

# Taking Extraordinary Action



ASSOCIATION OF LEGAL ADMINISTRATORS®  
The Source of Legal Management Information and Knowledge

A little over three years ago, ALA launched what has become a multifaceted Extraordinary Place to Work Initiative. That was based, then and now, on the simple premise that there can be no better way for ALA to improve members' returns on their investments in the Association, and the value they bring to their employing organizations, than to help them make those organizations great places to work for everyone who works there.

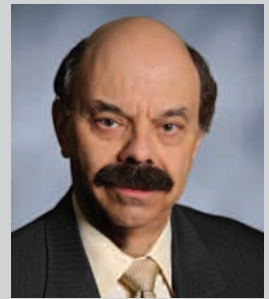
That simple premise takes on added meaning in the unsettled economic times we are currently experiencing worldwide, and the impact of those times on clients, the business of the law, and the very make-up of the law firm workforce in a climate where business needs lead to changes in how money is spent, the re-evaluation of benefit programs, and all sorts of personnel decisions affecting associates, staff, and even partners. It can all create a bit of a different workplace climate – one that can test a firm's ability to maintain its culture and those characteristics that make it a true "home away from home" and an extraordinary place to work.

Our lives in times like these are inescapably better when the places where we work are places we trust; where the work has value to ourselves and others; where people have continuing pride in what they do; where we enjoy those we work with; where we feel we belong and that what we are becoming through our work is what we want to be in our lives; and where leadership is responsive to those changes imposed by the state of the economy and life, and continues to show concern and caring for people throughout the firm.

ALA's Extraordinary Law Firm Initiative continues to grow, with your Association's second Extraordinary Law Firm Conference slated for February 2009. (For more information about this unique event, see page 64 of this issue.) This year we've also moved this annual themed issue of *Legal Management* to a new position on the calendar, tying it more closely to the Conference and also to your needs in providing leadership and assurance in the times we live in. In the pages of this bonus issue, you'll find tips on enlightened leadership, ways to encourage co-workers' personal development, strategies for motivating employees and colleagues; best practices for well-run firms (such as how to best integrate laterals), and many other ideas that can help you to create new and stronger building blocks in making your firm a place that is far from ordinary.

We trust that you will find in these pages thoughts and ideas that you can use in your firm or organization, and an ongoing reference that will provide you food not just for thought but for action – *extraordinary* action – now and in the coming months as we deal with the new world in which we live.

**John J. Michalik**  
Executive Director and Publisher



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