

HOW CAN LAW FIRMS BETTER INCENTIVISE FEMALE LAWYERS?

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InspiraLaw is an initiative created by Iberian Lawyer that aims to inspire the next generation of women lawyers in Spain and Portugal

"By creating favourable conditions and adequate professional opportunities. This involves a culture change in law firms that historically have favoured male lawyers at all levels. The creation of a more diverse and inclusive working environment is critical for overall success. Gender diversity, different backgrounds and an array of perspectives will create innovation, allowing law firms to provide the highest value service to their clients. Diversity is the future, embrace it or you will be obsolete."

Isabel Fernandes, head of legal, Grupo Visabeira

"Make them feel like part of the project. Let them know they are an asset for the firm, that the firm is better with them and that they can contribute in many ways to the firm's success. Then to make good on this commitment through work assignments and promotions."

Marta Delgado Echevarría, partner, Jones Day

"One way is through recognition, but this does not always mean money or material things. What would be most appreciated by women lawyers is the firm trusting them and providing them with challenges and hard tasks to accomplish, as they do with their male colleagues. Law firms should also care much more about offering real equal opportunities in terms of promotion, their careers and equal pay."

Ana Gómez, lawyer at Mariscal & Abogados and president of the Asociación Nacional de Laboralistas

"The main building block is a merit-based culture, that is giving credit to lawyers for their contribution and achievements, disregarding stereotypes and allowing lawyers to operate flexibly while making them aware that we expect them to be impressive professionals in their own personal style."

María José Menéndez, Madrid managing partner, Ashurst

"The best way to motivate women lawyers, and all our employees, is to enhance agile working policies and maintain an open communication channel where individual needs can be openly discussed. We try to establish a trusting relationship which allows both parties to thrive. We firmly believe in meritocracy and our focus is providing a successful career path that can be adapted to each person's circumstances."

María Pilar García Guijarro, Madrid managing partner, Watson Farley & Williams

"We need to be confident, set clear goals for our career and fight for them. Career progression in a law firm depends on a number of factors with all of them being equally important, including 'politics'. What really counts is doing your best. The role of women is always evolving and we need to allow ourselves room for growth, both personal and professional, and this starts with dropping the concept of perfectionism and embracing the concept of making your best effort."

Naiara Rodríguez-Escudero, partner, Latham Waktins

"All lawyers, both men and women, need incentives and motivation. Usually the most motivated lawyers are those who are great leaders, or who work under strong leaders. We can motivate and inspire by understanding daily work demands and providing an atmosphere where people feel supported, as well as providing policies that enable lawyers to thrive in an ever-changing environment. This could involve having inspiring role models, flexible work policies and compensation for excellent work."

Lidia Peyrona, head of legal, IBM Spain and Portugal

"Law firms should ensure equality in the professional development of male and female lawyers and commit to applying objective criteria to evaluate their performance, bearing their personal circumstances of age, family situation, and so on, in mind. Law firms should publicly express commitment to gender equality by increasing the number of female managing partners."

Sonia Gumpert, partner, Monereo Meyer Marinel-lo Abogados and former chairwoman of the Bar Association of Madrid