This Month

- **Getting essential skills in place – alternative sourcing**
- **The Perfect Partner**
- **Asset Management Client Support and Satisfaction**
- **Management checklist – essentials**

- **Getting essential skills in place – alternative sourcing**

Last November www.professionalchoiceconsultancy.com/articles/November2024.pdf I referred to the large growth in outsourcing and focused at the time on document production, book keeping and accounting and legal skills and there is significant growth in all of these categories.

Since then, there has been a lot more detailed attention on the failure to meet regulations and compliance, accounts skills for rules, regulations, bank relationships, financial management, working capital and M&A Plus the right legal expertise to get Wills right, consultations with IFAs and Accountants, brand and image, client communication and data security and effective PMS/CMS

I have received these observations from www.thecashroom.co.uk

"Over the last year we have seen an ever-increasing number of law firms looking for expert support and advice with their finance functions. We still have firms approaching us when they have had a cashier leave, and as a result have a gap in their own resource. However, more frequently than ever firms are approaching us to discuss wholesale changes to their operating models. They want to optimise their way of working and that means obtaining skilled support, not just in relation to their regulatory processes for their accounts, but also for the accounts elements of their Practice Management Systems. They need to be able to trust, and also analyse the data on their client and office side accounts, thus enabling better informed decision making and monitoring best practice."

I have witnessed some skills and systems failures/shortfalls in handling client accounts and their funds which is going to get firms fined, challenged over Pii and a loss in credibility.

It is very apparent that irrespective of the size of a firm in some areas the right level of expertise is essential. Even some accountancy firms with legal experience are beginning to offer wider services

Recognising this is a new team on the block but with essential expertise www.fdflex.co.uk who are offering part time expertise to work as part of the management team of a firm for just a couple of days per month – dependent of the areas covered from financial and working capital management and forecasting – increasingly important, tax planning and Pii negotiations, remuneration schemes, firm growth and maybe an exit strategy and of course regulation and compliance .

When selecting such an organization it is essential to review through due diligence the organization and the people available including checking their background skills in the sector – for example utilizing a skilled accountant with a history of Pii insurance brokerage is pretty positive. I have done a check on the core management team of the group.

- **The Perfect Partner**

With years of hands-on experience as a lawyer, manager, partner – heavily involved in commercial management of firms and then establishing Home - McCrum Legal and for nearly the last 10 years operating as a consultant Simon McCrum www.linkedin.com/in/simonmccrum/ has experience having dealt with hundreds of firms and thousands of partners.

Simon has just published the third book in his Trilogy – The Perfect Partner following on from The Perfect Legal Business and The Perfect Lawyer. Certainly, challenging and calling for strength. Brilliant challenges around attitude and style of leadership – there is so much in there about the style and effectiveness of leadership which many firms are missing – still some "I am a legal partner and am therefore always right".

Staff recruitment and retention of the great ones is key as well as recognition of the importance of a prospective client, who then becomes one, repeats business and broadens scope of activities and then becomes a referrer and advocate to others.

Matches quite a few of the issues included in www.professionalchoiceconsultancy.com/articles/January2025.pdf which also suggests a partner stock-take.

- **Asset Management, client support and satisfaction**

Back in December and subsequently I have referred to how many law firms are mishandling a really key topic www.professionalchoiceconsultancy.com/articles/December2024.pdf The right action will enhance client satisfaction and referrals, cut back on the risk of poor performance, add revenue to the business and enhance the value of the Will Bank asset.

50% of the adult population without Wills and even where they have been done nobody sure if the client is still alive, whether there has been an update when IHT rules change, the right skills are used at the time of creation – it isn't document production only – IFTs, accountants should be consulted. I have also witnessed people dying and Wills not being traceable. A firm may have 10,000 Wills 70% of them in a known location but what about the rest. Not digitised and therefore not being communicated with about needs to make changes.

This is another area where much has happened over the last few months. Firstly, many forms need to have their data cleansed so that they can become active. www.willbank.site – the Will Bank Transformation business is very close to announcing its first law firm clients where the cleansing and updating of the database is actioned by expertise and the data being placed on an active CRM solution which enables the firm or the outsourced WBT operation to continue communication with the clients. On top of this there is a portal that allows law firm clients to be securely proactive – look at their own Wills and ask the firm for updates.

www.nationalwillregister.co.uk is an increasingly important database that currently is home to 10.5 million Wills that enables people to be able to find their or family Wills. More and more firms, enhancing service to clients are offering this facility which is an added value service that can be operated effectively with clean and digitised/validated data bases.

- **Management Check List**

In February we identified a proposed list of actions that were essential and the management team should be on top of them as a priority – all about commercial enhancement and survival. www.professionalchoiceconsultancy.com/articles/February2025.pdf The current market place is really enhancing the need

- SRA/AML/Regulations – loads of challenges, fines and image impact – lots of client account stuff. Will include issues over accounts production by who and where/when
- Accounts skills – financial management, planning, forecasting handling working capital, right MI and BI essential

- Resourcing – in house or using third party specialisms. Image, recruitment and retention plans – 65% of millennials looking to go
- Partner commitments and business strategy
- Private client activity – new business and existing database enhancements
- Brand, image and client communication. Clients becoming referrers.
- Current PMS/CMS plans and provider relationships, newcomers. It infrastructure reliability and security
- There needs to be an action plan for each of the above items within firms and Ops Board reviews on a monthly basis

Always available to point people in a direction

Bill Kirby is a director of www.professionalchoiceconsultancy.com offering advice to firms on business issue from strategy, planning, business development, the effective use of IT applications and IT hosting for compliance, business continuity and DR. He can be contacted at billkirby@professionalchoiceconsultancy.com and www.linkedin.com/in/bill-kirby-ab01632