

Legal Sector- Culture Change within a global, but UK-centric law firm

PROBLEM: One London-based law firm with over 2500 employees globally recognised they were losing mid-career women, with a particularly dramatic drop off at Partner level. This was frustrating as 60% of all trainee hires for over a decade had been young women. Like many modern law firms, the firm had grown through 15 years of mergers and acquisitions, which at each stage had left the new firm with fewer senior women than before each merger. Women made up just 21% of Partners. Additionally, as the firm was now growing into Middle Eastern and Asian markets, they also realised change from a white male and UK-centric leadership model would be the only way to survive.

GOAL: Increase the number of women at Partnership level and create a more inclusive culture for people of a range of backgrounds and from offices outside of the London hub.

INCLUSIQ SUPPORT: InclusIQ worked with the firm for 6 months. We led the Board as well as the Senior and Managing Partners in discussions on these issues, aligning wider business goals to their new focus on diversity. InclusIQ undertook client-facing events on diversity to help engage clients on how the culture was changing. This was enhanced by prior interviews with 70 staff, ranging from focus groups to individual meetings with sector and service heads. This enabled us to make tailored recommendations, incorporating the long term effects of each merger, to create culture change. Recommendations focused on solutions for leadership, senior committee membership, family-friendly practices, use of technology and the 'always-on' culture.

RESULT: As InclusIQ's work was high profile, women at the firm were pleased to see gender balance being addressed, giving them optimism in their own futures. Externally, the firm went from one that had significant gender balance problems to one that was seen as leading and even winning awards on these issues, in the legal sector. Most significantly, 3 years on from InclusIQ's work, female representation increased to:

- **Remuneration committee: 50%**
- **Board level: 38%**
- **Partnership nominations committee: 50%**
- **Service Heads: 33%**

In their most recent round of promotions, **women made up 38% of all new Partners**, nearly double the number of promotions (21%) prior to engaging InclusIQ. By improving the overall Partnership pool by 1% each year, they are now on track for meeting their goal of 25% female partnership by 2018 with a more ambitious wider public subsequent target of 30%. The firm understood there were no silver bullets on this issues and they would have to remain focused just to keep pace with their competitors, let alone better their own efforts.

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Contact suzanne@inclusiq.com to discuss how InclusIQ can help you achieve your diversity & inclusion goals