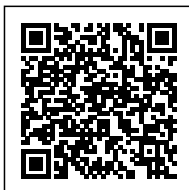


# 'OUR MISSION IS TO DISRUPT THE LEGAL INDUSTRY'

*Posted on 27/10/2016*



Category: [Opinions](#)



**Hewlett Packard Enterprise's strategy of focusing on recruitment at entry level and nurturing talent – rather than hiring externally for senior roles – has led to big savings, says Eduardo Ruiz**

At the office of the general counsel (OGC) at Hewlett Packard Enterprise, we have an ambitious mission: to disrupt the industry by being the most innovative provider of in-house legal services. We

pursue that mission by focusing on four main areas, which we call 'talent factory', the 'inside game', 'smart solutions' and a 'culture of game changers'.

The 'talent factory' is about recognising that talent is the key ingredient for success. We aim to be talent-makers, not talent-takers. Talent-takers are not capable of developing the next generation of talent, so they fill holes by hiring externally at every level of the organisation. Our goal as talent-makers is to hire strategically and almost exclusively at entry level and ensure, through a talent management system, that we have successors ready at every level, up to executive roles. The talent factory is also about transparency – our promise to our OGC professionals is that they will always know where they are in their career, where they are heading and what they need to do to get there. We want everyone in the team to feel that they have the training, the resources, the working environment and the experiences that will make them the best at what they do.

The second transformation area is what we call the 'inside game'. In other words, we aim to bring as much work as possible in-house. We believe no outside counsel is better positioned than us to bring the most value at the lowest cost. The inside game plays out across the entire organisation, but has two main components. First, we have a New Attorney Program (NAP) whereby we go on-campus to recruit the very best talent from the top law-schools to join our litigation, IP and M&A teams. The NAP is a five-year programme under which our new attorneys will receive the training they need but will also get directly involved in sophisticated work from day one – for example, in the area of litigation, they will interview witnesses and put together briefs, or on the M&A side they will get involved in transactions under proper supervision. We believe this is a winning proposition and our experience shows that we are able to attract excellent talent that is sufficiently open-minded to walk away from the well-trodden 'join a big law firm' path.

The second component of the 'inside game' is 'Agility Centres' – we are building centres of expertise in low cost locations where most of the repetitive, low-to-medium complexity work is done by internal resources, so everyone else can focus on high-value, high-complexity work.

#### Cost savings

All of this has paid off. Three years ago, 55 per cent of the OGC budget was spent on outside counsel, while 45 per cent was internal cost. Today, that has been flipped so it is the other way around. At the same time, the costs associated with certain categories of litigation have been reduced by 50 per cent, while the success rate has improved.

The third transformation area is 'smart solutions'. We have made significant investment in tools and technology that allow us to be more efficient and also get much better insights into what we do. We are also asking every lawyer to record their time – like in a law firm – and by crossing and overlying the time-recording data with the information provided from the other tools, we can learn a lot of things, spanning from how much time we spend on low value deals to validating assumptions about talent productivity. So we are shifting from anecdotes and intuition-driven decisions to analytics and data-driven decisions.

Finally, our fourth transformation area is a 'culture of game changers'. As Peter Drucker put it, "culture eats strategy for breakfast", so we believe it is essential to instil a culture of constructive disruption, thought leadership, ethics and innovation throughout the department. We want our people to embody our core values: be faster, be better, be newer, work together. We want them to engage in pro bono activities. We want them to live our values. Only by doing so, will we succeed in our mission.

As we move forward with our strategy, we expect our relationship with law firms to continue to change for the good. In our experience, the best outside lawyers would rather partner with sophisticated and capable in-house teams than work with poorly motivated and underqualified internal teams. We will definitely continue to need the assistance and expertise of law firms, and we expect them to come hand-in-hand with us in our relentless search for excellence.

**Eduardo Ruiz is chief of staff, VP & associate general counsel in the office of the general counsel**

