in attorney development will treasure this book because it provides specific guidance for becoming more reflective, observant, and introspective toward guiding the growth of the type of professionals that the legal profession so badly needs.

—Michael J. Basile, Managing Member and Partner, Spilman Thomas & Battle, PLLC

Translating theory into practice is always more art than science, but to do so for lawyers is even more challenging because lawyers are selected, trained, and highly paid to be skeptical, critical thinkers. In this groundbreaking book, Anne Brafford applies years of careful thought and research to her deep and personal knowledge of the corporate legal world and how lawyers practice, think, and live. The result is a great gift to our profession—elegant discussion of the theory and elements of engagement, together with real-world, actionable advice to help lawyers reflect, build their resilience, and re-orient themselves and their careers towards the positive. Let's use an actual exclamation point to celebrate this wonderful step forward!

—Scott A. Westfahl, Professor of Practice and Director  
of Executive Education at Harvard Law School

I loved this book! There are two difficult questions confronting anyone who studies lawyer well-being. First, why does happiness in the practice of law matter? Second, assuming happiness matters, how can lawyers find it? In this excellent new book, Anne Brafford answers both questions with a combination of wit, scholarship, and practical advice. Arguing that engagement strategies that produce profits and top performance in business can be applied within law firms, she shows the reader exactly how to do so in a systematic way, drawing from groundbreaking theories in organizational and positive psychology. The book is well researched and documented but is written in a clear and compelling manner that makes it an entertaining read. It is a valuable tool for scholars, firm leaders, or anyone interested in the application of positive psychology in the business world.

—Daniel S. Bowling, III, Senior Lecturing Fellow, Duke Law School

Many law firm professionals are well aware of all of the buzz about positive psychology. While most of us recognize that it may help to explain the secrets of successful law firms, we feel intimidated by the sheer amount of research on this topic. Where should one even start?! The good news is that the amazing Anne Brafford has done the work for us—she's written an easy-to-digest primer full of practical advice—that I absolutely plan to incorporate—for anyone who wants to understand what all the hype is about. Anne describes how to create and cultivate an environment rich with high-performing lawyers who bring both energy and passion to the job. This is a must-read for PD professionals!

—Milana Hogan, Chief Legal Recruiting & Professional  
Development Officer, Sullivan & Cromwell LLP

Wow! Inhale this book and start using its concrete suggestions! Brafford has knocked it out of the park with indisputable research that tells a holistic, direct story and—more importantly—specific actions to take and specific phrases to say that will help all of us in professional services.

—Margaret Greenberg, MAPP, and Senia Maymin, PhD,  
co-authors of the bestseller *Profit from the Positive*

This book is a wonderful gift for the legal profession. It formulates scientifically based, actionable, concrete, helpful, and practical strategies firms can utilize to foster well-being and engagement. The book includes many detailed apt law firm examples, questions for self-reflection, a checklist for change, an excellent glossary of terms, and references to supporting research studies.

—Peter Huang, Professor and DeMuth Chair of Business  
Law, University of Colorado Law School

Every law firm partner should have a copy of *Positive Professionals*. I can think of no better guide for partners embarking on their journey to shape the future of the legal profession. Anne Brafford provides an engaging and thoughtful blueprint for success at a time when the legal profession, and BigLaw especially, is struggling to retain its best and brightest. Tackling the realities head on and providing concrete strategies based in research and science for how to make a positive cultural change, *Positive Professionals* feels as though it could reach even the most skeptical of lawyers. Professional Development at every law firm should take notice and ask themselves how their programs are currently measuring up. If you are looking at how to improve engagement, retention, profitability, productivity, positivity, leadership, or even just the well-being of your lawyers, then look no further—this is the book for you.

—Courtney Wylie, Professional Development Professional at Drinker  
Biddle & Reath LLP and certified professional coach for attorneys

*Positive Professionals* validates many concerns about the experience of practicing law, but empowers us to make change. The book equips us to identify the forces at work within ourselves and the practice, provides research-based strategies to counteract and better manage these (often competing) dynamics, and gives us tools to cultivate a better experience for ourselves and those around us. *Positive Professionals* is a worthwhile investment for any legal professional or organization looking to trade ambivalence and resignation for renewed and sustained engagement.

—Lori Brandau, Shareholder, Bradshaw, Fowler, Proctor & Fairgrave

If you are one of the legions of lawyers interested in improving your work experience, your life experience, your organization's bottom line, or all of the above, this book is for you. Anne has achieved her stated hope that "wherever the book falls open, you'll learn something useful." She includes broad and deep research combined with abundant examples from law practice to directly address the most critical issues facing any lawyer in any position. How do we harmonize meaning and money, purpose and profit? How do we maximize productivity and wellness? This book covers the gamut from lawyer motivation and engagement to managing others in the most constructive ways. It makes it clear that becoming your best, your happiest, and your most productive are essentially the same quest, and that the principles for success also apply to positive management of others. You will be happy if you read this book, and your employees will thank you for it as well.

—Lawrence S. Krieger, Clinical Professor and Co-Director of Clinical Externship Programs, Florida State University College of Law, researcher on lawyer and law student well-being, and former litigator

The science of positive psychology is transforming how people work and live in modern times. *Positive Professionals* illustrates in detail how you can use evidence-based positive psychology principles to improve your career success and the performance of the organizations you work for. This exciting new book is a must read for any professional, especially those in, or aspiring to be in, important leadership positions.

—Stewart I. Donaldson, PhD, Professor of Psychology and Community & Global Health at Claremont Graduate University, and Editor/Author of *Scientific Advances in Positive Psychology and Applied Positive Psychology: Improving Everyday Life, Schools, Work, and Society*

Anne Brafford's *Positive Professionals* is a great read for anyone looking to make their firm (or any organization) a more productive and healthier place to work. Brafford combines anecdotes from her 18 years of experience at a large law firm with a comprehensive overview of the leading scientific literature around workplace engagement to explore several ways in which firms can harness the power of positive psychology to make their attorneys and staff more productive, healthier, and happier. While the book speaks most directly to law firm management and partners, I was struck by how applicable *Positive Professionals* was to my experience as a senior associate at a large law firm.

—Jonathan A. Beitner, Large Law Firm Senior Associate