

Count the Ways

ALA Book Offers Plenty of Unique Ideas

Much like this special themed issue of *Legal Management*, *200 Ways to Make Your Law Firm an Extraordinary Place to Work*, a book published by ALA, grew from a recognition that legal administrators are interested in creating great places to work. Doing so builds loyalty and trust among staff, which contributes to success and stability.

More than 2,500 ALA members who either are human resources specialists or work in firms with fewer than 25 attorneys participated in this project, as these individuals manage all operations of their firms.

The introductory and closing quotes to each chapter are taken directly from replies sent by the respondents. Here are some examples of the ways in which legal administrators make their law firms extraordinary places to work:

TO HIGHLIGHT THE IMPORTANCE OF RESPECT:

- Start with integrity and sense of family – strong attributes exemplified by practicing, founding partners.
- Ensure all firm events include attorneys *and* staff.
- Nourish an environment of respect, high-quality work and team spirit.

TO INVEST IN YOUR STAFF:

- Provide free or discounted health club memberships.
- Provide personal trainers three times a week.
- Pay special bonuses to all employees when major cases are completed and fees received.
- Pay holiday bonuses, up to one month's pay, based on current salary and tenure.

TO ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION IN VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS:

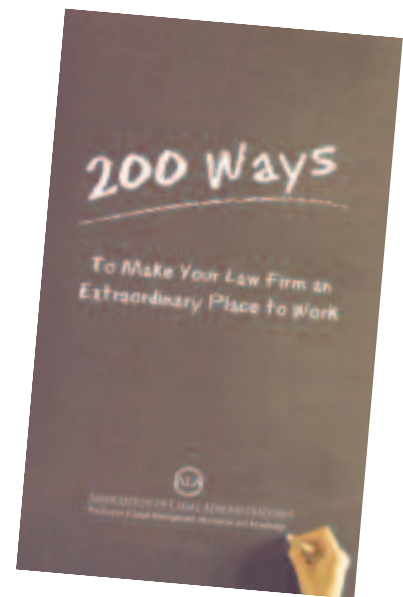
- Allow paid time off for all to deliver Meals on Wheels.
- Allow 15 hours paid time off each year to provide community service.
- Support the "Race for the Cure," honoring a firm member who died and/or those who survived breast cancer.
- Allow employees to wear jeans to work in exchange for a donation to charity.

TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THERE IS, INDEED, LIFE OUTSIDE THE OFFICE:

- Give extra time off, flowers, food, cards and visits for employees who are sick or suffer a family loss.
- Provide emergency paid time off when employees' family members are hospitalized.
- Keep a staff member on full pay if very ill, regardless of ability to work, for up to 90 days (qualification period for disability). Consider a reduced schedule at a full hourly rate upon return.
- Allow a new parent to bring the baby to work, until six months old. Provide office space, privacy and a monitor, as this program allows better bonding and supports the parent's transition back to work.

TO KEEP THE LITTLE GRAY CELLS ALIVE AND WELL:

- Pay for seminars and association dues.
- Support ALA membership, and encourage participation in national and chapter leadership activities.
- Provide monthly computer training and tips from an IT trainer, with food provided.



200 Ways to Make Your Law Firm an Extraordinary Place to Work is available for \$14.95 to ALA members and \$19.95 for nonmembers. For more information and to order the book, visit www.alanet.org/bookstore.