

Value Practice:***Sun Microsystems Law Department Training: 'Get Smart' Training and Beyond*****Connie Brenton*****Interviewed while Senior Director and Chief of Staff to the General Counsel
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Training is a supported goal from upper management at Sun Microsystems. The legal department has embraced this corporate mandate and implemented a variety of training initiatives to address various needs, like driving company open source initiatives and developing a competitive advantage in hiring. Sun legal offers training both centrally through programs run by the law department's Legal Operations Group (e.g., 'Get Smart Training'), and by various legal functions supporting specific business units (such as Products and Technology Law and Global Sales & Services Legal).

This ACC Value practice example focuses on Sun Microsystems' 'Get Smart Training' and highlights components of specific tiered training programs implemented by select legal functions.

Key Elements of Sun's 'Get Smart Training':

- *Frequency; Length:* 'Get Smart Training' is offered once per month; sessions are 1 to 1.5 hours.
- *Schedule and Topics:* The training schedule is set a year in advance; suggestions on topics are solicited from across the law department. Topics are tailored to issues that affect the whole legal organization. Past training topics include: market integration, data privacy, mergers and acquisitions, due diligence lessons learned, open source update, negotiating difficult provisions, joint ventures, and more.
- *Tone at the Top:* Sun's General Counsel attends these training sessions; demonstrates importance and value, and sets the tone. On average, 80% of the law department participates in/tunes into the training session.
- *Delivery:* Training is delivered via WebEx. All training sessions are recorded and can be accessed following the live training to accommodate schedules and differing time zones. Training includes a slide deck and audio. Presenters are encouraged to put materials on the Legal Department's secure wiki.
- *Metrics:* Training and participation in training is tracked. Training is a law department goal; the WebEx feature allows the Legal Operations Group to 'see' who participates.

Tiered Training within Legal Teams:

Following are highlights of training initiatives implemented by Sun's Products and Technology Law Team and by its Global Sales and Services Legal Team.

Products and Technology Law (“PTL”): Building Blocks for Success

This legal team started by looking at core values and critical success factors (“CSF’s”). Having identified its core values and CSF’s, the team developed ‘building blocks for success’—attributes needed to deliver legal services for Sun that exceed anything offered by law firms to maximize the changes for success for key Sun initiatives and strategies (such as open sourcing core products like Sun’s Solaris Operating System).

- *Building Blocks for Success:* includes information about clients’ businesses and core technologies (e.g. microprocessor design and manufacturing), specific legal topics critical to Sun’s businesses (e.g. open source, copyright and patent law), contract negotiation, client counseling and business negotiation skills, PTL policies, processes and procedures (e.g. inbound licensing requirements and limitation of liability mandates), law department policies, Sun business policies, tools (e.g Sun’s proprietary open source tool), certification and tracking and more.
- *Scope of Training Modules:* the legal team has a list of 50-60 recorded topics on which they offer training; each topic is tied to a ‘block’ This training is needed for its lawyers to not only be successful but offer a competitive advantage.
- *Frequency; Format:* Training is offered between 3-10 times per quarter. Training material is collected and sessions are 1-2 hours and are in person and by webex. Sessions are recorded. All training is centralized on the secure Legal wiki.
- *On-boarding:* A library of training is valuable as part of the orientation process for new lawyers on the team. Team management can select key modules to help new hires understand business, legal processes, policies and expectations. Team views training as helping to provide a competitive edge to attract and retain talent.
- *Track ‘attendance’:* legal team management tracks attendance at a high level. The team has an attendance goal of 60%; actuals are closer to 70-80%.
- *Client Training:* done on an ad hoc basis as needed and covers topics from using Sun’s CDA tool to open source to basic negotiation and technology licensing concepts. Training sessions are stored on the secure Legal wiki and are available for reuse by all members of the department.

Global Sales and Services Legal Team (“GSSL”): Focus on Practices to Consider Global Diversity

The GSSL team plans training annually, and generally identifies 6-8 training topics for lawyers and 6-8 training topics for clients each year. The team ‘tiers’ its training—first considering the ‘Get Smart’ training and then determining additional training needs to complement other offerings.

- *Geographically dispersed; Timing:* The GSSL team is geographically dispersed with 50% of the team located outside of the United States and no more than 6 to 8 people in any office.

To try to offer training that all may use, training sessions are recorded and generally offered live either at 7am or 4pm pacific standard time.

- *Methods:* All training is recorded; most sessions are via conference calls. The team is also looking to develop web or podcasts, and clients are exploring MP3 or I-touch training delivery systems.
- *Global holidays:* Given the team's geographic diversity, the schedule is set after reviewing a worldwide holiday calendar; in addition, trainers consider cultural and language sensitivities in developing training sessions.
- *Leadership Team Sets Strategic Training:* A leadership team within the GSSL team sets vision and sets the annual training calendar for the team.

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