Program Agenda

From Visible Invisibility to Visibly Successful
A Program Toolkit Produced by the Women of Color Research Initiative

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 the research studies and discourse on the topic of women of color in the law profession or an expert from the Toolkit’s Speakers Bureau (available online at www.ambar.org/WomenOfColor), or a local, recognized thought leader who is highly knowledgeable about current research and recommended practices for retaining and advancing women of color in the law profession

Panel - Ideally the panel would consist of not more than 4 speakers. Speakers should be women of color or men and women who have a record of promoting and advancing women of color.

(1) At least two (2) general counsels from a large local or regional company
   a. An in-house counsel with control over lawyer hiring
   b. An in-house counsel on the compensation or diversity committee

(2) One or two partners from large, local law firms

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12:00 – 12:15 Lunch served. If a different time than lunch, start with the opening and give the panel an extra 15 minutes for discussion.


12:20 – 12:30 Moderator: Introduces the topic, speakers, and the goals
   • Overview of Women of Color Research Initiative studies with review of process; questions asked/answered; responses (Use PowerPoint)
12:30 – 1:15 Panel Discussion (Questions by Moderator to Panel)
Note: It is important for the moderator to listen closely to the responses from the panel and follow-up with appropriate questions/responses. It is not mandatory to ask all the questions below but to follow the flow of the discussion.

1. What policies does your company or firm have to create a more inclusive environment for women and people of color?

2. What mechanisms or structures are in place to communicate and enforce these policies? Are there any programs/policies that specifically address issues for women of color?

3. How does your company or firm make promotion decisions?

4. Is there any evidence that what the organization is doing effects change or produces results?

5. What does your organization do to ensure fairness and equity in compensation? or How are compensation decisions made in your company?

Wrap up questions:

6. What one piece of advice would you give women who are interested in moving into leadership positions (whether it be at a law firm or at a corporation)?

7. What do you feel your biggest obstacle was along your path to success and how did you overcome this challenge?

1:15 – 1:30 Q & A

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

1:15 – 1:45 Table discussions of Toolkit scenarios and recommended practices:
This session consists of roundtables of four to six people discussing one Toolkit scenario and fleshing out the challenges and responsibilities of each character in the scenario. The focus should be on strategies for incorporating recommended practices for retaining and advancing women of color. 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 and 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 ABA Commission on Women in the Profession would appreciate receiving a copy of any such articles and a summary of your comments about the program. Please send them to us at natale.fuller@americanbar.org.