



**Diversity
& Inclusion**

Association of Legal Administrators



ALA DIVERSITY & INCLUSION SCORECARD FOR LAW OFFICE ADMINISTRATORS

A ROADMAP TO CHANGE



Last updated December 2015



Diversity & Inclusion

Association of Legal Administrators

Dear Legal Administrator,

One of the essential skills of leadership is the ability to create an environment in which everyone who wants to succeed has the opportunity to do so. And in today's environment, businesses that fail to actively work to advance the principles of diversity and inclusion risk undermining the health and success of the organization itself. Clients and vendors demand it, and attracting top talent requires it. Beyond race, gender and physical ability, the promise of diversity and inclusion encompasses a much broader and more complex vision of acceptance and appreciation of the differences between us on so many levels, including cultural, socio-economic, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and more.

To realize your organization's diversity and inclusion goals as well as the Association's broader goal of creating a more diverse and inclusive profession, we have identified 54 best practices for law office administrators and placed them into seven categories: 1) formal firm leadership; 2) firm culture; 3) firm policies and workplace inclusion; 4) professional development; 5) organizational diversity and inclusion competency; 6) community involvement; and 7) supplier diversity. In each of these areas, administrators have the ability to find and eliminate organizational barriers that limit diverse and female attorneys' opportunities to succeed.

Review each best practice within each category, and identify those your law firm currently performs, as well as those that still can be pursued. Examples are provided, where available, for each best practice to show how it can be incorporated into the Firm's operations.

Please direct questions, comments and feedback on this tool to diversity@alanet.org. Learn more about ALA's Committee on Diversity & Inclusion, and find current diversity-related resources and articles, at www.alanet.org/diversity.

Sincerely,

ALA Committee on Diversity & Inclusion

ALA Diversity & Inclusion Scorecard for Law Firms

Updated December 2015

1. Formal Firm Leadership

While leadership takes different forms and at various levels within an organization, formal leadership is necessary to give the organization direction and to set a vision. As the saying goes, one way to know what a person values is to observe where they spend their money, time, and talent. The firm’s vision and commitment to diversity and inclusion has to have active support from senior leadership and also commitment to hold all leadership accountable for its success.

	Best Practice (Task/Responsibility)	Examples Where Available	Firm Score Yes/No
1.	The firm has appointed a dedicated individual, group or several individuals, depending on firm size, to manage their diversity and inclusion efforts.	Steps Toward Diversity	
2.	Senior member of professional staff is actively involved in firm diversity and inclusion strategy and initiatives.		
3.	Leadership takes an active role in communicating to the organization about the commitment to diversity, the diversity strategy, and diversity initiatives.	http://www.jacksonlewis.com/media/pnc/4/media.2174.pdf	
4.	Leadership actively participates in diversity initiatives such as attending a diversity event.		
5.	Firm includes diversity on the agenda at management / leadership meetings, partner meetings, and retreats.	http://www.alanet.org/diversity/DIVERSITY-BROCHURE.pdf	
6.	Firm develops, communicates and implements a diversity strategic management plan.	http://www.stites.com/about/diversity	
7.	Leadership of the firm includes diverse members and leaders of the firm (i.e.: partners / members, legal administrators, managers) and are held accountable for insuring diverse representation throughout the firm.		

8.	Leadership engages in succession planning to ensure diverse and female attorneys / staff have equitable opportunities to inherit clients' work.	http://www.abajournal.com/magazine/article/women_in_charge_at_the_top_of_their_game/ http://www.americanbar.org/publications/law_practice_magazine/2011/may_june.html	
9.	Leadership has formally evaluated the organization's incentives system.		
	Add your own:		

2. Firm Culture

The firm has taken an active role in its commitment to creating and fostering an environment that is supportive of Diversity & Inclusion.

	Best Practice (Task/Responsibility)	Examples Where Available	Firm Score Yes/No
10.	Firm observes Cultural Heritage Months and diversity milestones.	http://www.alanet.org/diversity/resources.aspx	
11.	Firm formally adopts programs that include the full firm in promoting the firm's commitment to Diversity & Inclusion.	http://www.streetlaw.org/en/programs/law_firm_diversity_pipeline_program http://www.bakerlaw.com/diversityfellowshipprogram/ http://www.debevoise.com/diversityatdebevoise/ http://www.sidleycareers.com/northamerica/about/diversityscholars/	

12.	At least once a year, the firm gives a report on its efforts in creating a culture that fosters Diversity & Inclusion.	http://www.wnj.com/WarnerNorcrossJudd/media/files/uploads/Documents/WNJ-DIAR-2012-020613-lowres.pdf http://www.haynesboone.com/firmdiversity/ http://www.bakermckenzie.com/files/uploads/documents/north%20america/diversity/na_diversity_inclusion_report_07292011_final_lowres.pdf	
13.	Communication from firm leadership supports Diversity & Inclusion internally and externally.	http://www.jacksonlewis.com/media/pnc/1/media.971.pdf	
14.	Firm ensures that all firm social functions and forms of recognition of "life events" are inclusive of all committed relationships and family members of its attorneys and staff.	http://www.alanet.org/diversity/Planning_Inclusive_Events.pdf Gift and Celebration Policy.pdf	
15.	Firm encourages participation in minority and women's bar associations and counsel groups.		
16.	Firm provides funding and sponsorship for women and diverse attorneys to participate in leadership roles with minority organizations.		
17.	Firm conducts regular engagement surveys which include metrics on diversity & inclusion.	http://www.catalyst.org/2013-human-resources-diversity-leader-champion http://www.sdma.com/sedgwick-receives-recognition-for-its-diversity-efforts-10-11-2012/	
18.	Firm supports and sponsors internal diversity affinity networks and/or Employee Resource Groups (ERGs).	Internal Diversity Networks and Employee Resource Groups.pdf	

19.	Firm's mission, vision and values incorporate diversity and inclusion.	http://www.duanemorris.com/site/diversity.html http://www.diverseattorney.org/ http://www.pullcom.com/together-diversity.html Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Mission Statement.pdf	
20.	Firm includes diversity in all orientation and onboarding programs and provides an overview of the firm's diversity strategy and initiatives.	Firm EEO Statement http://www.alanet.org/diversity/DIVERSITY-BROCHURE.pdf	
21.	Firm sends a welcome letter from Diversity Chair or designated person to all new hires welcoming them to the firm and emphasizing diversity's value in the firm and outlining the goals and objective (www.nalp.org)	Welcome Letter	
22.	Firm provides billable hour credit towards participation in diversity activities and initiatives.		
	Add your own:		

3. Firm Policies and Workplace Inclusion

The firm has a specific Diversity & Inclusion Policy or other written commitment to the same.

	Best Practice (Task/Responsibility)	Examples Where Available	Firm Score Yes/No
23.	Firm Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) statement is inclusive of diverse characteristics such as sexual orientation and gender identity.	Firm EEO Statement	
24.	Firm has a formally stated policy of diversity and inclusion and communicates this policy on the firm's website both internally and externally.	Diversity and Inclusion Statement	

25.	Diversity training is provided on an annual basis, starting with leadership.	http://www.saul.com/sites/default/files/3752_diversity_brochurePDF_011714_0.pdf Firm Practice on Diversity and Inclusion Training http://www.alanet.org/diversity/DIVERSITY-BROCHURE.pdf	
26.	Firm has a hiring and recruiting policy that focuses on its commitment to achieve a firm that reflects the diversity of the community it serves.	Best Recruiting Practices 10 Tips for Hiring and Interviewing to Move Diversity Forward	
27.	Firm supports inclusion by establishing a process and policy to increase retention of diverse and women attorneys.	http://www.duanemorris.com/site/recruiting_retention.html	
28.	Firm employs the Voluntary Gender Self-Identification Form	Self Identification Form	
29.	Firm has policies and procedures for benefits that achieve parity amongst its employees to the extent possible in a given jurisdiction; including domestic partner health benefits, maternity/paternity leave.		
30.	Firm requests and / or requires diversity in applicant pools when hiring attorneys and staff.	Diversity in Applicant Pools	
31.	Firm establishes inclusive policies such as flexible paid time off, prayer/reflection rooms, and lactation rooms.	Policy Sample Prayer Lactation Wellness Room	
32.	Performance standards and promotion criteria are clear, explicit, and fairly applied to make evaluation and promotion processes objective and equitable.		
33.	Firm reviews work allocation process to ensure opportunities for women and diverse attorneys.		
	Add your own:		

4. Professional Development

The firm provides professional development opportunities, both formal and informal, for its attorneys, managerial leadership, and professional support staff.

	Best Practice (Task/Responsibility)	Examples Where Available	Firm Score Yes/No
34.	Firm provides ongoing sensitivity and/or diversity and inclusion (unconscious bias) training on an annual or semiannual basis for all attorneys and staff.	Firm Practice on Diversity and Inclusion Training http://www.alanet.org/diversity/DIVERSITY-BROCHURE.pdf	
35.	Firm diversity training includes content addressing four generations in the workforce.	Four Generations in the Workforce	
36.	Firm supports membership/access for attorneys and staff to utilize local or national resources such as ALA, NALP, SHRM, MCCA, LGBT and other general, specialty and minority-related organizations, both locally and nationally.	Resource Organizations Example	
37.	Firm supports attorney and staff attendance at conferences or events relating to diversity and inclusion, including recruiting, retaining and mentoring a diverse workforce.	Attending Diversity and Inclusion Events	
38.	Firm has a mentoring program that requires mentoring across difference (gender, race, ethnicity or sexual orientation) and built in an effective accountability mechanism. Firm provides support to make certain that everyone is aware of the “unwritten rules” about how law firms operate and what it takes to succeed and advance in the firm.	Attorney Mentors How to Mentor	
39.	Firm has created a system to monitor work assignments to ensure all attorneys are receiving assignments that are meaningful and help develop the skills necessary for advancement.	Attorney Skills Checklist	

40.	Firm trains partners in effective management skills, including listening, supervising, coaching, and giving honest, constructive feedback.		
	Add your own:		

5. **Organizational Diversity and Inclusion Competency**

The firm's operations reflect a high level of organizational competency regarding diversity and inclusion.

	Best Practice (Task/Responsibility)	Examples Where Available	Firm Score Yes/No
41.	Firm ensures that it complies with all federal, state, and local laws with concern to hiring practices.		
42.	Firm has EEOC statement in any materials relating to hiring or career opportunities.	www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/internal/eeo_policy_statement.cfm	
43.	Firm uses metrics to report on the creation and sustainment of diversity and inclusion. Such metrics may include organizational metrics such as numbers of minority, women, LGBT disabled or other lawyers, or hiring and retention metrics such as resumes, interviews, offers, etc.		
44.	Firm provides training for all supervisory staff within six months of hire and every two years thereafter which focuses on non-discrimination, diversity awareness and anti-harassment policies.	Firm Practice on Diversity and Inclusion Training http://www.alanet.org/diversity/DIVERSITY-BROCHURE.pdf	
45.	Firm offers executive coaching on skills such as managing, mentoring, and supervision.	Mentoring and Executive Coaching	
46.	All supervisory staff and management can readily define diversity and inclusion as it pertains to the professional legal workplace.	http://www.alanet.org/diversity/DIVERSITY-BROCHURE.pdf	
	Add your own:		

6. Community Involvement

The firm is seen as being an involved member in the overall and legal community.

	Best Practice (Task/Responsibility)	Examples Where Available	Firm Score Yes/No
47.	Firm actively supports and is involved with minority bar associations or appropriate sections within it local and state bar associations.	Minority Bar Associations	
48.	Firm supports internships and clerkships that provide opportunities for individuals who represent underserved or marginalized groups. This can be through internships for high school and college students who are considering a career in the law or through formal minority summer associate programs for law school student.	Sample High School Mentoring Program	
49.	Firm encourages pro bono engagements amongst its attorneys and overall community involvement at all levels within the firm.	Pro Bono Community Involvement	
50.	Firm actively participates in university-sponsored diversity meetings between students and attorneys - not OCI related, but more informational and mentoring type events.	Academic Diversity Participation	
51.	Firm partners with (adopts) a school in a lower-income residential district to assist students with tutoring, school supplies, playground clean-up, a coat drive or other appropriate activity.		
52.	Firm engages in charitable work that heightens attorney and staff awareness of inequality in their community.		
	Add your own:		

7. Supplier Diversity

The firm seeks to build relationships with suppliers that will represent small, local, and/or minority and women-owned business.

	Best Practice (Task/Responsibility)	Examples Where Available	Firm Score Yes/No
53.	The firm has a policy of actively supporting/using diverse suppliers.	Supporting and Using Diverse Suppliers	
54.	The firm measures and tracks its use of minority and women-owned businesses.		
	Add your own:		



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