

Put some thought into creating a Legal Project Management team

Successful legal project management requires communication and collaboration within the team. A group of attorneys, firm managers, and legal assistants works together to complete a legal matter in the most time conscious and financially efficient manner. When creating a management team, it's important to put some thought into who is best suited to meet the needs of the project. From the project manager to individual team members, consider what each individual can bring to the project. There are no specific rules to follow. Just ensure that your choices are best suited to meet the needs of the client and the matter at hand.

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The Leader

Behind every successful team stands a successful leader. In the legal project management realm, this person is referred to as the project manager. A partner, the law firm administrator or an associate may perform in this role. The project manager takes on numerous responsibilities, especially during the planning stages, where tasks are assigned to the individual team members. The leader needs to be familiar with the strengths of each member, in order to match each task with the most appropriate person. He or she must also have a good understanding about the extent of the project and what assignments are necessary to successfully meet the overall objectives.

The project manager also oversees the progress of the project. In the law firm environment, this is best done by regularly reviewing the advancement of each task and the amount billed to date. With [TimeSolv](#) legal billing software, managers can easily review the real time status of each team member's progress. This allows for quick identification of any potential

problems and provides the leader with the opportunity to correct issues before they affect the profitability of the firm. These corrections may require difficult decisions, so it's important to have a leader who is decisive and assertive when appropriate.

Team Members

When creating an LPM team, it's advisable to first consider the project budget and the client's needs. Which associates are most experienced and capable in the subject matter area? For example, assigning your best business law attorney to work on a family law case is not the smartest decision. Remember, you are striving for efficiency and maximum profitability. Make thoughtful decisions when choosing which team members are best suited to work on the specific project.

The client's budget should also guide the team member selection process. If you are working with a client who has limited resources, it's probably best to assign associates with lower hourly rates, instead of a higher earning partner. Make decisions that can lead to significant cost savings, without cutting back on quality for your client.

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Creating an LPM team is not a responsibility to take lightly. Choose a leader who is skilled at project planning, assertive in his/her decision-making and willing to regularly review the project's process. Choose members who are experienced in the project matter and able to communicate well with one another throughout the duration of the project. If you keep these goals in mind when creating a project team, your firm will be well on its way to successful legal project implementation.
