

**Value Practice:****Using a Disciplined Internal 'Hoshin' Planning Process to Enhance Alignment with Business Clients- Law Department Practices at Toyota Motor Sales, USA, Inc.****Christopher Reynolds****Interviewed while Group Vice President and General Counsel****Toyota Motor Sales, USA, Inc.****September 2009****Background**

Toyota Motor Sales, USA, Inc.'s law department internal, value-add 'hoshin' practice that brings discipline to the legal service planning process in a manner designed to enhance alignment and communications with business clients.

Following is a summary of the 'hoshin' planning process.

**Law Department's 'Hoshin' Planning Process Enhances Internal Alignment with Clients**

Using the hoshin planning process, the law department plans legal services for the upcoming fiscal year in a collaborative and structured way with internal business clients.

Some key attributes:

- **Hoshin planning tool helps plan legal services for upcoming fiscal year-** the law department uses a template as a tool to help structure discussions with business leaders. An example of the Hoshin planning tool may be viewed [here](#).
- **Legal leadership team frames legal-oriented hoshin** – the hoshin is developed within the law department and then presented to business clients; the hoshin includes information on what the law department plans to accomplish, how the department will accomplish these actions and benchmarks.
- **Face-to-face meetings with business leaders towards end of fiscal year to identify priorities and plan for upcoming year-** meetings are generally one hour; the law department presents its hoshin and solicits input from business leaders on alignment with the business plan.
- **Document and confirm discussions-** Reynolds' team includes a designated leader, the law department's Chief of Internal Audit, on point for 'burning' the collaborative planning discussions to a document that is then shared with business leaders to confirm it reflects discussions.

- **Transparency-** overall, the hoshin process makes transparent to business leaders plans for what the law department will emphasize in the upcoming year based on objectives and priorities identified by business leaders.
- **Law department's value-** the process helps the law department show that it is serious about alignment with business goals and is useful to identify priorities and set resource allocation for providing services.

### **Closing Insights**

Reynolds explains that the hoshin process is a powerful internal planning tool that requires the law department to be very serious and deliberate about its approach for providing legal services to our business clients. He also describes it as a great tool for marketing internally within the company the law department and showing its value noting that the process allows the law department to demonstrate to business leadership that it is marshalling resources and addressing what is top-of-mind for them in a way that aligns priorities.

### **Contact Information**

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