

LEGAL MANAGEMENT

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A CLM Shares How Certification Has Advanced Her Career

Tracy L. Clark, CLM

LM: Do you get more attention from employers because of your Certified Legal Manager (CLM)SM certification?

Clark: As far as I know, there is not an official recognition of the CLM designation with the State Bar of Texas. However, on many postings I have seen recently for firm administrators, branch administrators and executive-level positions (including chief information officer, chief operating officer, chief marketing officer and various directors and managers), the CLM designation has been a “required” or “preferred” item listed under employment criteria. It was one of the reasons I was hired by my current firm. My colleague in our Austin office, Amanda Koplos, earned her CLM at the same time I did, so it’s something that’s really important to our employer. My preparation for the exam and my ultimate certification demonstrated a mastery of a broad range of skills in managing a law firm. The required recertification credits (similar to CLEs) ensure that CLMs remain abreast of current industry trends, updates in employment law, changes in HR, new technology and so forth.

LM: Do you think your certification has given you more job growth opportunities?

Clark: There have been many times when my firm leadership asked me to participate in a project because of my extensive knowledge of various topics. For example, I was asked to assist with the build-out and move of two of our offices based on my knowledge (gained through my study of the most recent trends on the topic while preparing for the exam) and my experience in that area (I was asked to participate in those activities at a previous firm solely based on my desire to learn more before taking the exam). Likewise, I have been involved as a technology liaison between the legal side of the firm and the IT department because of my experience and the knowledge gained while preparing for the CLM exam. My firm also supports my participation in ALA and my attendance at conferences so that I may maintain my certification. Doing so allows me to continue to be a valuable resource for my firm on projects or during times of change. Those opportunities would likely not be made available if I were not a CLM.

LM: Any other advice or thoughts you’d like to share with those considering the certification?

Clark: In my experience, I feel I have earned respect from the other office managers in my firm despite my shorter tenure. I believe this is due to the input I am able to provide during discussions and meetings. I am involved in decisions and invited to participate in projects based on my demonstrated CLM skill set and my peers willingly support me in those endeavors. Again, that would not be possible were it not for the CLM preparation, certification and additional continuing education gained while earning my recertification. I am convinced that had I not passed the exam, the knowledge I gained would still have helped me in my daily work.



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READY TO TAKE THE LEAP?

No matter your career stage, CLM certification can help get you to the next level — and show employers you've mastered the knowledge and skills to operate at a high level of expertise in legal management.

[Click here](#) to learn more about the benefits of certification. Ready to apply? Get started [here](#).

