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Executive summary

As of 2023, women still only make up 37 percent of full equity partners in private practice law firms. Business development – the people you know, your order book, and your ranking within an organization – is key to closing this gap. It might be a generalization to say that women do business development differently to men, but it tends to hold true. Crafting successful, authentic, out-of-the-box business development strategies in a largely male-dominated profession is a challenge for many women lawyers, who find that the status quo doesn't work for them.

This second edition of *Business Development for Women Lawyers* features contributions from a variety of women at the top of their field who've amassed a wealth of insight into how women can excel in the legal industry. Our contributors look at the skills and techniques, experiences, and talents that female lawyers use to develop their practices and grow their order books, acting as both inspiration and motivation to readers. From frank discussions about when to use AI to guidance on navigating the sometimes frightening world of networking events, readers will come away with a clear understanding of how to get ahead in the legal world.

Client development is table stakes for women lawyers aspiring to “rainmaker” status at their firm. The crucial next step for women attorneys is ensuring they receive their due credit for those clients and matters they developed. In our opening chapter, Natasha Innocenti explores the essential traits of women rainmakers who have successfully navigated the gender biases and occasionally draconian complexities of law firm compensation systems. Emphasized skills include creative networking, internal marketing, practiced confidence, and even generative AI know-how. Natasha confronts prevailing myths surrounding various credit origination systems and how women can successfully navigate within them.

The traditional networker will attend conferences, write insightful blogs, arrange client lunches and dinners, and show-up at the networking platforms – but this list of business tactics doesn't create the rainmaker alone. So what does create that status? What sets them apart from another partner? What

traits do these individuals hold, and is it possible to nurture and train up your team to create an army of rainmakers? Pam Loch answers these questions in chapter two, in a deep dive into what makes an effective rainmaker.

Building your professional reputation and relationships within your firm, with clients, and within the industry as a whole is essential for career and business success. In chapter three, Susan Heaton-Wright discusses why it's important to build a positive reputation and relationships with others, what might be stopping you from doing so, and some ideas, tips, and activities to help build up your reputation and your network.

Attending networking events can feel daunting for many. Learning the key skills to network at events effectively and positively, together with practicing those skills, will lead to increased confidence and positive outcomes at events and afterwards. Joanna Gaudoin's chapter looks at the need for and benefit to networking, which goes far beyond what people often think, to help individuals navigate the working world and progress their careers. The chapter discusses how to develop a networking strategy and plan before walking through the key skills you need to navigate networking events well, from the moment you arrive until you leave, as well as what to do afterwards. Events themselves are simply an initial way to meet people and begin new professional relationships. But nowadays, nurturing your online network is as important as any in-person connections you make.

In chapter five, Belinda Lester talks about the power of social media, the school gate, and female friendships. She explores how the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown, as well as the trend that this led to working from home, has enabled women to leverage their networking power and, in some ways, now puts men at a distinct disadvantage. Belinda discusses, in particular, the power of Facebook and how it differs from LinkedIn, and how both these platforms as well as other social media can be best used to complement in-person networking and maximize their benefit. Belinda explains how she has utilized her online network as well as her offline one to generate tens of thousands of pounds worth of business, as well as to attract lawyers to her firm.

A key characteristic of any successful person is that they take credit for their contribution – they have control over their career and ensure others know their successes. The challenge for many women is that culturally they are brought up not to self-promote, which negatively impacts their career prospects. In chapter six, Susan Heaton-Wright talks about why it's important to take credit for your contributions and ownership for your career successes,

as well as why many women might find this a challenge. Self-promotion and owning your success not only has an important impact on your mindset but can help you forge positive connections with others and build a strong reputation both within and outside of your firm.

One area for discussion stands out above the rest when considering how the legal profession is evolving – artificial intelligence (AI). In most cases, surviving and thriving as a practice means being tech-forward. Small and solo-run firms often don't have the resources to hire staff when support is needed, so software for scheduling, accounting, legal research, and practice management may be essential. It's not surprising, then, that many female lawyers are wondering how AI might give them an advantage in their small and solo-run practices. AI can reduce time spent on tedious tasks while tremendously improving the quality of information-gathering and analysis. Most importantly, AI can improve decision-making by making it better informed and less biased. Because of these obvious benefits, many firms are leveraging AI without much hesitation. But AI is a tool, not a cure-all, and like all tools, it is most useful when it solves problems it is suited to solve. In chapter seven, Nika Kabiri discusses how and when is best to adopt AI into your practice.

Legal optimizers have already adopted tech tools to crunch data and actively use it to identify clients and improve chances of engagement by target clients, exploring metrics of previous deals, outcomes, advice, and costs. Many larger firms also already use the advantage of AI tools to achieve their goals with less effort and more efficiency. In chapter eight, Joanne Brook considers that, as we move from the phase of "early adoption" of AI for legal practice, this is the time for the majority to review the initial success of its use in legal practice and the advantages that can be gained in using new technology.

While the traditional law firm model promises lawyers a prestigious career path and generous financial compensation, to progress to the top often means sacrificing a healthy work-life balance, which disproportionately impacts female legal professionals. In chapter nine, Sarah Goulbourne, co-founder of gunnercooke, explains how her belief that legal services could be delivered differently has created a new model that is challenging this gender imbalance. Sarah shares her experience of creating a law firm that prioritizes a healthy work-life balance and puts culture at its center.

Good leadership is vital to creating a healthy culture that nurtures female talent, and in chapter ten, we speak to three GCs about what they do in their

day-to-day lives to develop their own business and support the women around them. Aniela Foster-Turner, Hannah Constantine, and Misha Patel discuss putting client relations first, leading by example, and the importance of getting an early start to the day.

As touched on by our interviewees in chapter ten, mentoring and coaching have a big role to play in helping to enhance the business development skills of female lawyers. In chapter 11, Claire Rason sets out the differences between mentoring and coaching and shows how both can be harnessed. Exploring how confidence and other limiting beliefs can get in the way of winning work and doing business development, she provides an account of how individuals can use mentoring and coaching to leverage their strengths to excel.

The final chapter of the book looks at the everyday obstacles that women juggle in the legal workplace and considers the effect that such obstacles have on neurodivergent women lawyers. Pam Loch and Danielle Gleicher-Bates call for a future where neurodivergent talent is recognized, welcomed, and accepted, and discuss the steps that a firm needs to take to make work, work.

About the authors

Joanne Brook is a legal technologist and provides advice to innovators across the creative sectors, from software developers to theatre producers and from AI developers to NFT artists. She focuses on helping clients achieve commercial solutions to previously not considered legal issues that arise from developing and using their technology and critically, in protecting and licensing their intellectual property rights to ensure business expansion and growth in a fast-paced market. Prior to becoming a legal consultant, she was a partner at a West End law firm and a boutique City law firm before that. She describes her view on the digital revolution and adoption of technology as like sitting in the jump seat with a super-sonic test pilot and hearing the engines roar or calmly evacuating the plane whilst wearing a parachute and hi-vis, carrying a laptop and inflating a lifeboat. In all that, she feels privileged to continue to advise smarter and more creative people than herself on a daily basis. Joanne is an intellectual property professional expert for Lexis Nexis and an author of IP and data management precedents for various professional publications. She regularly contributes legal insight to the legal press and lectures on technology and new law.

Rachel Brushfield is “The Talent Liberator”, a career strategist, and coach who helps women lawyers to achieve uplifting breakthroughs at major career crossroads. Portfolio careers, thought leadership, and personal branding are specialisms. Rachel is founder of EnergiseLegal (energiselegal.com), established in 1986. Her chapters for *Globe Law and Business* include “Work’s not working – portfolio careers” (*Career Development For Women Lawyers*), “Helping women lawyers overcome their blocks about marketing” (*Business Development For Women Lawyers*), “The shifting sands of talent management” (*The Rise of Specialist Career Paths in Law Firms*), “Adapting business models to ride the millennial wave” (*Future Law Firm Business Models*), and “Essential skills for the changing legal market” (*The Talent Management Toolkit For Law Firms*). Books include *Talent Management – A Hands-on Guide*, *Professional Development for Lawyers*, and *Smarter Legal Marketing*

and Career Management for Lawyers for the Law Society. Rachel has also written many articles for *Managing Partner* and The Law Society's *Managing for Success* and *Inside Out* magazines.

Hannah Constantine is a lawyer with wide corporate, M&A, and commercial experience. She is currently general counsel for corporate and M&A at Smiths Group Plc, a FTSE 100 engineering group, which has offered her valuable opportunities to develop in a range of roles – from generalist commercial positions in Europe and Asia, to legal operations, to global corporate advisory and M&A. She established and chairs the Smiths Group Foundation, launched in 2023 with an initial commitment of £10 million to make impactful grants improving STEM skills access, safety, connectedness, and sustainability in Smiths Group's communities around the world. Prior to joining Smiths Group, Hannah spent eight formative years at Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer.

Aniela Foster-Turner is a senior executive with over two decades of international legal and compliance experience in the energy sector. Aniela is the general counsel for Enoda, a tech company in the energy sector. She has worked in private equity for a couple of years, developing battery storage projects in four different jurisdictions. Prior to that, she held previous leadership roles with Siemens and Siemens Gamesa, where she broke ground as the company's first woman general counsel in Europe and worked on the development of over seven GW of wind farm projects. She is widely recognized as one of the foremost lawyers in highly complex, high-profile transactions within the renewable industry. Aniela was shortlisted for "Woman of the Year" at the Law Society Excellence Awards 2019 and the "Innovative Leader" and "In-House Leader" of the Year awards at Women, Influence & Power 2021 and 2022. She is an ambassador of POWERful Women, a mentor in the legal community, and a non-executive director on the board of trustees of the Women in Engineering Society earlier in 2023.

Aniela has two legal degrees from the University of Bucharest and City University of London, as well as studying European Law at King's College, and is a Saïd Oxford Business School alumna. She uses her broad knowledge, heritage, and experience to promote and support various diversity and inclusion initiatives while championing change in the legal profession.

Joanna Gaudoin runs Inside Out Image and works with lawyers on their non-technical skills to navigate workplace challenges, be the best they can be at

work, and fulfil their potential – ultimately to progress their careers and improve the performance of their firm. Joanna works with individuals, firms via group sessions, and speaks at events to help lawyers move forward from where they are, including being promoted, dealing with the new aspects of a role following a promotion, handling challenging relationships, developing client and prospect relationships, managing others, and building their profile and network in the market.

Fundamentally, her work helps people consider how they are engaging with others at work and improve their communicate to relate to others in different work scenarios effectively and positively to build better professional relationships and achieve their objectives. She is the author of *Getting On: Making work work*.

Danielle Gleicher-Bates is an award-winning neurodiversity advocate passionate about neuroinclusion in the legal sector and justice system. As a late-diagnosed, multiple-neurodivergent woman, she uses her lived experience to challenge perceptions of neurodivergence. Danielle is the co-founding chair of neurodiversikey® and an aspiring barrister, having been awarded scholarships by the Honourable Society of the Inner Temple and City Law School to pursue the Bar Vocational Studies course.

As the co-founder of gunnercooke, **Sarah Goulbourne** is passionate about challenging, improving, and evolving the way in which legal services are delivered to businesses. Sarah is also hugely passionate about creating a business model that gives lawyers the opportunity to use the best of their legal abilities, in a way that motivates them. She is adamant that people should be able to practice law without sacrificing their personal life, something that many lawyers find difficult in the more traditional environments. Sarah has over 20 years' experience practicing commercial law in a range of organizations, including FTSE 250 companies, private entrepreneurial businesses, and the public sector. She has held numerous executive and non-executive board positions, working in the leisure, media, financial, and health sectors. She is an experienced non-executive director and has a detailed knowledge of merger and acquisitions and governance requirements in listed companies.

Susan Heaton-Wright is a multi-award-winning businesswoman, international keynote speaker, former prize-winning opera singer, author, podcaster, and the founder of SuperStar Communicator, empowering emerging leaders

to communicate with impact, confidence, clarity, and credibility in all business conversations. These include delivering speeches, presenting ideas and opinions, pitching for investment, public speaking, and being effective in meetings. Her company works with many pharmaceutical multinational companies and professional services firms. She has worked with attendees from more than 130 countries worldwide. Susan is a launch leader for EMEA leadership programs for HBA. In 2020, she was named as one of the top 100 Influential Female Entrepreneurs in the UK. Susan visits Athens annually to support the Love Without Borders charity, which supports refugees. She also fundraises for the Alzheimer's Society and the Isabel Hospice in Hertfordshire.

Natasha Innocenti is a partner at Empire Search. She has been recruiting partners and groups in California at the highest levels since 1997. Natasha started her legal search career at Heidrick & Struggles. She spent almost 15 years at Major, Lindsey & Africa, as a partner and head of the partner practice in the Bay Area for eight years. In 2017, she joined Macrae, where she and her team executed searches for prestigious law firms looking to open and expand in Northern California. Natasha has been named one of the 100 Leading Legal Consultants and Strategists by Law Dragon in each year since 2018. She has been writing and speaking on diversity and inclusion in the law for over 20 years. Natasha has served on the Board of the Law Foundation of Silicon Valley since 2013. She graduated from Mills College and earned her MA in Philosophy from the University of London in 1995.

Nika Kabiri is a decision scientist who has spent 20+ years studying decision-making in a variety of contexts, from relationships to politics to business. She is founder and principal at Kabiri Consulting, where she helps businesses improve their decision-making with AI. Nika's work on decision-making has been featured in Fast Company and Yahoo, and she was recognized as a top decision coach in *LA Weekly*. She has been quoted in the *Wall Street Journal*, *Time*, *The Washington Post* and Gizmodo and has contributed to media sources like The Hill, Huffington Post, and Inside Sources. She is also co-author of the bestselling book *Money Off the Table: Decision Science and the Secret to Smarter Investing*. Nika has worked with clients like Amazon, Google, and Microsoft, as well as companies in the legal tech space. She is also a former University of Washington faculty member. Nika earned her PhD from the University of Washington and her JD from the University of Texas.

Pam Loch is a dual qualified solicitor who set up Loch Associates Group in 2007 to respond to the need for bespoke people solutions. Today, Loch Associates Group is a legal, HR, and training and wellbeing organization with a purpose of creating responsible, performing, and progressive businesses. As well as being the managing director, Pam has also been a specialist, award-winning employment law solicitor for over 20 years, writing thought-leading articles and book chapters, as well as being a seasoned commentator on television and radio. Pam has been ranked, for the last 13 years, as a Leading Solicitor in Employment Law in the *Legal 500* and *Chambers and Partners* legal guides, with Loch Law being ranked as a leading firm too. Her passion for finding solutions to help businesses manage and look after their people is reflected in the development and success of the businesses across the group.

Belinda Lester, the managing director and founder of Lionshead Law, is an employment lawyer with 25 years' experience in the field. Acting for both employers and employees, her first degree in psychology has been invaluable both in relation to her work in dispute resolution and in relation to business development. She started her firm in 2013 and has grown the consultancy-based practice from solely offering employment law services to one that now includes commercial, immigration, and private client work. As a working mother of two, she had to find creative ways to network and finds utilizing social media to build her brand invaluable.

Misha Patel is a seasoned English law-qualified corporate/commercial lawyer and the general counsel at JDG. She began her career at Clifford Chance, where she trained and excelled as a senior associate. She then spent 12 years at KPMG UK as its associate general counsel and legal director, specialising in M&A transactions, regulatory compliance, and corporate/commercial matters.

Misha's extensive experience includes Board-level and international mandates, navigating complex legal, risk, and strategic challenges. Known for her leadership and pragmatic guidance, she adeptly manages tech, operational, and compliance issues. A recognised speaker at various conferences and roundtables, Misha's insights have earned her recognition as a "Rising Star" by Financial News, the Sunday Times, and Management Today, highlighting her influence and impact in the legal and financial sectors.

Misha holds a law degree from the University of London and a master's in

law from the University of Warwick. Her educational background, combined with her extensive professional experience, positions her as a formidable legal leader.

Claire Rason is an accredited coach (Senior Practitioner Level with the EMCC). She is the founder of coaching consultancy Client Talk. A former practicing solicitor, she has worked in, or alongside, professional services firms for over 20 years. Claire is passionate about bringing the power of active listening and diverse thinking to professional services firms. She is particularly passionate about gender parity at partnership level and has researched why women don't make it to the top (Class of 2002: Women in Law).