

The Need for Training of Lawyers in India

As the Indian legal market matures, so do the requirements for the professional development of lawyers.

By Bithika Anand

Gone are the times when being a professionally qualified lawyer was good enough. With law being a highly competitive profession the need for training and skill development is all the more imperative.

Why Training?

Many lawyers feel, even after the completion of their course work, that they know very little and lack skills that the changing time demands. With increasing attrition and the cost of hiring laterals, it makes a perfect case for upgrading the skills of an existing talent pool and placing them in a befitting position of the firm.

One needs to understand that attending a single training program does not change people or a Firm's culture overnight. Training should be an integral part of the law firm. Legal and soft skills training will strengthen professionalism, improve the performance of legal professionals, enhance service quality and stimulate client respect.

Looking for something that will give them a competitive advantage over their adversaries, lawyers are turning to legal, soft skills and leadership training. One law firm has a designated partner responsible for ascertaining the continuous training and skill development needs of the organization and ensuring conduction of such training programs in the firm. Lawyers are also inclined towards going for management programs to hone their managerial skills.

Through continuous and effective training programs for lawyers, law firms can address the critical problems like high turnover of lawyers and clients, revenue shortfalls, client complaints, malpractice suits, and falling reputation over a period of time.

These programs cost a significant amount of money and therefore law firms should have a budget allocated for the same. There is a growing body of evidence that improving the quality of lawyers in the firm will increase law firm profits and improve lawyer satisfaction. This in turn, will also ensure continuing professional excellence.

Indian law firms, though, have felt the need for continued training and skill enhancement but have done very little to upgrade the skills of their lawyers. This calls for a need to foster a culture of sustained training and skill development which meets the needs of the different sectors of the economy and society.

The top management of the law firms should envisage a mandatory and supportive soft skills, computer application, leadership and team management training program which will continuously allow lawyers to upgrade their knowledge throughout their careers.

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