

Why do many business people express frustration with lawyers? Because most lawyers don't get business. That includes business lawyers.

Many business lawyers, including in-house counsel will privately admit they don't understand the intricacies of business, especially strategy and management. This is because managers and lawyers speak different languages.

Managers think in terms of getting things done. Their tools are strategy and organizational management. They also leverage finance, accounting, marketing, and operations.

In contrast, lawyers -- including business lawyers -- think like lawyers. This means spotting issues and fly specking documents. (I first heard the term "fly specking" from constitutional law scholar [Roderick Hills, Jr.](#) as a first year student at [University of Michigan Law School](#). Hills is now at NYU School of Law). The unfortunate result of this orientation is lawyers often fail to advance business priorities.

Sure, some lawyers are strategic, but they provide legal strategy. They advise on how to negotiate contract or transactional terms, or on litigation strategy. They suggest how legal decisions might affect their client's business. But they rarely advise on business strategy and management practice. Nor do they often advise on how to *integrate* business strategy and legal strategy.

In future posts, I will discuss how [Legally Informed Strategy](#) provides a solution to this problem.