

Women Litigators' Luncheon Focuses on Retaining Women Lawyers

For attorneys, particularly woman attorneys looking to advance their careers, being a good lawyer is not enough.

That's the view of Deborah Epstein Henry, the President of Flex-Time Lawyers LLC®, a consulting firm that advises law firms and lawyers on work-life issues particularly those affecting women attorneys.

"There might have been a time when simply being a talented attorney was the key to success, but these days, particularly for women lawyers, being talented and stellar is not enough," said Henry, a former practicing attorney, who will present "*Blueprinting Women for Success*" at the Women Litigators' Luncheon at the Boardwalk Seminar® 2013 on Thursday, April 18, 2013.

In addition to being good lawyers, women attorneys also need to improve in five areas: networking and business development, leadership sponsorship and mentoring, promotion and self-promotion, work/life balance, and flexibility, said Henry, the author of *Law & Reorder: Legal Industry Solutions for Restructure, Retention, Promotion & Work/Life Balance*.

Women generally are not good in these areas either because they are afraid of being seen as pushy and overbearing, they feel they don't have the needed skill sets or because they are uncomfortable with the idea of using social relationships for business goals, she said.

It's not uncommon when a leadership option is presented, for a man to put his hand up and say 'I'll do it' even if he doesn't have the



Deborah Epstein Henry

skills to do it," Henry said. "Women are reluctant to put their hand up until they feel they have obtained and mastered the skills."

She said she wants those in attendance at the Women Litigators' Luncheon to learn the areas that women, historically have been weak at. "I'm hoping that people will feel empowered to take on some of these things and change the way they look at them."

Henry said her presentation will be different than the traditional speaker-audience format. "I want to create groups at tables where people can network, discuss and offer suggestions to people at other tables

"There are plenty of men who can improve in these areas, but my focus is on helping women find ways to advance their careers while also balancing their home life so they stay in the profession," she said.

Approximately one-third of women lawyers leave the profession, many because the demands of law firms and in-house legal departments make it difficult for them to balance career and home, Henry said.

"As a profession we're doing a much better job of recruiting women as lawyers, but we're not doing a good job of keeping them," she said. Henry pointed to national statistics that show the number of women partners in law firms at 16 percent.

"It hasn't moved from that level in quite a while, which says that law firms need to find better and more flexible ways of promoting women than simply relying on billable hours, which has been the tradition," she said.

Henry, who founded Flex Time Lawyers® in 1999, said that after her more than 10 years of consulting she is optimistic about the role of women in the legal profession.

"The partnership numbers still need to grow, but there have been a lot of changes over the years as law firms and institutions realize the talent drain that takes place when women leave the profession," she said.

"Around the country, we are seeing increasing numbers of employers starting to experiment with different methods to retain talented women," Henry said. "Many places are realizing that all of their employees benefit if the firms or companies are more employee-friendly.

"They are coming to the realization that creating environments that are better for employees leads to greater employee satisfaction, and that in turn leads to greater client satisfaction," she said.

NJAJ Representatives Re-Appointed to Supreme Court Committees

Three NJAJ representatives on Supreme Court committees have been re-appointed to their posts for two-year terms by the Supreme Court.

NJAJ Past Presidents Michael A. Galpern, Esq., Amos Gern, Esq., and Bruce H. Stern, Esq., were notified of their appointments for the 2013-2014 term in December.

Galpern was reappointed to the Committee on Jury Selection in Civil and Criminal Trials.

Gern was reappointed to the Civil Practice Committee.

Stern was reappointed to the Committee on Model Civil Jury Charges.

NJAJ President Scott G. Leonard, Esq. congratulated the three attorneys on their reappointments.

"I applaud Amos, Bruce and Michael for their continued service to our organization," he said. "I am pleased that the Supreme Court has recognized the value of NJAJ's input as shown by these reappointments."

Boardwalk

continued from page 4

Blueprinting Women for Success.

The Boardwalk Seminar® 2013 will offer four restricted programs on Wednesday, April 17, 2013.

The programs, *Deposition Workshop*, *Engineering, How Lawyers Maximize their Soft Tissue Cases*, and one presented by Noted Trial Consultant Amy Singer, will be open to regular NJAJ member only.

The Boardwalk Seminar® 2013 will also host an exhibit hall with 160 vendors. Bring your business cards.

Look for more information on the NJAJ web site.