

The ten things that should be considered to go from good to great:

1. Know the business itself inside out.
2. Understand how the finances work across the board. Understand figures and financial reporting - understand budgets process etc.
3. Don't just keep yourself up to date with legal developments (which you MUST do) - consider alternative courses - MOA, finance for non financial managers, take on language skills, know the culture and history of countries in which your company does business etc.
4. Understand the political environment in which you work. Understand how to manage the varying characters of people.
5. Have time management as a top priority and within that understand how to prioritise your work according to the objectives of the company.
6. Communication skills are key both written and verbal. Presentation skills are key - take a course if necessary.
7. Stay in close touch with your peers in other companies so you know what is happening in the world outside your company for in house counsel - interact well with the legal community - be known - speak at conferences - get a good reputation external to your company.
8. If your business is mutli jurisdictional ensure you travel to each location often enough to be fully familiar with conditions "on the ground".
9. Ensure you are well known throughout your business and that you know the key players personally. Do not confine your key relationship to the person to whom you report. Make sure also that you are constantly communicating with all of the executive team - even if you do not have a current matter with them.
10. Find another word for NO!!!! Remember you are Counsel/Advisor not a nay sayer. Help the business achieve its objective without getting into trouble. You must not be regarded as a "necessary evil" but rather as an invaluable asset to whom management naturally turns for advice. Prevention not cure should be your motto.