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Executive summary

Time Management for Lawyers: Making Every Six Minutes Count is a comprehensive guide designed to help legal professionals take control of their time and enhance both productivity and wellbeing. In a fast-paced and high-pressure profession, time management is the key to thriving – not just surviving. This book explores practical strategies for managing overwhelming case-loads, maintaining a healthy work–life balance, and preventing burnout. It covers the latest technological influences, including how AI is reshaping how lawyers manage time and tasks, while also addressing the mental and emotional challenges of working in law.

From optimizing focus to managing client demands and avoiding distractions, this book helps lawyers achieve peak performance while still leaving room for creativity, innovation, and personal wellbeing. With expert advice on delegation, prioritization and setting clear goals, *Time Management for Lawyers: Making Every Six Minutes Count* equips you with the tools to reclaim your time and thrive in your legal career.

The book opens with a foreword by Catrin Mills, a solicitor with over 25 years' experience, who explores how the issue of time poverty for lawyers isn't going away. Catrin outlines the issues and gives an overview of what is to come in the book.

Chapter one, by Todd Hutchison, then looks at tools and techniques lawyers can use to schedule and prioritize their time, taking into account task importance, with consideration to their unique behavioral styles, energy levels, and the ways in which they best work.

This is followed by chapter two on prioritization, and how to focus on what matters the most. David Skinner and Karen Dunn Skinner explore the real cost of doing it all, contrasting this approach with the high-value work only you can do. They also explore the concept of delegation, offering tools and strategies to find ways to reclaim your time and reimagine your practice.

In chapter three, Joanna Gaudoin looks at how you can make time for business development – that essential but often overlooked aspect of work that gets lost in the day-to-day.

Joanna explores the key building blocks you need to make time for, and how to build business development into your working day. In chapter four, Jean-Baptiste Lebel and Alice Boullier de Branche of A&O Shearman look at work–life balance and wellbeing, and how to protect your health and energy.

Wellbeing and effective time management stand at the core of long-term performance and satisfaction in business law. Legal professionals face distinctive challenges, such as the constant pressure to be available and the frequent merging of work and personal life due to urgent client needs. Addressing these challenges is vital not only for individual lawyers but also for the overall health of the profession. Chapter four rethinks work–life balance as a dynamic equilibrium, looking at its consequences and benefits from a scientific standpoint. The authors then look at strategies for sustainable practice, by both the individual and the organization, recognizing that a shared commitment to a healthy work environment is essential for the future of business law. The chapter concludes with tips on how lawyers can thrive through sustainable time management. By leveraging technology, prioritizing wellbeing, and fostering a supportive culture, lawyers can reclaim their time, enhance performance, and build fulfilling, sustainable careers.

In chapter five, Nikki Alderson explores how the COVID-19 pandemic forced a long-overdue transformation in the legal profession – away from rigid presenteeism and towards more flexible, remote-first models of working. Drawing on first-hand client experience and industry trends, she examines whether working from home has improved or undermined productivity, inclusion, and wellbeing. The chapter offers a balanced perspective on the pros and cons of remote legal work, alongside concrete, practical strategies for leaders, individuals, and teams to cultivate focus, connection, and sustainable success in a post-pandemic world.

AI is actively changing time management in legal practice today – not in some distant future. It is not replacing lawyers, but helping them reclaim time and reduce their admin burden. Chapter six by Sarah Murphy gives concrete examples of how AI can streamline task management, reduce context switching, and improve client responsiveness. Using Clio Duo as a case study, Sarah encourages lawyers to reflect on their current workflows and consider trialing AI tools to improve productivity.

In chapter seven, Gary Miles explores the prevailing culture of busyness, and how to break free from constant overload. The chapter looks at why lawyers are more stressed and overwhelmed than ever and how to combat the culture of busyness in order to create time for strategic thinking.

Chapter eight by Mila Trezza explores the “always-on” mindset and its underlying causes, including a culture of busyness and constant responsiveness, years of training to develop accuracy, pressure to double- and triple-check work, a drive to be “on top of things”, under-resourced teams, and a desire to excel. Over time, difficulty switching off can become an ingrained habit, spiraling into an “always-on” mindset that ultimately undermines the very productivity we aim to achieve. Mila’s chapter provides a foundation for an intentional shift towards a more sustainable way of working – one that enables us to take control of our time and priorities. It also offers practical strategies for setting realistic boundaries with clients and colleagues, and shows how effective communication can help us ensure these boundaries stay in place while delivering to client expectations.

In the high-stakes world of legal practice, time is precious – but attention is priceless. Lawyers are trained to manage calendars, juggle deadlines, and prioritize caseloads. But what if the real key to productivity isn’t in your planner, but in your brain? Chapter nine by Anna Marra takes you inside the science of neuroproductivity – the art of aligning your work habits with how your brain functions. Rather than pushing harder and longer, you’ll discover how to work smarter by leveraging the natural rhythms of attention, decision-making, memory, and mental energy. With practical strategies grounded in neuroscience, this chapter will help you reclaim control – not just of your schedule, but of your mind. For lawyers who want to thrive, not just survive, neuroproductivity offers a new lens for time management, one that starts from the inside out.

Chapter ten then looks at how to make space for creativity – a path to well-being and peak performance that Karen Dunn Skinner believes is essential. Karen acknowledges the high-stress, high-performance expectations in law and introduces the idea that creativity – often dismissed or ignored in legal culture – is not a distraction but a powerful productivity tool that supports better service delivery and improved quality of life for lawyers. Creative activities (artistic and otherwise) reduce stress, replenish mental energy, and can improve decision-making and client service. Time spent on creative pursuits, Karen argues, is not wasted – it fuels higher performance at work.

Todd Hutchison returns in chapter 11 to look at career planning and strategic time management. Carving out time for long-term career goals and growth is essential he maintains, as well as stepping back from daily tasks to focus on your professional trajectory.

Rachel Brushfield then continues this theme in chapter 12, exploring how

lawyers can master time for a successful legal career. She examines the importance of taking time to plan your career and make it future proof, sharing examples of how to make time to plan your career with a busy life and workload, and strategic tools and frameworks that you can apply to your own career now and in the future.

Rachel explores the technique of career scenario planning and how this can help you to look at different career options and mitigate risk. The role of environment as a useful way of creating focus for career planning is analyzed, ring-fencing space as well as time to focus on your future career. The emergence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and how it can be useful for expedient career planning is also analyzed.

About the authors

Nikki Alderson is an international talent retention and women's leadership specialist, TEDx and keynote speaker, coach, bestselling author of *Raising the Bar: Empowering female lawyers through coaching*, and former criminal barrister with 19 years' experience. Nikki supports law firms, barristers' Chambers, and other legal organizations to attract, retain, and elevate female talent and empowers female lawyers and other professionals to achieve career ambitions. Nikki specializes in three areas – women's leadership, enhanced career break return and new working parent support, and workplace resilience, confidence, and wellbeing. Although Nikki's work focuses predominantly on one-to-one coaching within the workplace, she also delivers motivational keynote speeches and bespoke workshops, seminars and webinars on a variety of topics, such as *Breaking Barriers to being your Best*, *Return and Rise*, *Finding Time to Have it All*, and *Workplace Wellbeing*.

Alice Boullier de Branche is senior HR manager in the Paris HR team at A&O Shearman. She graduated from business school (ESSEC Global BBA) and has a master's degree in Sociology (Paris VII). Alice has been working on HR matters at A&O Shearman for over ten years. She joined A&O to work on training and development, then later specialized in providing human resources support to the fee earners population. She is especially engaged in areas such as performance evaluation, compensation strategies, recruitment, retention, and talent development, as well as wellbeing, diversity, and inclusion initiatives. Alice has contributed to a book produced for the International Bar Association by Globe Law & Business, *Talent in the Legal Profession*.

Rachel Brushfield is "The Talent Liberator"TM®, and founder of EnergiseLegal, established in 1996. An experienced career strategist and coach with a marketing and brand strategy career heritage, Rachel helps mid-career lawyers overcome actual and perceived blocks and create an uplifting career breakthrough at major career crossroads. Women lawyers, portfolio careers,

personal branding, and consultant lawyers are specialisms. Content creation projects include career webinars for the Law Society and D+I content for LexisNexis. Rachel is a published author in multiple topics including marketing, career management, professional development, and talent management. A seasoned events professional, Rachel has done multiple events for women lawyer networks including the Law Society UK, the Law Society Northern Ireland, Society of English and American Lawyers (SEAL), American Women Lawyers in London (AWLL), and Women in the Law (WITL).

Karen Dunn Skinner coaches legal professionals around the world to be as great at running their businesses as they are at practicing law. She believes lawyers can have it all – a thriving practice and a life they love. After more than 20 years as a lawyer, she co-founded Gimbal Consulting with her partner, David. Karen is a pioneer in legal process improvement, the author of *The Power Zone Playbook for Lawyers*, and a sought-after speaker and consultant. She's a global advisor to the International Institute of Legal Project Management and a fellow of the College of Law Practice Management. Karen lives in Montreal, where she and David have raised two children and built a fulfilling life they love. In the last few years, she's rediscovered painting and finds tremendous inspiration when she's hiking and skiing at Tremblant or paddling her kayak on the St Lawrence River. Her art has given her a whole new understanding of the relationship between creativity, productivity, and happiness.

Joanna Gaudoin helps professional services firms and their people take a structured and skilled approach to business development. Many professionals find winning and retaining challenging, yet it's a core part of their role. Joanna helps individuals and firms build clarity, confidence, and capability to develop and retain valuable client relationships. Through her company, ClientWise, Joanna works to reduce over-reliance on a few individuals bringing in work and supports a more consistent, embedded approach to growth. Her work spans consultancy, facilitation, and training through firm-wide programs, targeted workshops, and individual coaching. Her proven framework, *The 5 Ps of Business Development*®, underpins all her work. Joanna has 14+ years of experience with law firms, accountants, banks, and other professional services. She previously worked in brand marketing and consultancy. She's an experienced and engaging speaker and author of *Getting On: Making work work*, and co-author of two other Globe Law and

Business titles, *Business Development for Women Lawyers* and *Essential Reads for the Modern Lawyer*.

Dr Todd Hutchison is an international bestselling author, and listed in the *Who's Who of Business in Australia*. He is the global chairman of the International Institute of Legal Project Management (IILPM), which has legal practitioner graduates in 65 countries. He is a consultant with commercial law firm Balfour Meagher, an adjunct associate professor (Business and Law) at Edith Cowan University, and teaches business law, contract law, and project management in an MBA program. His fascination with high performance led to his studies in behavioral science and he has personally led projects in over 260 organizations across 21 countries. He completed a doctorate in forensics and legal project management, and works as a digital forensic expert witness in Supreme Court cases across Australia, specializing in homicide and major crime matters.

Jean-Baptiste Lebel is the HR director of A&O Shearman's Paris office. He holds a law degree from Paris II Assas and graduated from Sciences Po Paris. Jean-Baptiste has taught at the Sorbonne and HEC on recruitment, retention, and career management in law firms. He has over 25 years of HR experience in the consulting sector and is especially engaged in topics related to compensation policies, recruitment, talent retention, inclusion, and well-being applied to law firms. He switched from headhunting for law firms to HR, becoming PWC Legal's HR director for Paris before A&O. Jean-Baptiste Lebel has contributed to several books produced for the International Bar Association by Globe Law & Business.

Anna Marra is an Italian consultant and trainer, based in Spain, specializing in strategic and operational legal project management for law firms and corporate legal departments. She graduated in Law from the University of Milan, has been a member of the Varese Bar Association since 2004, and holds a Master's degree in International Affairs from the Institute for International Political Studies (ISPI) in Milan. She served as the executive director of Transparency International Italy, contributing to educational and legislative initiatives on ethics and anti-corruption. Since 2006, she has focused on legal project management, merging her legal expertise with project methodologies to introduce innovative approaches in legal matter management, becoming an international reference in this field. Anna is

deputy chair of the International Institute of Legal Project Management (IILPM) and an advisor for the Global LegalTech Hub. She has authored books such as *Legal Project Management: Techniques to Innovate in the Legal Market* (2012) and *LPM Bites – Purpose-Driven Management: A Humanistic Approach to Legal Project Management* (2025). As the director of various international open and on-demand courses on legal project management and legal productivity, she founded the LPMFocused Hub in 2023 for legal professionals interested in new work frameworks, productivity, efficiency, and sustainability in legal practice.

Gary Miles, a seasoned law practitioner for over four decades, has dedicated his career to litigation and, more recently, family law. As the managing member of Huesman, Jones, and Miles in Maryland for over three decades, his diverse experience includes being a trial lawyer, managing partner, author, leader, podcaster, coach, and entrepreneur. His true passion lies in helping lawyers solve their problems and guiding them toward liberation from the hurdles that hold them back. Having experienced the pressures inherent in the legal profession, Gary is deeply committed to his clients' success and fulfilment. He equips them with practical tools to overcome the obstacles they face, enabling them to achieve the success and freedom they aspire to in their law practices. Gary's influence extends beyond the courtroom. He hosts a popular, highly-rated podcast, *The Free Lawyer*, with two weekly episodes, and is the author of the insightful book *Breaking Free*. These platforms allow him to share his knowledge and experience with a broader audience.

Catrin Mills has over 25 years' experience as a practicing solicitor specializing in employment law. Catrin trained with a City firm before pursuing her career outside London to become a partner in Hertford. Catrin has recently returned to private practice having spent a period in-house with a leading independent school where she became chief operating officer. Catrin has always had a keen interest in people management and especially how individual productivity and staff engagement contribute to the success of an organization. She now advises both employers and employees on all aspects of employment law, and particularly enjoys supporting employer clients with people strategy.

Sarah Murphy is the general manager of Clio International, overseeing EMEA, APAC, and Canada for Clio, the global leader in legal technology. With a strong emphasis on innovation, she leads and inspires her teams, ensuring Clio remains at the forefront of transforming the legal experience across these diverse regions. Sarah's extensive career spans various industries, including finance, insurance, telecommunications, and legal technology. This diverse expertise enables her to empower legal professionals of all backgrounds to overcome the challenges of running successful law firms. Driven by her passion for building and scaling high-growth teams, Sarah combines a commitment to innovation with a focus on customer success and exploring new markets where Clio can make a significant impact. As the driving force behind Clio's expansion across EMEA, APAC and beyond, Sarah unlocks untapped opportunities and steers Clio towards continued success. Under her leadership, Clio consistently sets new standards of excellence and innovation throughout the region.

David Skinner believes lawyers can have it all – a thriving practice and a life they love. The co-founder of Gimbal Consulting and the LeanLegal® Academy, he's a Lean Six Sigma expert and lawyer with decades of experience in private practice and in-house in Canada, Europe, and the UK. David combines his profound knowledge of the practice with the perspective he gained as a client, to help lawyers build profitable and productive practices. David is a sought-after thought leader and consultant. He's the co-author of *The Power Zone Playbook for Lawyers* and a global advisor to the International Institute of Legal Project Management. David has facilitated process improvement projects across North America and taught Gimbal's proven LeanLegal® approach to thousands of legal professionals. David was a member of the bars of Quebec, Massachusetts, and New York for over 30 years. He splits his time between Montreal and Mont-Tremblant and dedicates hundreds of hours a year to volunteering as a ski patroller and rescue technician.

Mila Trezza is a former general counsel and vice president for a Fortune Global 500 energy company. With over 20 years of international experience as a lawyer, she is now an award-winning executive coach. Through her coaching, Mila partners with legal leaders and organizations worldwide – including global corporations, top-tier law firms, and leading in-house teams – to reframe challenges, strengthen leadership, and build the confidence needed to create meaningful impact and sustainable growth. Her contribu-

tions to the legal profession have been recognized with numerous awards, including a Lifetime Achievement Award (In-House) from ALM | Women, Influence & Power in Law UK.

Foreword

When the first edition of this book was published, social media was in its infancy and whilst commentators had for some time been warning of the existential threat of AI, technology had not yet solved a lawyer's eternal problem – how to find more time in every day.

We might have anticipated that, by now, technological advancements would have helped us to master the competing pressures that are an inevitable part of a lawyer's daily experience. We might have expected that by 2025 we would be awash with time-saving applications or that with novel business structures and new charging models we might have left behind the billable hour entirely.

But how much has really changed? The world, and the way lawyers work, might have altered dramatically, but the demands on lawyers are arguably more intense than ever.

The pressure to be always available, meeting financial targets under cost scrutiny, and making time for business development in a crowded marketplace, can leave little time to fit in other essentials like personal development and wellbeing. The communication channels open to clients and colleagues have multiplied with the addition of online meetings and chat messaging, meaning that we are constantly reachable. Time management is still a real challenge for lawyers in our fast-paced “always-on” culture.

This book starts with a fresh look at prioritization and task management and offers some useful advice for effective scheduling. It emphasizes the disadvantages of attempting to plan when in a state of chronic stress or overwhelm and provides practical tips on how to tap into our logical mind for better decision-making. It introduces us to behavioral styles and encourages us to think about aligning tasks with our natural talents to achieve a state of high productivity and fulfilment, or “flow”.

The book goes on to consider the importance of work–life balance and wellbeing and how, as a result of the pandemic, the profession was reluctantly forced to adopt flexible working almost overnight. It is perhaps ironic that a profession in which individuals (at least those of us in private practice)

must routinely record and justify how they allocate their daily hours was so suspicious of allowing lawyers to work autonomously, but many would argue that concentrated time, free from interruptions, has led to increased productivity. Whether working from home is here to stay is a matter of debate, but a balance needs to be struck with team communication, support for more junior lawyers, and ensuring that the blurring of the line between home and work does not lead to burnout.

The contributors then go on to offer helpful strategies to combat overload, such as how to set boundaries and then stick to them. We are also reminded of the need for leaders to model good work–life balance, and how taking care of our own wellbeing enables us to serve our clients better.

Delegation is, we know, key to effective time management, and now we can delegate tasks to the world of AI. Lawyers are being encouraged to embrace productivity-enhancing tools and the book provides useful examples of how technology can be used to relieve the administrative burden on lawyers, or to ease data-heavy tasks. Lawyers are now routinely adopting AI not just to automate administrative processes, but to “do the leg work” – from creating initial drafts or analyzing lengthy contracts to producing attendance notes or summarizing legal research, and that is surely the tip of the iceberg.

The science of “neuroproductivity” explains the role of the brain’s different rhythms for the purpose of different types of tasks, such as critical thinking and problem solving. It highlights the effect of technology and interruptions on how the brain works and, importantly, how stress affects decision-making. We learn how accessing these rhythms can enhance productivity and optimize focus to avoid chronic stress. On the topic of a healthy mind, we’re also encouraged to make time for creative activities to offset cognitive overload and to allow our subconscious to bring us new levels of insight.

Finally, we are reminded of the importance of seeing the bigger picture – our day-to-day work should lead us towards our career goals. This book provides helpful advice on how to think strategically about our careers and ambitions. Using behavioral profiling we learn how understanding and channeling our natural abilities brings not just productivity but professional fulfilment.

This book is a long-awaited update to the previous edition, providing practical, evidence-based strategies to help lawyers take back control. Applicable to legal professionals at every stage of their career, whether you’re in private

practice, in-house, self-employed, or enjoying a portfolio career, it is an essential companion for any lawyer who wants to create a successful – and sustainable – working life.

Catrin Mills