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Does the Legal Industry Need a Change?



A reporter, author, GC, and law firm chairman walk into a bar. Actually, on Tuesday they walked into a **Dickstein Shapiro** conference room to discuss *Law & Reorder*, **Deborah Epstein Henry's** new book. ABC's **Claire Shipman** led the conversation— with Debbie, DuPont GC **Tom Sager**, and firm chairman **Mike Nannes**—about restructuring the legal industry's business models, retention, promotion and work/life balance (minor issues). Debbie, a litigator turned legal consultant, tells us an email she sent inviting fellow attorneys to **nosh and schmooze** about work/life balance spawned **150** responses, inspiring her to put pen to paper.



Half the book addresses helping employers adapt to growing industry changes; the other half's a roadmap for honing individual skills and finding the best fit for attorneys and law students. The gist? Both halves should align for workplace synergy. To **maintain client** and attorney **satisfaction** (and profits), law firms should **increase flexibility**: in billing, hours, promotions, and pay scales. Lawyers, in turn, can express work needs to employers and polish soft skills early on. Mike, above, tells us clients requesting diversity will help law firms come around. Tom—a **34-year** DuPont vet who has written about his company's novel legal model—says training lawyers in **project management** and **Six Sigma** operational strategies will drive firms' efficiency.