



THE  
**LAW SOCIETY**  
OF HONG KONG  
香港律師會

# 34<sup>th</sup> POLA SUMMIT

6 - 8 JUNE 2024 | HONG KONG

SUSTAINABILITY OF THE LEGAL PROFESSION GLOBALLY



# Talent Attraction and Retention

Regarding the topic of “talent attraction and retention”. It covers two aspects:

- 1、 What do law firms rely on to attract and retain talents?
- 2、 What should lawyers’ associations at all levels do to attract and retain talent in the profession?

# I. What law firms rely on to attract and retain talent?

# I. What law firms rely on to attract and retain talent?

For law firms, talent attraction and retention is usually determined by three elements, including professional knowledge platform, long-term development strategy and mature spiritual culture.

# 1. Law firms need to build professional knowledge platform for meeting the talents' needs for improving skills

Law firm is a knowledge-intensive professional place. We should build professional knowledge platform which can meet the talents' needs for improving skills, so that even in the early stage of their work, they also can experience the effective promotion of professional level, and then enhance their sense of identity and dependence.

# (1) Law firms should implement regular training mechanisms.

Compared with the senior lawyers with complete knowledge and rich experience, the regular training mechanism is more focused on attracting young talents. A Law firm usually has many types of business, senior lawyers are often concentrate on business they are familiar with, it is difficult to form a complete training system for them. However, it is difficult for young talents to have a comprehensive understanding about all kinds of business in the early stage, such as the content, characteristics and norms of the process. Therefore, law firms can carry out regular training to meet the learning needs of young talents for attracting and retaining talents.

## (1) Law firms should implement regular training mechanisms.

- On the one hand, law firms can horizontally integrate the basic knowledge of various types of business, then design a courses with comprehensive content and generalist nature to help young talents quickly understand different areas of lawyers' business, guide them to explore and plan for their long-term practice direction. On the other hand, law firms can vertically sort out the proven experience of specific business, such as considerations for different process when undertaking litigation cases. It will help young talents to study and exercise in depth in specific business areas.

## (2) Law firms should build information sharing databases.

The efficient conduct of lawyers' business largely relies on the legal knowledge base. The knowledge accumulated and summarized by law firms in the past has a high learning value for young talents who are eager to improve. Through the establishment of a information sharing database, we can achieve the purpose of unifying standard document templates, sharing contract templates, sharing case experience, etc., and help young talents to effectively broaden the channels and ways to obtain knowledge, information and practical experience.

## (3) Law firms should optimize the mentoring system

Before formally becoming a practising lawyer, young talents need to serve as trainee lawyers. During the period of traineeship, the effective guidance of mentoring lawyers plays an important role in talent attraction and retention. Some law firms set up “master-apprentice system”, “whether to bring out qualified apprentice” is as one of the thresholds for the promotion of partners, urging the “master” to be more dedicated for mentoring. Through the optimization of the mentoring system, young talents can grow steadily in a healthy and stable learning environment, which not only strengthens their internal drive for self-development, but also deepens their cohesion to the work platform.

2. Law firms should complete the long-term development strategy to clarify their own position and layout.

# (1) Law firms should build a unified management mechanism of shared case resources.

Case resource is the core element for lawyers to obtain income and for their long-term development. For lawyers who have difficulties in developing case resources independently at some stage, having shared case resources is an important factor to attract them to join. Law firms should build a shared cases resources centre and after give priority to young lawyers or professional lawyers after the collection of the case resources and reasonable secondary distribution. These measures will not only strongly promote the steady growth of the talents and health development, but also provide new vitality and power for the long-term development of the law firm.

## (2) Law firms should clarified the remuneration and promotion mechanism.

At present, there are already many famous law firms attracting talents by optimizing the remuneration structure and planning the growth and promotion channels. For example, in the early stage of the trainee lawyers' and young lawyers' work, in order to protect their basic livelihood, law firms will give appropriate fixed salaries and annual bonuses, to help they mainly focus on the work and personal growth; in the late stage, law firms will developing a system of annual salary increases and promotion to enhance the talents' predictability and enthusiasm for their long-term development.

## (3) Law firms should explore the supplementary welfare system.

Supplementary welfare system usually includes the following: the establishment of special funds to provide eligible young lawyers with interest-free loans for home purchase, loans for overseas study, etc.; encouraging young lawyers who can independently practice to participate in academic forums, business seminars and other types of professional activities and providing financial subsidies; and the free provision of shared workstations for young lawyers, and so on.

# 3. Law firms need to focus on the building of spiritual culture to enhance the sense of belonging of talents.

Implementation of building spiritual culture, such as regular travelling and birthday parties, will help to enhance the work experience and the sense of belonging of talents. Spiritual culture building is powerful driving forces for gathering talents, and promoting the law firms' development. Lawyers will have the spiritual sense of belonging when they deeply understand and agree with the firms' culture, which can form a strong cohesion, promote the overall effectiveness of the law firm and the efficient achievement of the goals.

## **II. What should lawyers' associations at all levels do to attract and retain talent in the profession?**

## II. What should lawyers' associations at all levels do to attract and retain talent in the profession?

Young lawyers are the driving force for the development of the legal profession and the future of the profession. Young lawyers who are new to the legal profession are often at a disadvantage in competition, and their survival and development have always been a hot topic in the profession.

Therefore, the lawyers associations at all levels in mainland China has specifically formulated relevant policies and organized relevant activities for young lawyers, focusing on the promotion of economic protection and professional empowerment of young lawyers, as reflected in the following:

1. optimizing the economic security system, improve the mismatch between young lawyers' income and expenditure and other problems, and provide basic protection for the retention of talents in the legal profession.

# (1) building minimum wage guarantee system of young lawyers combined with the actual situation.

In January 2022, Chongqing Lawyers Association issued the *Decision on the Implementation of Social Insurance and Minimum Wage for Lawyers*, and law firms with different types of development modes and distribution mechanisms may take into account the actual situation and refer to the suggested paths listed in the Decision to implement the minimum wage standard.

## (2) reducing or waiving membership fees for young lawyers

Taking into account the economic pressure on young lawyers', lawyers association at all levels have reduced or exempted young lawyers from paying membership fees.

In January 2023, Guangdong Lawyers Association announced to reduce or exempted membership fees from April 1st 2023 to March 31th 2024 for all newly practising lawyers in Guangdong Province.

Shanghai Lawyers Association issued *Shanghai Lawyers Association Membership Fees Payment Rules*, the Rules stipulates that lawyers who obtain lawyers' licenses at the first time can be exempted from the current year's individual membership fees, the second year of individual membership fees halved. Although there are differences between the standards of membership fees reduction and exemption of the lawyers association at all levels, but these measures are effective in helping the lawyer profession to retain talents.

2. establishing of a sound training mechanism for talents, helping young talents to effectively improve their personal skills by strengthening business training, launching professional skills competitions and other means

# (1) organising regular training for young lawyers

Beijing Lawyers Association has been organizing training courses for young lawyers under the “Helathy Growth Plan for Young Lawyers” for a long time.

Shanghai Lawyers Association has set up “Youth Classes” for lawyers with less than 3 years of practice, “Youth Training Classes” for lawyers with 3 to 10 years of practice and “Youth Camps” for young partners with more than 7 years of practice, and carries out online training to expand lawyers professional skills in criminal, labour, arbitration and other practice areas.

Chongqing Lawyers Association implemented the “Craftsmanship Inheritance Plan”, senior lawyers will help young lawyers by sharing their experience. In addition, it carries out the “1,000 Leading Young Lawyers Talents Training Programme”, aims to train 1000 young leaders.

## (2) organising young lawyers development forums

In August 2022, the Xinjiang Lawyers Association and Shaanxi Lawyer Association jointly organized a forum on “Development of Young Lawyers in the New Era”, where outstanding lawyers from different regions gave speeches and interacted with each other online in four sessions, namely, “Growth”, “Confusion”, “Exemplary” and “Prospect”, and provided young lawyers with breakthrough ideas and experience references on how to choose the business direction and the platform of the law firms from their own growth experiences.

In September 2022, the Lawyer Associations of Shanghai, Jiangsu, Zhejiang and Anhui jointly organised a forum on “Youth in Judicial Administration in Yangtze River Delta”, which focused on the optimization and upgrading of policies for young lawyers.

## (3) conducting “Young Lawyers Debate Competition” “Legal Service Skills Competition”, etc.

In June 2023, the Shanghai Lawyers Association held the 2023 Shanghai Lawyer Debate Competition, in which 32 debate teams and more than a hundred debaters from 16 districts, corporate lawyers, invited members and other lawyers’ teams in the city participated in the competition, which effectively promoted Shanghai lawyers to improve their business skills, and also created a win-win exchange platform among lawyers.

In March 2023, the Dalian Lawyers Association held a Legal Service Skills Competition for Young Lawyers, showcasing professional services such as contract signing, real estate transactions, agency system, wills and inheritance in the Civil Code.

**For any profession, including the legal profession, talent is the core competitiveness of the professions' high-quality and sustainable development. We expect that through this discussion, we can have the opportunity to learn more and better ideas and initiatives from various countries and regions in attracting and retaining talents, and lay a better talents foundation for the healthy and rapid development of our countries' legal professions.**



THE  
**LAW SOCIETY**  
OF HONG KONG  
香港律師會

# 34<sup>th</sup> POLA SUMMIT

6 - 8 JUNE 2024 | HONG KONG

SUSTAINABILITY OF THE LEGAL PROFESSION GLOBALLY

## Thank you !

