



Professional Development

The growth and advancement of the firm's associates is the mission of its Attorney Life, Evaluations, and Mentoring Committees. The Attorney Life Committee is at the heart of this effort. Its development of a core competency matrix ensures that every associate understands their Practice Group's performance expectations and that practice group leaders provide opportunities essential to skill-building and steady, predictable advancement within the firm. Evaluations are based on annual self-assessments and partner appraisals and the interim achievement of core competency benchmarks. Assigned mentors provide every associate with guidance and help along the way, and share responsibility with practice group leaders during the evaluation process.

Mentor Program

Hinshaw's firmwide mentor program provides associates with a single resource for assistance in understanding the professional expectations of the firm as well as developing strategies for achieving professional and developmental goals. While the firmwide mentor program helps enhance the associates' professional development and quality of legal performance, Hinshaw continues to encourage all associates to develop working relationships with all the attorneys in the firm regardless of formal assignments.

The mentor program formalizes mentoring efforts for all associates with a particular emphasis on orientation to the firm and its unique culture and development of legal and practice skills. Each associate is assigned a mentor and this assignment may be changed at any time at the request of the associate or the mentor.

Hinshaw's mentors have clearly articulated roles and responsibilities. These include being regularly available to address questions, concerns or issues of the associate; assisting in establishing and defining effective goals for the associate's area of practice; encouraging activities to promote the enhancement of the associate's legal and practice skills; orienting the new associate to procedures of Hinshaw and the firm's organizational culture; assisting in the development of skills and socialization to the firm through regularly scheduled meetings and individual development plans that include skills checklists or other instruments; and ensuring that the associate is provided with substantive and appropriate work opportunities and assignments.

At Hinshaw, the mentor and associate participate in an initial meeting within the first week of the associate's employment to discuss mentoring program activities and develop a preliminary mentoring plan, including an individual development plan. After that, the associate and mentor typically meet no less than once per month to discuss the associate's progress in all areas of development. In addition, the associate attends client entertainment and marketing activities with the mentor or any other attorney when the opportunity is identified by either the mentor, associate or other attorney.

To monitor the program, a meeting of all associates and mentors is held quarterly to review the program in general and discuss successes, failures and experiences.

In addition to having an assigned mentor, several attorneys in the firm have been designated as affinity mentors and are known for their interest in associate development and their natural teaching and leadership abilities. These affinity mentors provide an additional support system for associates and can be called upon at any time for professional advice and support.

Trial Advocacy

Once our new associates have completed the fall Hinshaw U Program, they become eligible for our spring Trial Advocacy Program.



The Trial Ad Program begins with three days of seminars taught by the Firm's trial attorneys as well as some members of the judiciary. The seminars are conducted off-site in a state-of-the-art mock courtroom that facilitates demonstrations by the faculty. This instructional phase covers preparation and argument of motions in limine, opening statements, direct and cross-examination of witnesses, introduction of documentary evidence, closing arguments, jury instructions, and preserving points for appellate review. Each segment is introduced by a member of the judiciary from the local Circuit and Appellate Courts, which provides an additional perspective on the trial experience.

The instructional phase is followed by a final day-long jury trial presided over by the Firm's leading trial attorneys. The jury is comprised of staff members from the Firm. The trials are videotaped and later critiqued by the faculty to maximize each participant's learning experience.

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