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# WISNIK INDUSTRY SNAPSHOT SURVEY

*PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT*

FALL 2009



Wisnik Career Enterprises, Inc.  
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Dear Friends of Wisnik,

Thank you for participating in our Wisnik Industry Snapshot Survey! We are thrilled that 56 of you took time out of your hectic schedules to respond.

Overall, you report that you are being asked to do more with less resources. About 72% of you expect your budgets to be cut for 2010, but you expect these cuts to be minimal.

When asked which programs you would continue to invest in, even in these economically challenging times, you repeatedly said Business Development training for both Associates and Partners. Your commitment to training your attorneys is as solid as ever. Unfortunately, many of you say that getting your attorneys to attend the programs you offer is difficult because of associates' fear of being away from their desks when work arrives. In addition, many of you mention that morale is low and is impacting participation. Associates having more time for training has not necessarily resulted in higher attendance levels to the training programs being offered.

Interestingly, it appears that your busiest attorneys are 4th-6th years. Nearly 70% of you did defer your new attorneys' start dates. If you had the budget, you would offer these deferrals training to help them gain tools to make a successful transition from student to attorney. The majority of you are considering or are in the process of establishing competency benchmarks for your attorneys as well as replacing lock-step compensation with alternative models.

Overall, it sounds like major cuts are not expected to continue in 2010 and you expect to maintain the programs your firm has already committed to. You have done a great job of surviving. The question is when will you be able to thrive again and offer your attorneys the creative initiatives you know would make them most valuable to clients? Only time will tell when this will be possible again.

We hope you find this survey informative and welcome your thoughts,



*Eva Wisnik*

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## *Who responded to the survey?*

- 20 - Chiefs, Directors
- 20 - Managers, Administrators
- 16 – Coordinators, Assistants

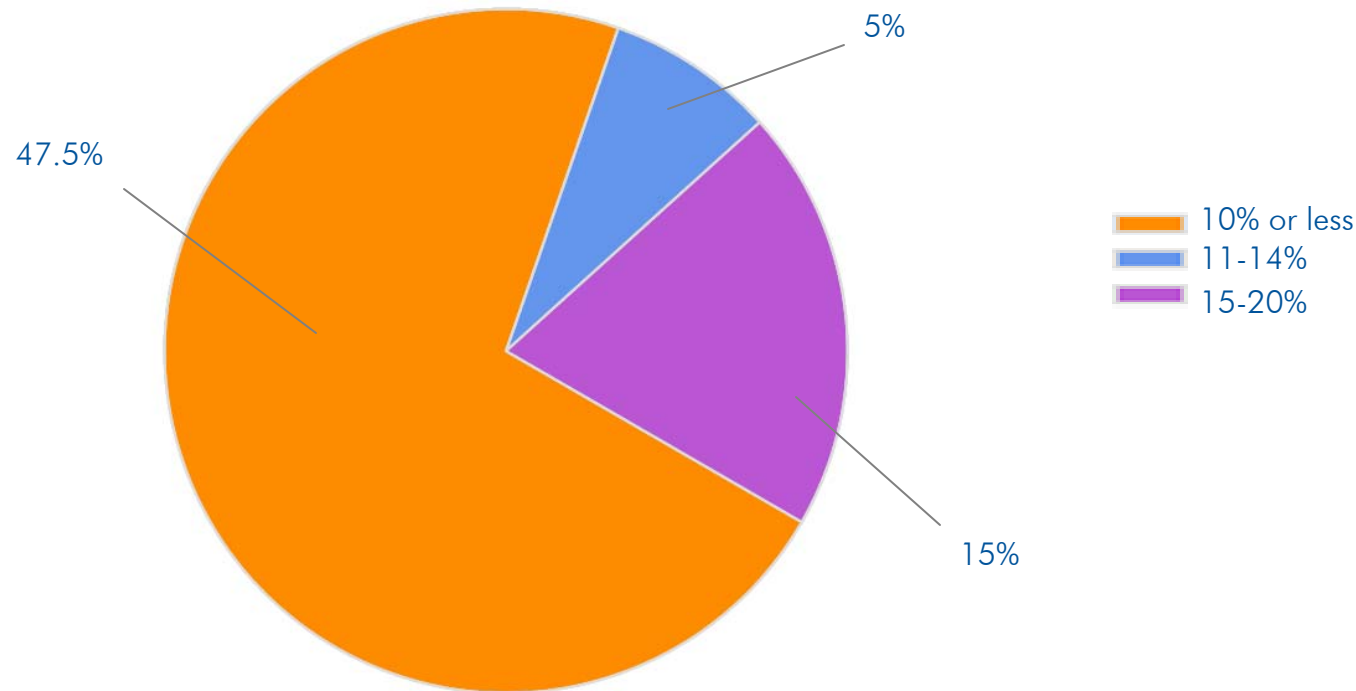
## *Where are they located?*

CITY	# RESPONDENTS
New York	20
Washington, DC	15
Chicago	6
California	4
Boston	2
Other	9



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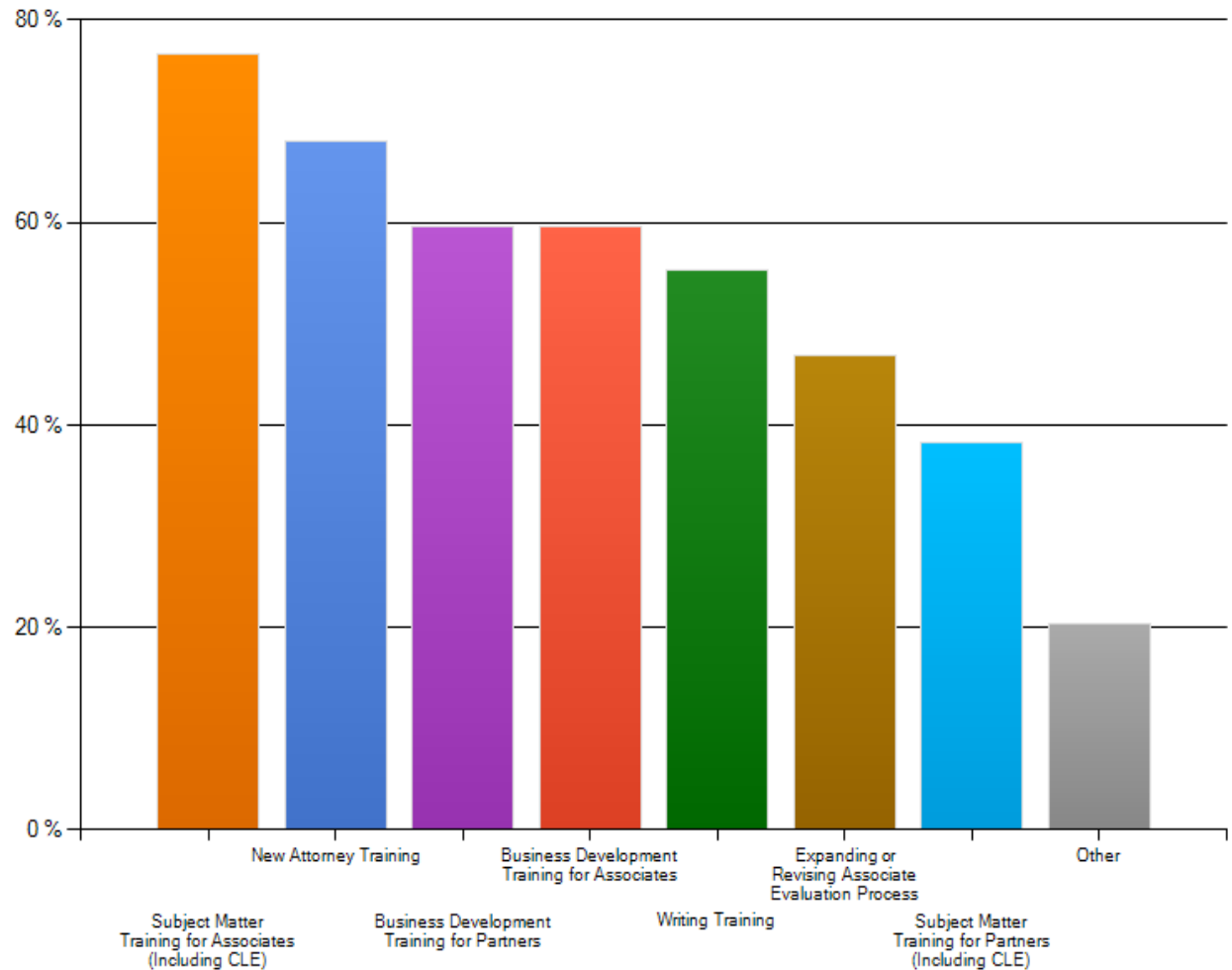
- ❖ 72% expect their budget for 2010 to be reduced
- ❖ However, almost 50% believe it will only be cut by 10% or less



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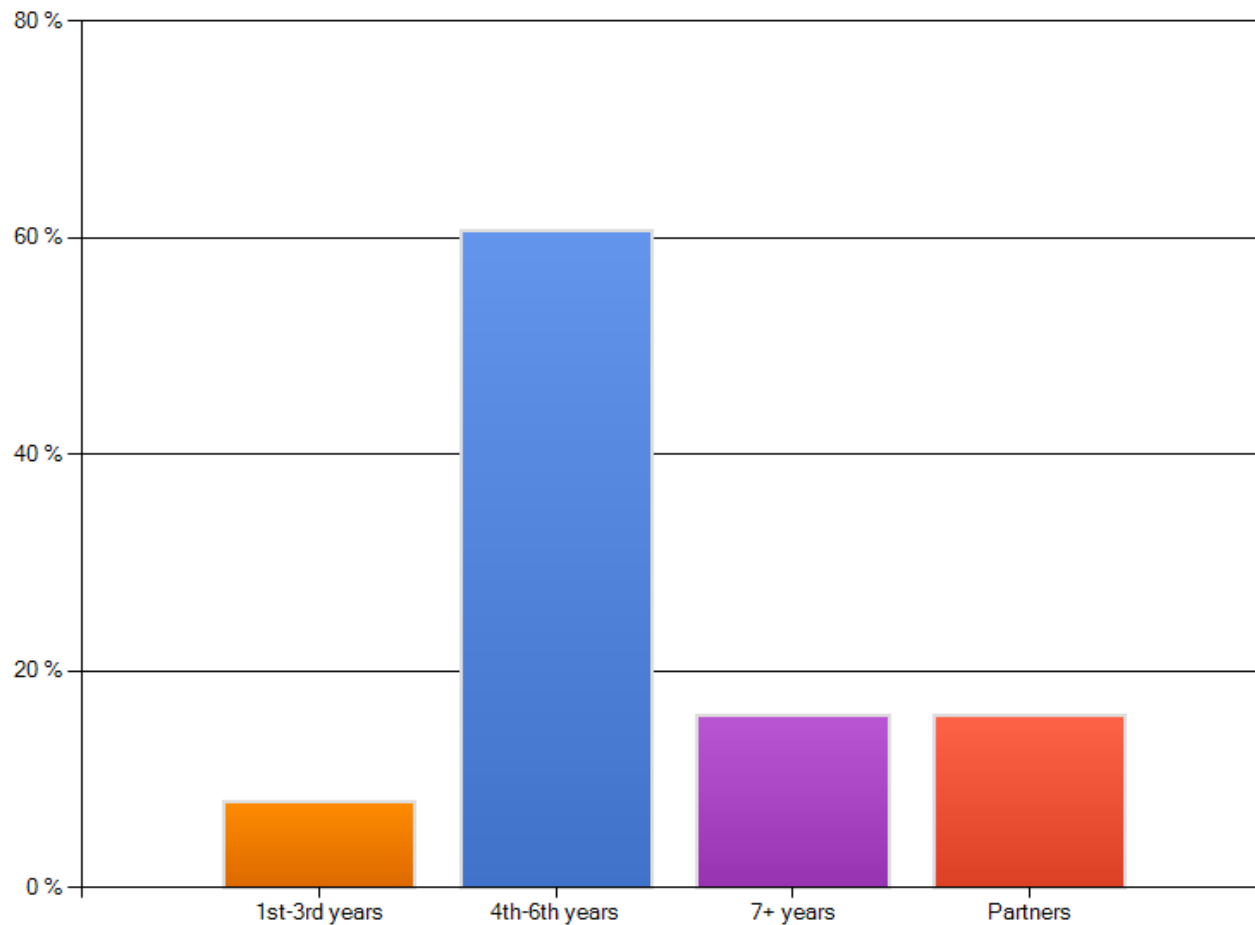
During these economic times which programs would you keep/add despite budget cuts?

*PD professionals identified Business Development Training for Partners & Associates as their #1 investment.*



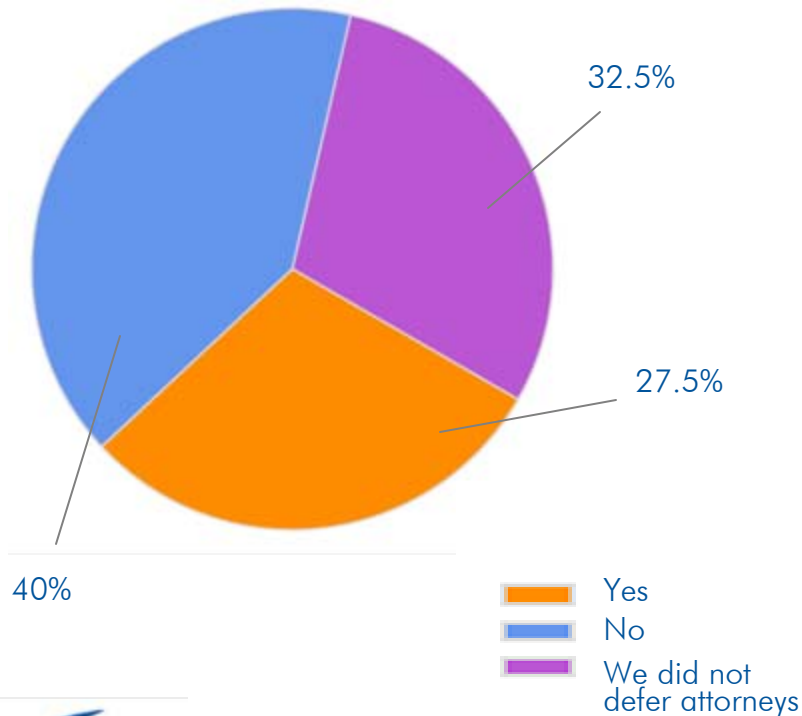
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What level attorneys are busiest  
(in terms of billable hours) at your Firm?



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If you deferred new attorneys, are you providing them with any kind of training (live or on-line) before they arrive at your Firm?



If you had the budget and time what kind of training would you offer these deferrals?

"Programs aimed at satisfying their CLE requirements."

"Substantive department training to keep their skills sharp during the interim period."

"Training to prepare them for law firm practice, including: communication skills, time management and supervisory training."



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If your department received an additional \$150,000 what would you spend it on?

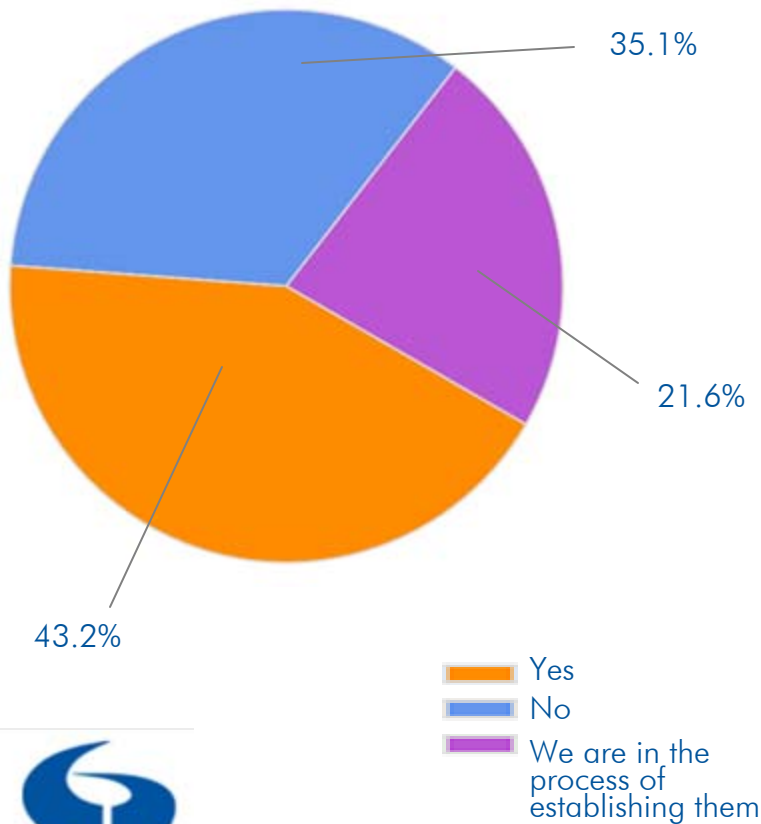
RESPONSE CATEGORIES	% RESPONDENTS
Training Programs	41%
Retreats and Morale Boosting Events	26%
Consulting Projects (i.e. competency modeling, revamping evaluation process)	15%
Staff and Salary	10%
Mentoring and Coaching Programs	8%

- ❖ "Business development training."
- ❖ "Programs and activities that would boost associate morale."
- ❖ "Bringing attorneys together for in-person training and networking."
- ❖ "Salaries for existing personnel and additional staff."
- ❖ "Consulting regarding competency modeling and benchmarking."

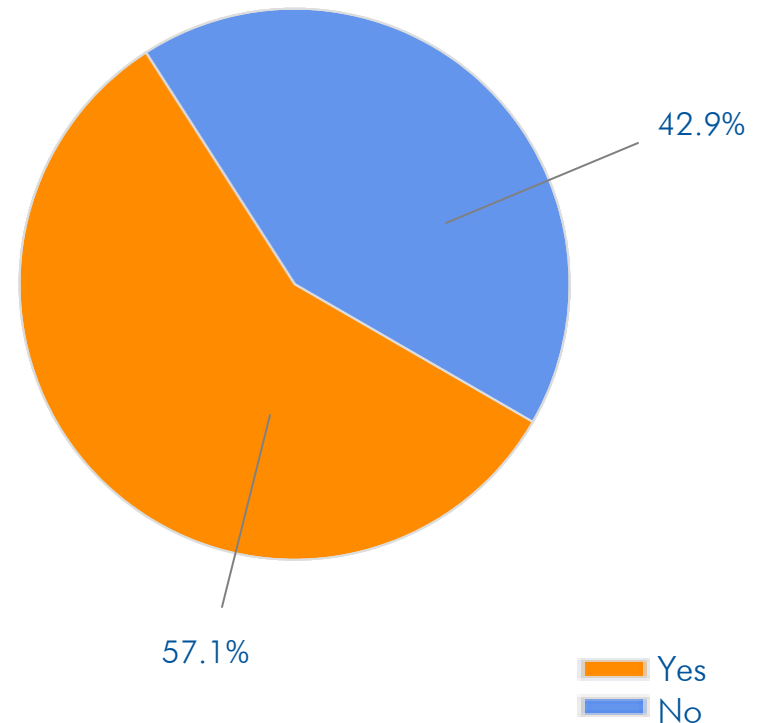


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Has your Firm established competency benchmarks for lawyers at different levels?

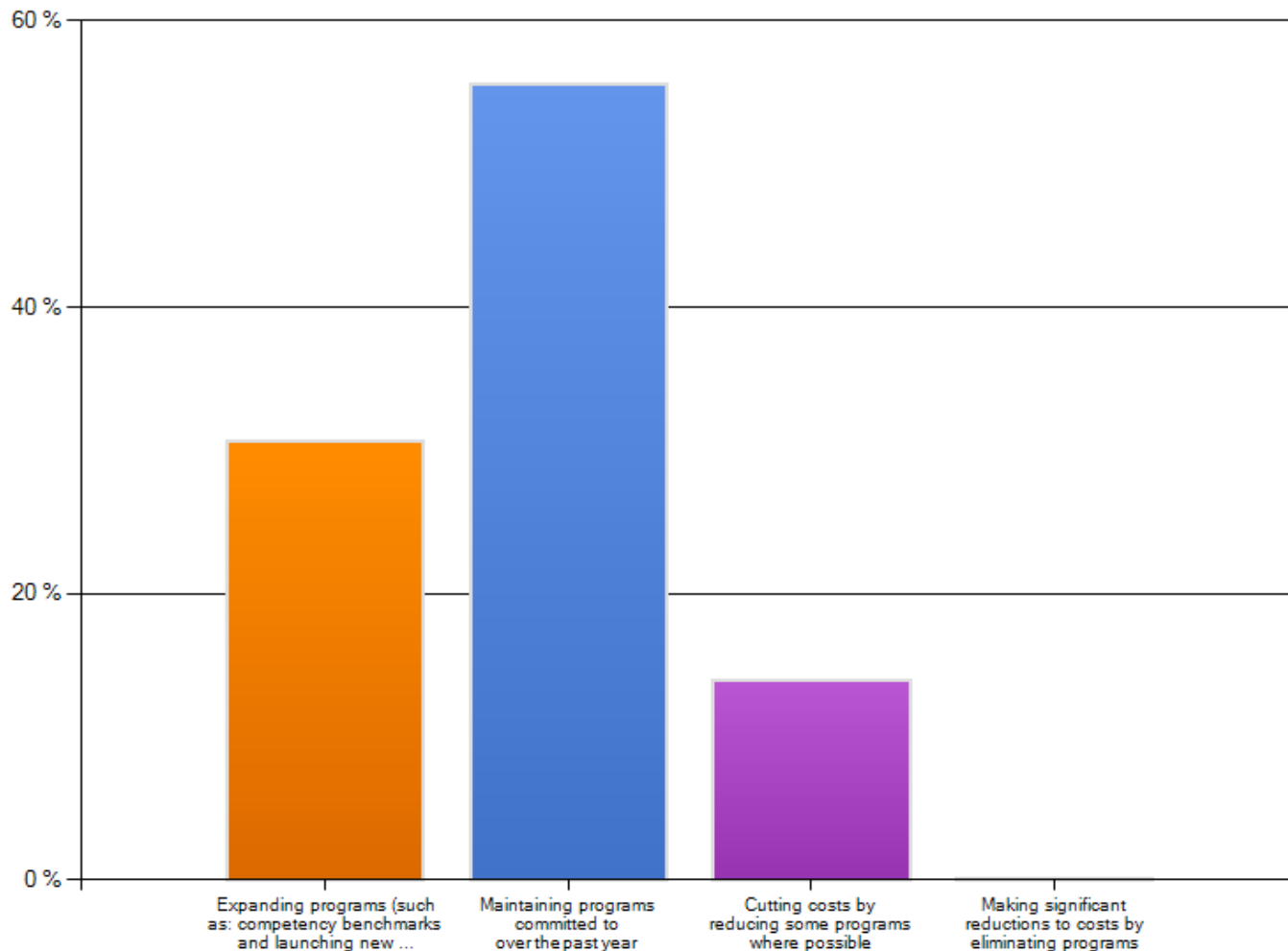


Is your Firm considering replacing lock-step compensation with alternative models?



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In the next 9 months do you primarily see your work as:



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## Describe your current challenges in law firm Professional Development:

- ❖ “Equipping associates with the necessary skills and knowledge to make them more confident and competent in a changing legal landscape.”
- ❖ “Getting attorneys to attend training programs especially with no travel budget and their concern for not being available to do work.”
- ❖ “Designing and building more expansive and smart programs, and thinking more strategically and long-term when implementing projects.”
- ❖ “Attorney morale is a challenge to overcome.”
- ❖ “There is not enough help to get it all done. One is expected to navigate through harder more demanding times with less help than in good times.”
- ❖ “Getting Partners/Executive committees to buy in on new initiatives and programs.”
- ❖ “Measuring our internal success and evaluating programs as they impact the bottom-line of a firm.”



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Are there any resources or skills that you have found particularly useful during these challenging times?

- ❖ “Time and stress management training.”
- ❖ “Increased collaboration across administrative departments.”
- ❖ “My professional network-- always helps me do more with less.”
- ❖ “Being creative under budget constraints and optimizing the use of existing technology.”
- ❖ “Coaching and counseling skills to help associates through difficult times.”
- ❖ “Keeping a positive attitude!”





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