The ABA Toolkit for Gender Equity in Partner Compensation Is Presented by the ABA Presidential Task Force on Gender Equity and the Commission on Women in the Profession

Program Agenda

Gender Equity in Partner Compensation:
Why It Matters and How to Do It

Format Options

(1) A 2 ½-hour moderated program with a keynote speaker, panel discussion, and interactive table discussions

(2) A 1 ½-hour moderated program with keynote speaker and panel discussion

Speakers

Introducer – From your bar association

Moderator – A high-profile leader from the sponsoring law firm or corporate law department who is familiar with studies and thinking on the topic of gender pay equity

Keynote Speaker – An expert from the ABA toolkit speakers bureau (www.americanbar.org/genderequity/toolkit) or a local, recognized thought leader on pay equity who is highly knowledgeable about current research and recommended practices for achieving gender pay equity

Panel - Ideally the panel would consist of: (1) a general counsel from a large local or regional company or an in-house counsel with control over lawyer hiring, (2) a law firm managing partner, (3) a member of a law firm compensation committee, and (4) a bar leader. The nature of the panelists will depend on the sponsoring organization and location of the conference.

Program Agenda

12:00 – 12:10  Opening: Bar leader gives welcome and short introduction of the moderator
Moderator: Introduces the topic, speakers, and the goals

12:10 – 12:30  Keynote speaker

• Proposed content to be adapted to the program:
  o Lay of the land (status of compensation for men and women) and why the issue of gender equity in partner compensation is important
  o Challenges to achieving pay equity
    • Inaccurate or incomplete allocation of credit for existing matters/clients and new matters/new clients
Legacy systems and a lack of succession planning for institutional clients and billing/origination credits

Poor accountability, lack of transparency in compensation decisions

Effect of gender bias in compensation decisions

What are the foundations for fair and equitable pay practices? [NOTE: Depending on the sponsoring group and existing practices, additional topics may be useful for this part of the conference.]

Developing objective criteria for compensation decisions – and communicating them

Ensuring transparency in the process

Use of valid metrics

Appointing diverse decision-makers

Allocating origination and billing credit fairly and accurately

Developing fair and transparent guidelines for succession of client relationships

Sharing business development opportunities equitably among men and women

Soliciting client input in compensation decisions

What other related processes ensure a level playing field?

Use of formal client succession protocols

Promoting sponsorship, not just mentorship

Sharing work opportunities for key clients equitably among men and women

Providing skills training and coaching for women

Strategic use of women’s initiatives for business and career development
12:30 – 1:15  Panel discussion

- Topics:
  - Why is the issue of equity in compensation important to the well-being of the firm?
  - How can clients give constructive input into compensation practices?
  - What are the challenges to getting law firm management to consider changes to the compensation process?
  - What are recommended practices for instituting change in the compensation process?
  - What role can women’s initiatives play in effecting change? Can they be used effectively in law firms?
  - What role do men play in this process of change? How do we help obtain broad buy-in for these changes?
  - What steps can be taken to ensure that committees that determine compensation are more diverse?

1:15 – 1:30  Q & A

[NOTE: The program ends here if choosing the 1½-hour format. Omit and continue on to table discussions if choosing the 2 ½-hour format]

1:15 – 1:45  Table discussions of recommended practices: This session consists of roundtables of six to eight people taking one topic (e.g., a recommended practice) to flesh out the benefits, impediments, and recommended techniques for implementation. At the end of the roundtable session, each table reports back to the group as a whole. A reporter should be designated at each table to report to the larger group.

1:45 – 2:15  Reports from table discussions

2:15 – 2:30  Discussion of next steps, led by moderator

**Leveraging Your Content – and Spreading the Word about Your Good Work**

- Appoint scribes charged with taking detailed notes of your program. Use the scribe’s notes to create a follow-up article to be published by the association or its member publication/periodical or to blog about the event. If such an article is produced, circulate it widely to participants, leaders of local law firms, and interested parties;
post it on the association’s website, with appropriate metatags so that it is picked up by search engines and increases web traffic.

- Distribute news of the program and follow-up report or article in social media.
- Consider taping all or part of the program to create podcasts and post online.

We at the Gender Equity Task Force would appreciate receiving a copy of any such articles and a summary of your comments about the program. Please send them to us at Barbara.Leff@americanbar.org.