

COLUMBUS CHAPTER NEWS

JUNE 2026



Columbus Chapter President
Julie Bryan

President's Message

The Story People Write Without You

One thing I have been reminded of lately, stepping into a new role and a new environment, is how quickly people fill in the blanks when communication is unclear. Most of the time, it is not about bad intentions. It is about timing, assumptions, incomplete information, or simply people

moving too fast to realize others are trying to catch up.

But when people do not fully understand what is happening around them, they naturally start writing the story themselves. And those stories are rarely small. A missed detail becomes exclusion. A delayed conversation becomes secrecy. A lack of clarity becomes distrust. That is how disconnect quietly starts to build inside teams, even when nobody intended for it to happen.

That is exactly why Zeina Boydoun's presentation last week resonated with me so much. I sat there thinking about how relevant this topic is for every organization navigating change, growth, transition, or even just day-to-day communication. Zeina did not just talk about the problem. She gave practical ways to get ahead of confusion, communicate with more intention, and bring people along rather than unintentionally leaving them behind.

I walked away from that presentation feeling more thoughtful about the role communication plays in trust, culture, and leadership. That is exactly what strong programming should do... give us tools we can immediately bring back to our workplaces and apply in meaningful ways. A huge thank you to Zeina and to Affinity Consulting for continuing to support this chapter so well.



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UPCOMING EVENTS:

05-June - Friday

2-6 or 5:30-9:30

Volunteer Opportunity

A Kid Again

Location—Columbus Zoo

16—June—11:45am

Monthly Chapter Meeting

Leslie Muhlback—Tuning the

Instrument—Public Speaking Topic

Location—Squire Patton Boggs

41 S. High Street, 20th floor

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Find out how to ensure the best candidates are joining your firm.

EDITORIAL POLICY

The *Columbus Chapter News* is published monthly for the education and benefit of legal administrators. It is not published for the purpose of rendering legal, accounting, or other professional services or advice. Nothing contained in this newsletter should be construed as legal, accounting, or other professional services or advice. Reprint of articles contained in this newsletter requires the written permission of the Editor of the *Columbus Chapter News*.

ALA MISSION STATEMENT

ALA is the premier professional association connecting leaders and managers within the legal industry. We provide extensive professional development, collaborative peer communities, strategic operational solutions, and business partner connections empowering our members to lead the business of law.

COLUMBUS CHAPTER, ALA MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Columbus Chapter Association of Legal Administrators is to provide a local forum of professional and educational enrichment to improve the quality of management in law firms and other legal services organizations. Our chapter is committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive professional environment where we value and strive to develop our members of all backgrounds and experiences. We firmly believe that having varied perspectives and collaboration among members generates more incisive and deeper insights that better serve our chapter and our increasingly diverse world. We are also committed to giving our time and talent to the community in order to achieve a prosperous society.



Asking Effective Interview Questions



Erin Brereton

Owner of Chicago

Journalist Media

Freelance Writer

The majority of corporate and law firm leaders plan to add new employees this year — yet virtually all (99%) say finding skilled talent in the current job market is challenging, due to factors such as difficulty gauging candidates' skills, according to a Robert Half [survey](#).

To quickly land the talent they're looking for, law firms are utilizing methods such as panel interviews and personality tests to ask more than just the standard interview questions to learn about candidates, says Jamy Sullivan, Executive Director of the legal practice at recruiting and staffing firm Robert Half.

"Firms are making sure they can assess [candidates] through that interview process to get the best talent," Sullivan says. "Legal hiring managers are trying to dig a little deeper and reveal how a candidate thinks on their feet; how do they collaborate in complex situations? With today's legal environment, it's critical to have questions to help you assess legal and interpersonal skills."

Examining Staff Candidates

To concoct effective questions for staff interviewees, law firms need to first explicitly identify the proficiencies they hope to find for the role — and how the position will develop over time, says Valerie Fontaine, Managing Member at legal search consultant SeltzerFontaine.

"Often one partner wants one thing; another thinks they need something else," Fontaine says. "They need to know the personal qualities that are going to make for success in the position — [if] they want a team player, self-starter, someone who can handle a lot of projects at once. There is a lot of homework that needs to be done before a single question is devised or asked."

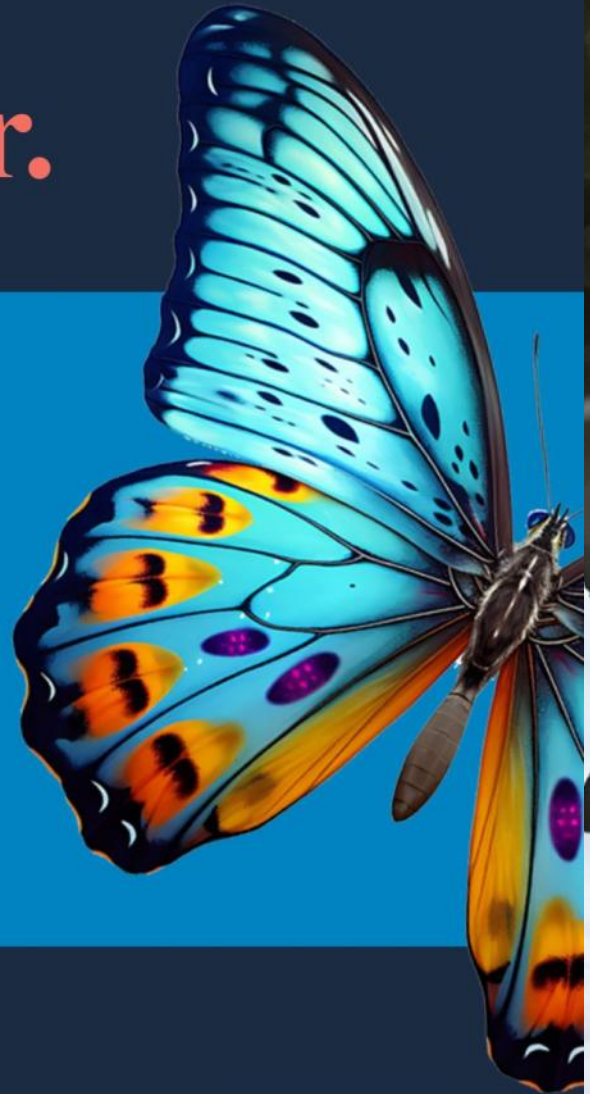
Continued on page 18

Build a Law Firm That Runs Smarter.



Leading a law firm shouldn't feel like constant triage.

If you're buried in manual processes, chasing down details, or relying on outdated systems that slow your team down, it's time to rethink how your firm runs.



**Better systems. Better habits.
Better results.**

Let's talk about what's next.



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

June 2026

Sun	Mo	Tue	We	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

05—June—2-6pm or 5:30-9:30pm
Volunteer Opportunity
A Kid Again
Location—Columbus Zoo

16—June—11:45am
Monthly Chapter Meeting
 Topic—Tuning The Instrument—Public
 Speaking Topic
 Location—Squire Patton Boggs
 41 S. High St., 20th floor

30—Tuesday—12:00pm
Board Meeting
 Location—TBD

ALA Events:
09—Tuesday
Member Idea Exchange

July 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	We	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

21—July—11:45am
Monthly Chapter Meeting
 Topic—TBD
 Location—TBD

28—Tuesday—12:00pm
Board Meeting
 Location—TBD

ALA Events:
07—Tuesday—Law Firm Accounting
(every Tuesday until August 11th)

09—Thursday—Human Resources
(Every Thursday until August 13th)

14—Tuesday
Member Idea Exchange

16-18—Thursday—Saturday
Chapter Leadership Institute

August 2026

Sun	Mo	Tue	We	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

18—August—11:45am
Monthly Chapter Meeting
 Topic—TBD
 Location—TBD

19-August—4:00pm
Ronald McDonald House
 Volunteer

25—Tuesday—12:00pm
Board Meeting
 Location—TBD

ALA Events:
04—Tuesday—Law Firm Accounting
(every Tuesday until August 11th)

05-Wednesday—ALA's Legal
Operations Bootcamp for
Administrative Professionals
(every Wednesday until August 26th)

09—Thursday—Human Resources
(Every Thursday until August 13th)



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DEI CORNER

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) should not be a program – it is something we build into our everyday lives. Small, consistent actions at work and home can help create an environment where people feel respected, supported, and able to contribute.

Here are a few simple practices that can become everyday habits:

In meetings, invite input from those who have not spoken yet and avoid interrupting.

Default to gender-neutral terms when appropriate (e.g., “they,” “team,” “everyone”) and respect the use of names and pronouns people request.

When assigning work, clarify priorities, deadlines, and expectations so everyone has equal access to success.

If someone approaches a task differently, ask “What led you to that approach?” before judging it.

Choose books, podcasts, and news sources that include perspectives different from your own.

Model curiosity and kindness in conversations with family and friends, especially when topics are sensitive.

Learn the meaning behind holidays and observances rather than treating them as “fun facts.”

If something feels unfamiliar, pause before reacting and ask yourself, “What might I be missing?”

In short, DEI is a set of everyday choices that help strengthen connection and belonging. Each of us plays a role in shaping the culture around us. Being mindful of others and their perspectives, experiences, and needs matter, helps us work and live together more effectively.

President’s message, continued from page 1

Mark your calendar for June 16, when we will be tackling *Turning Public Speaking Nerves Into Confidence*. If your stomach drops at the thought of standing in front of a room, trust me... you are not alone. This presentation will be giving tips and tricks to help you make it through your next public speaking event with ease!

One more thing before I sign off. We are still looking for members to join the Board and step into a few committee roles. I promise this is not a heavy lift! If you have ever walked away from one of our events with a new idea, a helpful connection, or something that made your job a little easier, this is your invitation to help us continue building that experience for others. We need fresh voices, fresh ideas, and people who care about where this chapter is headed. If that sounds even a little like you, please reach out to any member of the Board. We would love to connect and help find the right committee for you.

“The art of communication is the language of leadership.”

– James Humes

-Julie Bryan

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Reigniting Perspective: Ideas, Energy, and Connection at the ALA National Conference

Written by Kelly Atkinson, winner of this years scholarship to attend the ALA National Conference

Attending the ALA National Conference this year felt less like simply returning to a familiar event after missing two years and more like stepping back into a space that challenges how I think, work, and lead. I arrived hoping to learn a few new things. I left with a mind racing with possibilities, a long list of ideas to explore, and a renewed appreciation for the people who make this profession what it is.

What struck me most wasn't any single session; it was the pattern that emerged across them. Whether the topic was project management, communication, leadership, or AI, the underlying theme was the same: perspective matters. Again and again, I found myself thinking about how differently initiatives are experienced depending on where someone sits in the organization. It pushed me to reconsider how we design processes, communicate updates, and define success. The takeaway wasn't just "do more," but "simplify and align" — especially through the eyes of the people doing the work and those impacted by it.

That shift in perspective was especially evident in conversations about AI. While my role sits within IT and project management, this conference reinforced something I've suspected but hadn't fully internalized: AI is not an IT topic. It's an organizational one. Hearing questions from operational assistants, administrators, and other business professionals (and listening to how they think about AI in the context of their daily work) expanded my understanding of both the opportunities and the challenges ahead. It's clear that meaningful progress will require far more cross-functional dialogue than we've historically relied on. I've used AI to help me write this, of course, and hope to have many conversations in the future to help others learn valuable ways to incorporate its use into their daily lives.

At the same time, the conference delivered exactly what I had hoped for on a personal level: connection. There's something uniquely energizing about being surrounded by people who understand the nuances of working in a law firm environment. I had the chance to spend time with colleagues from across my own firm, many of whom I met in person for the first time, as well as with friends from the Columbus chapter and long-time conference relationships that go back more than a decade. Watching a respected leader and friend pass the gavel to the next president was a reminder of the continuity and community that defines ALA.

The moments between learning at sessions were just as impactful. I volunteered as a session coordinator, met new business partners in the exhibit hall, and reconnected with a speaker whose ideas have stayed with me long after a previous conference. A particularly memorable conversation about emerging AI tools left me both intrigued and determined to explore how those capabilities could translate into practical use within my team — and potentially even bring that speaker to our chapter in the future.



Continued on page 10

Reigniting Perspective: Ideas, Energy, and Connection at the ALA National Conference –continued



Then there were the moments that simply made the experience fun. Teaching some of our own how to play Nertz at a party. Randomly sitting with someone from the Cleveland chapter and walking next to someone on a morning walk who knew all of my friends from here at a Columbus firm. Celebrating an unexpectedly competitive victory in an exhibit hall whack-a-mole light game. Sharing many great meals including an unforgettable crab cake dinner at an Asian restaurant where my purse had its own mini seat, thanks to our business partner, Affinity. These experiences may seem small, but they are what turn a conference into something memorable and meaningful.

There is always a tradeoff when stepping away from home and work. I missed important moments with my family—a soccer game, two lacrosse games, 2 track meets, the everyday rhythm of being present. That reality isn't lost on me. But this experience reinforced that stepping away, when done intentionally, creates space to return sharper, more thoughtful, and better equipped to lead.

I'm deeply grateful for the opportunity to attend and for the investment the Columbus chapter made in me through this scholarship. The return on that investment will not be a single initiative or idea, but a series of changes—some small, some more significant—that are rooted in what I learned: simplify where possible, listen more broadly, and stay open to perspectives that challenge your own.

And perhaps most importantly, **stay connected**. Because in the end, it's the people who make the learning stick.



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Member Spotlight

Meet Columbus Chapter Member

Andrew Gross

Chief Administrative Officer

Critchfield Law

What is your current job title and major responsibilities?

I serve as the Chief Administrative Officer at Critchfield Law, a mid-sized firm in between Columbus and Cleveland, overseeing and supporting individuals and teams in the areas of finance, technology, human resources, marketing, and facilities.

Give us an example of a time when you said, "Is this really in my job description?"

I am thankful that most days consist of collaborative problem-solving across a variety of domains. Going from working on AI implementation, to getting an update on a leaking roof, to analyzing financial data all makes for consistently interesting workdays.

What did you want to be when you grew up?

My grandfathers flew in bombers in WWII and, like a zillion other boys who grew up watching Top Gun, I wanted to be a pilot.

If you could plan the perfect day what would it look like?

Waking up in some remote location with my wife and kids for a day of fly fishing.



What is the best thing that has ever happened to you?

Marrying my high-school sweetheart at 18. The decision to get married right out of high school freaked out our parents, but after 30+ years and 3 kids, I think it's safe to say it turned out well!



Continued on page 12

What was your first job?

Mowing the lawns of my grandfathers, both of whom demanded strict attention to detail. It was good training.

Who or what had the greatest impact on your life?

My father and my father-in-law. Both have been role models of wisdom, resilience, and stability.

What is your favorite activity (besides work, of course!).

Packing up the car with camping gear, our Brittany spaniel, and a fly rod to explore new places.

What would you do if you had more free time?

A rotation of outdoor activities with friends and family: pickleball, soccer, kayaking, mountain biking, etc. Even in the summer there just aren't enough hours of daylight.



If you weren't working in law firm administration, what career would you have chosen?

Business consulting.

Is there anything else you would like us to know about you?

I place a high value on integrity, accountability, and loyalty. I can't dance.



CHAPTER MEETING RECAP

Meeting Date: Tuesday, May 19th, 2026

Meeting Time: 11:45am-1:00pm

Meeting Location: Taft Law, 41 S. High Street, Suite 2200, Columbus, OH 43215

Meeting Title: Teamwork During Change: Helping Your Team Stay Calm, Clear, and Connected



Our speaker is Zeina Baydoun, Esq., Business Transformation Consultant from Affinity Consulting Group. Zeina provides expert advice designing and implementing strategic solutions, managing projects and ensuring customer success to help our clients achieve their business goals and objectives. A lawyer turned Consultant and Coach, she has spent majority of her career at organizations like Thomson Reuters and RELX Group helping legal clients work better and smarter and transforming their operations in the process. More recently, Zeina utilized her training as a mediator, facilitator and professional development guru working with individuals and teams helping them become more aware and aligned, using a variety of tools gained from her coaching certifications.

Zeina's work related superpower is being able to simplify the complex; seeing and believing in potential and helping others live their superpowers. Her favorite part about working at Affinity is helping firms craft a bold future vision and action plan, creating the heroes who get them there.

Outside of work, Zeina is an avid traveler and explorer, who enjoys personal growth and development topics and workshops, mindfulness/yoga/meditation retreats and topics, live music, art, philosophy and culture, trying new ethnic cuisines and learning from people.

In-Person Attendees: Kayci Zamarelli, Julie Bryan, Laura Focht, Hannah Bragg, Bradley Bragg, Andrew Gross, Tracey Hopp, Katie Gregory, John Justus, Kelly Atkinson, Debbie Martin, Kayla Gifford, Jane Weldy, Kelly Breckner, Angie Vecchio, Dave Morgan, Debbie Durbin, Amy Luce,

Date/Time of Next Meeting: June 5th A Kid Again Volunteer Event at Columbus Zoo! June 23rd on Public Speaking

Secretary's Signature:

Meeting Notes:

Why Change Feels Disruptive

Human brain wiring creates resistance.

Wired for certainty, not uncertainty

Brains search for predictability (efficient, familiar, safe)

Uncertainty triggers protective mode -> self-protection over collaboration

Change amplifies existing dysfunction rather than creating it

Continued on page 14

CHAPTER MEETING RECAP—Continued

Common Stress Behaviors During Change

- Repeated questions
- Irritability
- Resistance
- Silence/Withdrawal
- Over-control
- Cynicism
- Overworking
- Venting/Gossiping
- “That’s not my job”
- Finger-pointing

What People Quietly Wonder During Change

- Am I going to look incompetent? New software, new workflows.
- Do I know what’s happening? Am I missing something? Vague or absent communication.
- Do I have any control here? Change done TO people, not WITH them.
- Am I the only one struggling? Isolation during transition.
- Is this fair? (workload distribution concerns) Training access, workload, timing.



So what actually helps? Not perfection, not having all the answers, not pretending everything is fine. Teams need something steadier!

Continued on page 15

CHAPTER MEETING RECAP—Continued

STEADY Framework for Leading Through Change

S – Stability (when things are changing people look for anchors)

Ask your team:

What is NOT changing?

What can people count on?

What remains steady?

Examples of anchors: team values and culture, weekly communication cadence, client service standards, check-in structure and reporting lines.

T – Transparency (being honest about what we know vs. what we don't know)

Be honest about what you know vs. don't know

Don't fill gaps with made-up answers to seem helpful

Share when more information is coming and how

Silence creates rumors and gossip – communication prevents toxic speculation

E – Empathy (different people process change differently – different doesn't automatically mean difficult)

The detail-seeker: asks 19 questions – needs specifics before moving

The big-picture person: wants the “why” – not interested in step-by-step

The skeptic: questions everything – actually helps spot problems

The avoider: goes quiet – often overwhelmed, not indifferent

The overworker: doubles down – stress expressed through doing more



Continued on page 16

CHAPTER MEETING RECAP—Continued

A – Alignment (clarity vs. certainty)

Clarity does NOT equal certainty. Don't confuse the two

Answer: What's changing? What's staying the same? Who owns what?

Set expectations for communication process and timelines

Create clear channels for questions and feedback

D – Dialogue (communication is not the same as announcement. People need space to process, not just instructions)



Better change communication includes:

regular check-ins (short, consistent),
space for questions – not just directives,
feedback loops that actually feedback,
repeated messaging (people need to hear it more than once)
informal touchpoints alongside formal updates.

Y – Your Role (each role matters. Every person here shapes how change feels for others)

Leading the Change: you designed or are driving the initiative

Managing Through the Change: you translate the change for your team

Experiencing Change as a Peer: you shape culture, tone, and team energy

If you are leading the change... people need more than the technical rollout. Technical success and people success are not the same thing.

Clarity – not just documentation

Consistency – they need to count on your approach

Realistic expectations – name the bumps before they happen

Support – real, accessible, and visible

Responsiveness – address concerns before they become stories

Instead of “Training materials are coming.” -> “Here’s what’s changing, what’s staying the same, and how we’ll support you.”

Instead of “We need flexibility.” -> “We expect some bumps – that’s normal. Let’s surface issues early.”

Instead of “Just give us time” -> “Tell us what is feeling frustrating.”

Continued on page 17

CHAPTER MEETING RECAP—Continued

If you're managing through the change... manager often didn't design the change – but they shape how it's experienced. You often become the translator, clarifier, stabilizer, question receiver, and emotional barometer

Instead of "I don't know either." -> "Here's what I know right now, and here's what I'm still clarifying"

Instead of "Please be patient" -> "I know ambiguity is frustrating, but lets try to focus on what is clear right now."

If you're experiencing change alongside peers... not all leadership comes with a title. Curiosity is often a better teammate than assumption. Peer energy matters.

You influence:

Tone and language in your team

Curiosity vs. assumption

Helping and clarifying

Instead of "This is ridiculous." -> "I may be missing context – has anyone heard more?"

Instead of "leadership has no clue." -> "What's actually feeling hardest right now?"

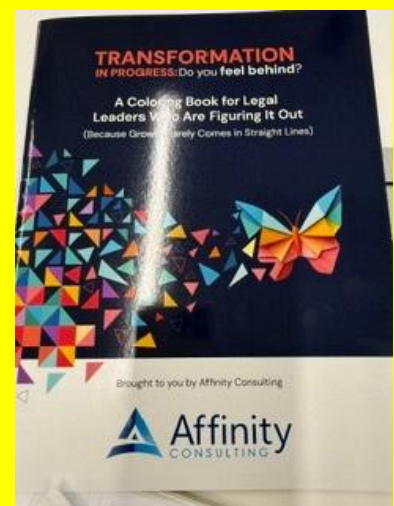
Instead of silence -> "I'm getting stuck here – can we talk through it?"



Affinity Consulting Group Raffle Prize: Starbucks Gift Card goes to Debbie Durbin!

The trivia question asked where Dave Thomas' first Wendy's location was in Columbus and what year it was? It was located at 257 E Broad in 1969. Congrats, Debbie, on your Starbucks gift card!

Meeting adjourned



Smaller law firms, for example, might want to craft questions to ascertain if candidates who are employed by large firms would think the work they'd be doing is beneath them.

"Someone coming from a very big law firm is used to having all kinds of resources — processing capabilities, a big copy center," Fontaine says. "[You could ask], 'Tell me how you actually get your work done. Do you know how to work a copy machine? Do you have a problem doing everything?' You want someone who's not going to be afraid to roll up their sleeves."

"Smaller law firms...might want to craft questions to ascertain if candidates who are employed by large firms would think the work they'd be doing is beneath them."

With technology playing an increasing role in legal operations, firms may want to ask administrative assistants, paralegals and other support staff members how using AI or a platform that automates tasks has helped them take on new responsibilities, Sullivan says.

"How do they help that firm run more efficiently?" she says. "How do the attorneys they support run more efficiently? Those types of interview questions really address how they are embracing change. It's a really good indicator if they're willing to move forward and evolve with the legal profession and are assessing the benefits associated with legal technology advancements."

Sullivan has also seen law firms ask how candidates would make a decision if they have insufficient information — which she says can convey adaptability, problem-solving and critical thinking skills.

"Asking the candidate a question around how they approach a situation, regardless of what level they are, helps evaluate [if] they [are] composed when there is uncertainty," she says. "How are they able to reach resolutions by collaborating effectively?"

Analyzing Attorneys' Potential

In the past couple of years, a growing number of law firms have included some of their marketing and business development professionals in candidate interviews, according to Melissa Peters, President of the National Association of Legal Search Consultants and Owner of legal recruiting company MP Legal Search.

"If you're going to spend a lot of money bringing in a partner who has clients, you want that portable business to come," Peters says. "It's also to [find out] what kind of work you do for that client. Is that duplicative of what we do?"

When firms get serious about a candidate, some, under the cloak of confidentiality, are discussing marketing to specific clients, she says — such as what budget candidates are seeking, trips they might take and pitch materials they may need.

"It's really a two-way street," she says. "The team is sometimes trying to explain to the candidate, 'This is why we'd be great for you. We can offer this, this, and this.' That used to be something you talked about once you got there."

Firms can also benefit from seeking junior candidates who have a business development mindset, Fontaine says.

"It's so important for the firm's growth — [and] also for the long-term survivability of the candidate within the firm," she says. "An employer might want to bring up the expectations to make certain levels of partnership and ask a candidate, 'Have you given some thought to future business development? What steps do you think you might take, and what backing are you expecting from the firm to help you?'"

"Firms can also benefit from seeking junior candidates who have a business development mindset."

Continued on page 19

Some firms are interested in finding out how candidates generally foster and manage client relationships, which can potentially lead to referrals and other favorable outcomes, according to Sullivan.

"It relates to how [lawyers] keep them apprised of the case," she says. "Regulatory scrutiny [and] compliance concerns have increased. A question you may be asking is, 'How are you proactively communicating what may impact [clients] in this new legal landscape, versus waiting for the client to bring us an issue and trying to solve that?'"

In addition to giving firms a chance to get to know job candidates, the interview process can provide an opportunity to highlight the advantages of working at a firm — such as its friendly, supportive atmosphere. Peters, though, tells candidates she assists not to ask what a firm's workplace culture is like.

"Everyone's going to say it's a collaborative, congenial culture," she says. "So that's useless."

A firm can instead opt to physically show prospective employees its culture — having them meet with other lateral partners, for instance, to ask how they integrated their practice into the firm and if they've gotten any cross-referral work.

"That speaks to the culture," Peters says. "It's just too easy to say, 'What's the environment like?' and they just throw out buzzwords. Cross-referral work is big for partners. What are the statistics on that?"

Asking which elements make candidates' day-to-day work experience enjoyable — and what aspects prompted them to stay at past organizations — can help firms discern if any of the proposed job components might make them happy, Sullivan says.

"Hopefully, that also helps them inquire [about] the firm's culture," she says. "If your firm has mentorship, legal career paths and upskilling, ask questions that will align with your culture to uncover [if] a candidate has those types of drivers, as well."

"Asking which elements make candidates' day-to-day work experience enjoyable — and what aspects prompted them to stay at past organizations — can help firms discern if any of the proposed job components might make them happy."

Maximizing Interview Questions' Effect

The interview process can be lengthy; bringing a new partner on board, Peters says, can potentially take six rounds of interviews over the course of a year. She tells candidates to never assume interviewers in subsequent rounds will know what happened in the first one.

"They should, but they're busy — so round two, three, four, be prepared to answer the same question 10 different times," Peters says. "Sometimes, even if you told Bob why you're leaving your current firm, I want to hear what [you'll] say to me. Are you saying something similar? Are you surprised or annoyed I'm asking? I want to know that."

Nearly a third of firms feel inconsistent interviewing practices are a persistent challenge in the lateral partner hiring process, according to [recent research](#) from legal market intelligence provider Leopard Solutions.

Some law firms let individual interviewers decide what to ask or assign specific questions to firm members. Other firms ask all the candidates for a position the same questions — which Fontaine says is probably an ideal approach to ensure the employer is comparing apples to apples.

To help prep their interviewing teams to successfully pose questions, firms may want to consider providing specialized training.

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“Lawyers have such different personalities,” Fontaine says. “Sometimes we see litigation lawyers act as if they’re conducting a hostile witness cross-examination — which is sort of a behavioral interview to determine how candidates handle stress, but not necessarily the most welcoming way for a candidate to experience your law firm.”

During an interview, potential hires understandably may be more focused on selling themselves than investigating what the role entails; however, it’s important they fully understand what the firm expects. They might be told the organization’s billing requirement is only 1,750 hours, for example, when actually most associates are billing 2,000 on average, and to get a bonus, 2,100 hours are needed.

A candidate can find that information out, Peters says, by asking what billing is required and what is typical.

“Law firms want their hires to stick,” she says. “Attrition costs them a lot of money, and it’s a tough market. They appreciate some of those more nuanced questions at the front end. They look at it as, ‘This lawyer is serious and knows what they want — if we don’t have the right answer, this won’t be a good hire; and we would rather know that now.’”



About the Author

Erin Brereton

Erin Brereton is the Owner of Chicago Journalist Media, and a freelance writer, editor and content strategist who has written about the legal industry, business, technology and other topics for 20 years.

Website

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We're excited to announce the Columbus Chapter of the Association of Legal Administrators is planning a special volunteer event with **A Kid Again** at the Columbus Zoo on Friday, June 5th. Each year, A Kid Again Central Ohio hosts a special DreamNight at the Zoo Adventure at the Columbus Zoo & Aquarium, creating a day where families facing life-threatening conditions can simply be families again.

Volunteers play a vital role in bringing this day to life. From welcoming families, to helping create smooth, fun-filled moments throughout the event, they help turn a day at the zoo into something truly meaningful. It's more than volunteering—it's giving families the chance to make lasting memories together.



We are currently asking for volunteers. The volunteer shifts are from 2-6pm and 5:30-9:30pm. Volunteers must be 8yrs and older, and accompanied by an adult at all times. If volunteers come for the first shift, then it should be no problem for them to stay and visit the zoo!

If you're interested, please reach out to ALA Community Service Chair, Angie Vecchio at avecchio@taftlaw.com.

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E-Letters to the Editor

We value your comments/suggestions and even your submissions. After all, this is your Newsletter! If you would like to write a Letter to the Editor, make a suggestion that would enhance the newsletter, or would be willing to write an article for the newsletter (either about a committee event or an educational topic that would be of interest to our members), please e-mail Laura Focht, Newsletter Editor at: lfocht@zhftaxlaw.com . Your input would be greatly appreciated!



May

MEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Julie McDonald—6 years
Amber Tewksbury—6 years

Committee Members Needed

We are always looking for great people who would like to serve on a committee. If you are interested in learning more about any of these positions, please reach out to any current board member. Joining a committee is often a great first step toward learning more about the chapter and someday joining the board.

Business partners are also eligible to serve on committees. If you are a business partner and would like more information about joining a committee, please contact Laura Focht.

COLUMBUS CHAPTER MEMBER CHANGE FORM

If any of your information changes, please e-mail the following information to:
Laura Focht, Newsletter Editor, Zaino Hall & Farrin LLC, lfocht@zhftaxlaw.com

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