



ORRICK

Cooley



You Don't Have a Retention Problem; You Have a Context Problem: *Shifting Paradigms to Improve Retention*

Whittney Beard – Orrick

Gene Gilmore – Cooley

Tom Leatherbury – Vinson & Elkins LLP

Rodney Mueller – STL Coaching

Tammy Patterson – NALP Foundation

Professional Development Consortium



Context

[**kon**-tekst]

noun

1.

the parts of a written or spoken statement that precede or follow a specific word or passage, usually influencing its meaning or effect:

*You have misinterpreted my remark because you took it out of **context**.*

2.

the set of circumstances or facts that surround a particular event, situation, etc.



Context (as the Coach Sees It)

- Context is the lens through which you view everything:
 - the beliefs you hold to be true about the world,
 - how people should act in every situation,
 - what is acceptable, normal, ideal, etc.
- Context frames what you see, say, hear, and believe to be possible.
- It is entirely subjective and it is also malleable and changeable.

Understanding Your Contexts

- Apple vs. PC
- Uber vs. Taxi
- Real Books vs. eReader
- West Coast vs. East Coast
- Baby Boomers vs. Millennials
- Big Firm vs. Small Firm
- Partner vs. Associate

Shifting Context

- Usually, the only way to create different outcomes is to first shift our perspective of a situation.
- To do that we follow this process:
 - *Identify* – what is our context?
 - *Explore* – what are the limits of the context?
 - *Vision* – what is the future we want, irrespective of context?
 - *Create* – create a new context that supports the vision

Winning Strategy

- Another way to think about this is to imagine something called “winning strategy.”
- There is a predominant context for success at a law firm.
- This is limiting innovation and creativity (what’s possible).

Success Context Exercise

- Step 1: Success in this area is...
- Step 2: In order to achieve this success, I must...
- Step 3: Write out your Winning Strategy/Success Context:
- Step 4: Identify the limits of the context, what's not working about it, what's dreadful about it.
- Step 5: Creating a New (Empowering) Context

PD's Current Context

What is the current context of
PD professionals?



Law's Current Context

What is the current context of the legal profession?



What this Costs Us

- Passion/Engagement/Drive
- Productivity
- Attrition and Poor Retention

Top Reasons for Departure Entry Level Associates 2006-2015

YEAR	TOP REASON FOR DEPARTURE
2006	Desire for more regular work schedule – 18%
2007	Pursuit of practice interests – 19%
2008	Unmet work quality standards – 17%
2009	Firm downsizing – 32%
2010	Career change to other legal job type – 19%
2011	Unmet work quality standards – 17% Desire for new geographic locale – 17%
2012	Unmet work quality standards – 15% Pursuit of specific practice interest – 15% Career change to other type of legal job – 15% Desire for new geographic locale – 15%
2013	Unmet work quality standards – 17% Pursuit of specific practice interest – 17%
2014	Pursuit of specific practice interest – 17%
2015	Unmet work quality standards – 14%



Top Reasons for Departure Lateral Associates 2006-2015

YEAR	TOP REASON FOR DEPARTURE
2006	Unmet work quality standards – 20%
2007	Unmet work quality standards – 18%
2008	Unmet work quality standards – 22%
2009	Firm downsizing – 31%
2010	Unmet work quality standards – 22%
2011	Unmet work quality standards – 21%
2012	Unmet work quality standards – 20%
2013	Unmet work quality standards – 23%
2014	Career change to other type of legal job – 20%
2015	Unmet work quality standards – 20%

Status at Time of Departure

Entry-level Associates

YEAR	ASSOCIATE'S DEPARTURE WAS UNWANTED	ASSOCIATE'S DEPARTURE WAS WANTED	ASSOCIATE'S DEPARTURE WAS NEUTRAL
2006	56%	17%	28%
2009	31%	42%	26%
2011	57%	22%	21%
2013	51%	24%	25%
2015	64%	21%	15%

Status at Time of Departure

Lateral Associates

YEAR	ASSOCIATE'S DEPARTURE WAS UNWANTED	ASSOCIATE'S DEPARTURE WAS WANTED	ASSOCIATE'S DEPARTURE WAS NEUTRAL
2006	46%	26%	28%
2009	25%	49%	26%
2011	45%	30%	25%
2013	41%	31%	28%
2015	52%	33%	14%



Creating a New Context with Leaders

- If we gave up the old model completely (even for a moment, as an exercise) and invented something that worked better for more people, what would it look like?
 - Qualities of a system where people are motivated and inspired to be more productive
 - Qualities of the firm that supports this
 - Qualities of the leaders in this firm

Sample Coaching with a Firm Leader





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