

Tipping Point

Transformation and Innovation in the Legal Department

The contemporary legal landscape is no longer a rigid hierarchy composed of limited and complacent behemoths, but rather an ecosystem, filled with a wide variety of players that facilitate disruption and revolution and jostle for clients' attention with agility and innovation. This includes - but is certainly not limited to - entities such as technology companies, consultants, alternative legal service providers, and paraprofessionals. Law firms are not the only ones in this environment that must adapt or fail; the legal department and in-house counsel, too, must transform in order to remain relevant and competitive. The world of the general counsel (GC) has already seen massive shifts - ever-increasing globalization has meant more legal issues and corporate activism, which in turn has generated new challenges and heightened demand. The GC cannot simply act in the role of outsourcer of work to external counsel, as in the past. With the growth of legal departments (it is now not uncommon for legal departments to number in the hundreds or even thousands, often formed of expensive lateral hires) the GC must now wear a number of hats, including that of the "CEO" of their department. The introduction of data analysis into the legal space and the oft-repeated mantra of "less with more" has meant that the GC must now think in terms of spend and budget more than ever before, transforming the legal department from a cost-center to a value-add. They must cultivate a breadth and scope of vision, able to organize and lead their department as an innovator. The flourishing legal ops role also provides yet another challenge for the GC. As the incorporation of legal ops within the law department becomes increasingly essential, the GC must work to ensure alignment and manage change. The present time has been hailed as the golden age of in-house lawyering, yet - and perhaps because of this - it is an uncertain and challenging time for the GC. Tipping Point: Transformation and Innovation in the Legal Department is intended as a handbook for the GC looking to build a truly modern legal department and revolutionize their role. Encompassing aspects from leveraging influence with the c-suite to reimagining organizational hierarchies and seeking the right operational professional, this publication features contributions from those at the frontiers of the profession as it transforms and embraces new areas of expertise.

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