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1002 Staying Focused: Motivation and Professional Development for the In-house Paralegal

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Faculty Biography

Brian Haberly

Brian Haberly is a senior paralegal in the Corporate and Securities practice group of Starbucks Coffee Company in Seattle, Washington.

Mr. Haberly has working at several leading public companies including Expedia, InfoSpace, Avaya Communications, and Northrop Grumman and also with the prominent Seattle law firms of Lane Powell PC and Williams Kastner & Gibbs, as well as Los Angeles offices of Irell and Manella and Jones Day Reavis & Pogue.

Mr. Haberly is a member of the Washington State Paralegal Association and is also a member of the National Association of Stock Plan Professionals. Mr. Haberly served as an advisory board member to ACC's inaugural paralegal track at the 2007 Corporate Counsel University program in St. Louis, and participated on two of its paralegal panels. Also in 2007, Mr. Haberly was named a member of the Advisory Committee of the Edmonds Community College paralegal program near Seattle.

Mr. Haberly received his undergraduate degree from California State University, Northridge and his Paralegal Certificate from the University of West Los Angeles.

Marie Ma

Marie J. Ma is a senior paralegal in the corporate and finance law subgroup of the Gap Inc. legal department. Her responsibilities include corporate governance of the legal entities in the U.S., Puerto Rico, and Canada, and managing filings for The Gap, Inc. with the Securities and Exchange Commission. In addition, she provides legal support to The Gap Foundation.

Prior to joining Gap Inc., Ms. Ma was a corporate paralegal at Fenwick & West LLP. While at Fenwick, she provided a variety of services to over thirty clients ranging from start-up to publicly-traded companies. Her work included incorporations and private equity financings to initial public offerings and securities filings.

Ms. Ma is a member of the diversity and inclusion committee of the Gap Inc. Legal Department. She is also a member of the Bay Area chapter of the National Association of Asian American Professionals, and volunteers with Glide Memorial Church and the San Francisco Food Bank.

Ms. Ma received her B.A. from the University of California, Los Angeles and is Juris Doctorate candidate at the University of San Francisco School of Law.

STAYING FOCUSED: MOTIVATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR THE IN-HOUSE PARALEGAL

ACC Corporate Counsel University

**Brian Haberly, Senior Paralegal
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Disclaimer: The comments made in this presentation are the views of the author alone and do not necessarily represent the views or positions of Starbucks Coffee Company.

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I. What does it mean to be “Motivated”?

Motivation is the psychological stimulus or incentive that moves us to take action or move towards a goal.

Each of us is motivated by something different, whether we are at work, at home, or at play.

In broadest terms, it is usually one of four desires for something we don't yet “have enough of” that motivates us to take an action. Those desires are : Gaining More Recognition, Gaining More Influence, Acquiring More Profit, or Internal Factors. Which one seems your primary desire?

Recognition:

People who are motivated by "Recognition" are interested in gaining respect, admiration, regard, esteem, notoriety and celebrity from those around them.

Influence:

Those whose primary motivator is "Influence" are interested in greater power, control, competition, independence and the ability to influence others.

Profit:

"Profit" motivated people measure their success by the amount of money, they earn, or accumulate, their possessions, and material things. They can be top performers in a sales organization. Conversely they tend to be dissatisfied with the status quo and chase illusory happiness that comes from the momentary high of buying something shiny and new or showing off a flashy car or expensive watch to try and impress those around them.

Internal:

If you are motivated by "Internal" factors, then morals, a sense duty, community intellect, creativity, philanthropy, and honor are important to you.

While each of us is driven (motivated) to take action for somewhat different reasons, one of the most effective ways to stay on track is to find your own personal inner desire. Determine what it is that really gets your “emotional juice” going. What is it in life that really excites you?

Ask yourself what new things you would try if you knew you couldn't fail.

Determine what goal you would stay up late or get up early each day to work on in order to ensure its success!

II. Tips for Staying motivated

You must strive to maintain a positive self image in order to overcome the challenges that arise each day. Look at new tasks as challenges to help you grow, not just as drudgery and work. Try to find something new to learn every day. Capturing your thoughts in a journal is a great way to capture your successes and learn from your disappointments. Celebrate your successes!

Know your desired outcome: CLARITY IS POWER! (Mentally, Emotionally, Spiritually, & Financially). Focus on what it is you really want, not on what you don't want! (Your brain will continue to work on a problem and sometimes finds answers for you even while you sleep!

Recognize that in order to Stay Motivated, you need to Keep your Eye on the Prize! In many cases, that means making some meaningful changes in the way you have been doing things up until now.

Some Truths about Effecting Change:

So, you think you want to change but you don't know how to start.

First, you have to Believe that you CAN change and change NOW!

Second, you have to Believe that we're each responsible for our OWN change, not our spouse, not our parents, not our kids, etc.

Third, you have to Believe that something MUST change it, and secondly, that you CAN change.

Remember, Life can sometimes seem like it is all about being discontent – but that discontent can be a positive thing, if you use it to Motivate you to effect change in your own life!

Everyone has something that they are not 100% happy with. The only people that don't want to change something are those people buried 6 feet under. They have no more problems left to solve, but I don't think you want to trade places with them now, do you?

Motivation (Continued)

What is the Best Method to Create Lasting Changes in your Life?

Recognize that ALL Human activities are driven by one of two Motivations:

- 1) **The Desire to Avoid Pain; and**
- 2) **The Desire to Gain Pleasure**

Of these two Motivations, the Desire to Avoid Pain is the Stronger.

Don't agree with this statement? Then think of things many people avoid:

Diets, Dating, New Job Searches, Financial Planning, Dealing with Aging Parents, or perhaps even having your own Will written. Intuitively, you KNOW you should take some actions on one or more of these areas, but you haven't. **WHY NOT?!?**

For many, the reason is that they are Frozen into Inaction out of Fear. Fear of Failure, Fear of Pain, Fear of Embarrassment, and Fear of Loss (emotional, financial, and other).

Despite the fact that the odds of something good happening far outweigh the odds of failure, and the rewards of success may be plentiful.

So, how do we break out of this Paralysis?

The answer is to Get Leverage on Ourselves!

Remember the 3 Beliefs for Change:

- 1) **Something Must Change;**
- 2) **I Believe that I Must Change it; and**
- 3) **I Believe that I CAN change it.**

III. Personal and Professional Development

News Flash! It is not your supervisor's job to be in charge of your Professional Development. You own your career, and it is up to you to make sure that you continue your development in order to reach your full potential. Yes, some companies encourage ongoing legal education and professional association memberships more than others. Don't use that as an excuse NOT to pursue development opportunities on your own though. Here are a few methods to Develop your skills.

Importance of Self-Promotion

The more visible you are, the more likely people are to remember you, especially at raise and promotion time. This concept can be hard to accept for introverts who would rather wait to be noticed. One of the best ways for introverts to increase their visibility is by writing for the department or company newsletter, using their organizational or information gathering skills that they may be more comfortable in displaying.

How else can you make yourself visible? By speaking up! When you are in a group or department meeting, try to think of something you can say that would contribute to the conversation. If you have a good idea for something, share it! (And make sure you get the credit for it.)

Find ways to let people know what you are doing. Some supervisors are better than others at sharing the credit of their direct reports' contributions.

Many people successfully market themselves into promotions by seeking new responsibilities. Volunteer for committee assignments where you will be working with a group of people – ideally some who have higher positions than yours. Anything you can do to procure a high-visibility assignment will greatly help people notice you and make it much more likely that your boss will agree with your request for a raise.

Remember, if you want something (an assignment, a job, a promotion, whatever) you must show your audience how much you want it. Otherwise, they may assume you don't.

Getting Your Work Noticed By Your Employer (overt methods)

Be a self-starter. Offer new ideas backed by research to your supervising attorney or or management team

Follow through with your ideas when approved

Be willing to work hard to make your supervisor's ideas successful (even if they don't knock your socks off immediately!)

Strive to write well. Give your supervisor concise, readable reports that make important points without extraneous information

Don't bring your attorney problems expecting him/her to solve them for you. Instead, bring possible solutions (3 or more choices are best) and make a supportable recommendation of your preferred choice. Chances are, your boss will agree with you!

Getting Your Work Noticed By Your Employer (subtle methods)

Did you complete a Project that had very good results? If someone thanks you via email for your efforts, thank them back for the opportunity. Let them know that you enjoyed working with them and "CC" your boss so that she/he knows of your success.

If a client verbally thanks you, memorialize the conversation in an email -- "Sally, I sincerely appreciated your kind words earlier today on the successful completion of Project ABC. I hope we can work together on another interesting and challenging project like this again soon!"

Don't underestimate the value of delivering Progress Reports – Track your progress on longer term projects by alerting your boss to milestones being hit, or any additional resources that you might need to meet a deadline.

Don't surprise your boss the night before a deadline with the bad news that you won't be able to deliver on time, when a call for help a few days earlier would have been able to solve the problem. Your boss will be more forgiving of you alerting him/her to your needing assistance than they will when being told AFTER it is too late to make a difference.

Celebrate your successes. Even if no one else does, plan a small celebration following a major achievement. Schedule a celebratory meeting in a conference room. Bring in a cake or some pastries, invite the key players you worked with, and relive the success and relieve some stress! This small step will reinforce your role and participation and leave everyone with a positive memory of you. (And likely ensure that you get involved again on an even bigger project next time around!)

Getting Your Work Noticed by the Profession

Attend local professional meetings regularly (both paralegal and trade associations)

Volunteer to work on committees either locally or nationally. Respond positively to the pleas for help that come by email or in publications

Help with presentations at conferences. You can start by being an assistant who collects evaluation forms or does other small jobs. Talk with the presenters and hosts. Learn what it takes to become a presenter, and volunteer to be a presenter at a future meeting.

When attending presentations, ask good questions. Be willing to talk to others after presentations end. Always have business cards in your pocket to hand out.

Network with others who share your interests. They will help you share your work with an even larger audience.

Write an article for your local paralegal association newsletter or Legal Assistant Today. Be sure to mention your boss and company by name (everyone loves to see their name in print.) Show any published items to your boss – they love to be able to share your success with their own supervisor (makes them look like effective managers that have hired the right people.)

Getting Your Work Noticed by Others

Find a local non-profit organization that you admire. Donate some time and expertise to them, not just write them a check

Does your paralegal association have an annual Bosses luncheon or dinner program? Invite your boss so that she/he can see what you have been doing to enhance your profession. (Legal Secretaries have done this well for years.)

Volunteer Pro Bono hours at a neighborhood legal clinic, a women's rights group, a literacy organization, or a Habitat for Humanity project

If you have been involved with a charitable org for at least six months, see if your company will co-sponsor a fundraiser and/or lend their name to it (more likely if you have been involved for a time). Offer to head up the

collection drive so that others in your office will see your name and associate your volunteer efforts with the charity

Value of Networking

Does your Company offer any employee activities? Networking isn't restricted to professional organizations. Consider joining a company Softball Team, a Running Club, a Book Club, or even a Bowling League! If you have nothing established yet, see if you can start up a group using a company meeting space, either during the lunch hour or after hours. (Practice your leadership skills!)

Networking with members of other departments outside of the legal department enables to you to gather information you wouldn't otherwise have access to. You will be more valuable to your boss, understand your own company better, and be a better representative of your company to others.

Get involved in a Toastmasters Club at work or in the community to enhance your communication and leadership skills, while meeting with people from different backgrounds and experiences. You'll gain self confidence by leaps and bounds, and you might just meet someone who spots you as a potential leader on their team!

Develop your listening skills, and help others develop their own skills and advance in their own careers (servant leadership in action.)

Connect/Reconnect with people outside of the usual employee/employer relationship. Make new friends and deepen your own range of outside interests. You'll have more to contribute personally and professionally by virtue of your well-rounded views and growing knowledge base. Learn to "CLICK" – C-Connect; L-Listen, I-Inquire, C-Collaborate, K-Keep. That is, Connect with the network of people that surround you (smile, listen, and establish eye contact. Listen with full focus. Inquire, drop your ego, and learn what really matters to the other person. Collaborate and really be of service to the other person. Keep your relationships vital and healthy by staying connected, keeping them in mind, and serving their needs. Listen right now... Can you hear some soft Clicking going on in this room and all around you?

Formal Education:

Need to finish up a degree? What is stopping you? (If your answer is either time or money, recognize and admit to yourself that there are solutions for both of these situations.)

Considering an Advanced degree? Will your employer help with costs?

Advanced Paralegal Certification:

Have you looked into becoming a PACE Registered Paralegal (“RP”) to further demonstrate your competency, as administered through the National Federation of Paralegal Associations?

Have you looked into taking NALA’s exam to obtain your Certified Legal Assistant/Certified Paralegal (“CLA/CP”) status, as administered through the National Associations of Legal Assistants?

What about obtaining a Certification for your own legal specialty area? (Such as the Certified Equity Professional designation for paralegals dealing in Stock Plan Administration). What would this do for you at annual review time? How about when you go to look for that next job

IV. Sense of Fulfillment

Deep down, we aren’t really looking for a fancier job title, or a bigger office, or a shiny new car. None of those will bring more than a momentary feeling of happiness.

What we really want is a Sense of Fulfillment

How can we feel fulfilled? Most of us want to live a meaningful life. Many wise men and women have learned that long-term fulfillment will only come from giving back to others and making the world a better place.

Look at Bill Gates and Warren Buffett. They are each giving away Billions and Billions of dollars to help people they will likely never meet. Why? They understand their responsibility to give back some of the rewards of success that they’ve achieved, and not just pass all their wealth down to their offspring.

Stand up for something!

Make a difference in someone else's life. Keep exploring and asking questions until you find out what gives your own life its meaning.

What will you contribute to your world? What gifts do you have to share? Ultimately, it comes down to decisions. Decisions help us to see what we focus our attention on, and what those decisions mean to us.

Winning at the Game of Life!

You can't win a game if you don't know the Purpose of the Game. You have to know what it is you want, and not just what you don't want!

Many people have "Rules" they have to live by to be happy themselves, but other people don't play by the same Rules you are playing by!

Rules about how your spouse or significant other "should be", how your Boss "should be", or perhaps something they are doing (or not doing) that doesn't fit within your rules. Surprise!! They don't know the Rules of the Game you are Playing!! Have more compassion for others. Relax! You may simply be misinterpreting their actions and intentions.

Even when you play by the Rules, you still sometimes get pain. Even pain can be insightful. Ask a better question, like "What can I learn from the pain I'm experiencing today?" or "If I don't use this lesson today, how can I use it tomorrow?"

Fulfillment comes not from collecting more "stuff" or having achieved some perceived social status. It comes from knowing you've left the world a better place by your words and actions.

Moving towards success

- Form a Plan
- Get Started
- Gain Momentum
- Get Smart/Be Compelled to Succeed

Remember, you can't build on Failure, only on Success. Don't ask yourself endless "Loop" questions like "Why do these things always happen to me?" "Why can't I ever get the job I want?" "Why can't I find a better boss, relationship, etc?" "Why can't I stick to my exercise/diet plan?"

These questions have no good answers, only looping. Instead, your brain will tell you "It is because you are such a loser!" Instead, STOP! Step back and Think!

You need to train yourself to ask Better questions if you want Better Answers!

"How can I find the high quality job I really deserve? How can I complete this large assignment on time and have fun doing it? How can I successfully save for that vacation/car/house/retirement and still reward myself today?"

Steps to Clearer Decision Making

1. **Get Clear on Where you Really are today.** (Not worse than you are!)
What are some things you are Most Proud Of?
What are some recent challenges you've faced that you don't want to again?
What did you learn by going through those experiences and why were they valuable to you?
What important decisions did you make this past year, and what decisions might you make in the coming year as a result?
2. **Get Certain**
Write down Big and Little things that at one time seemed impossible to achieve or acquire, but that you somehow did!
Then write down the Steps you went through to turn it into a Reality. (Did you form a Plan? Focus on the task continuously? Invest a lot of emotion and energy?)
3. **Get Excited!**
Write down a list of goals, both Big and Small.
Write down the number of Years alongside each one that you want each goal to take to achieve (1 year, 2-3 years, 5 years, 10 years, 20 years)
4. **Get Focused!**
Circle your top three 1 Year Goals that If you could achieve them, you would get up Early each day, and keep you up late each night to ensure its success.
5. **Get Committed!**
For each one of the three goals, write a paragraph about why each one is an absolute MUST for you to achieve, no matter what! Remember, Reasons come first, Answers Come Second! (Why must you succeed?)
Next, identify some of the things you may need to do that you don't WANT to do to achieve these goals. (Be honest! Look yourself in the mirror!
6. **Gain Momentum!**
Decide NOW what is one small thing you will do IMMEDIATELY, today, towards achieving your top three goals. (Make a phone call, write an email, Book a meeting, Call a Mentor, Sign up for a class, etc.)
7. **Get Smart!**
To follow through you must monitor your progress frequently! The more often you Measure, the more likely you'll succeed! TIP – Tell a friend or Mentor of your Goal and Timeline. That small action will make you accountable for its success! Celebrate your success as you reach your goals to reinforce your own positive behaviors!

Appendix A

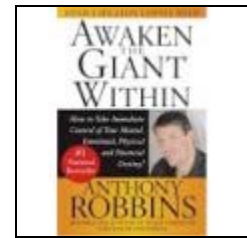
Rules for Working Hard, Easily

1. Don't see yourself as "Atlas" carrying the weight of the world on your shoulders. (Don't take yourself so deadly seriously!)
2. Determine to enjoy your work! Strive to see it as a pleasure and not as a drudgery or chore. (Change yourself and your attitude, instead of changing your job!)
3. Plan your Work – Work your Plan! (Failure to plan leads to a feeling of overwhelm)
4. Don't try to multi-task and do everything at once, nor for everyone. Do one thing well, and then move on to the next. (Peace of mind and you won't have to revisit those tasks that were 95% completed.)
5. Keep a positive mental attitude. When you think of work as hard, it will be hard! Think of it as fun and easy and it tends to become more fun and more easy!
6. Become efficient in your job. Knowledge Equals Power. It is easier to do a thing right, then to knowingly do it wrong.
7. Practice being relaxed. Take things in stride
8. Discipline yourself. Don't put off until tomorrow what you can do today!
9. Be thoughtful – Start your day by meditating about your work and your life each morning. You will remove stress and become more relaxed, and that may help you solve a problem you had been stuck on for far too long!
10. Go for more long walks where you can get some exercise, fresh air, and clear your head. Challenge a co-worker to have a "walking meeting" (instead of sitting in a conference room) and see if you aren't both invigorated and come up with more creative solutions.

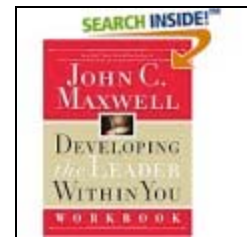
Appendix B

Additional Reading

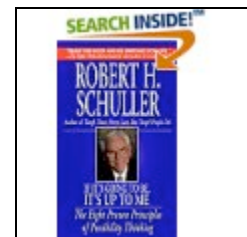
**Awaken the Giant Within –
Anthony Robbins**



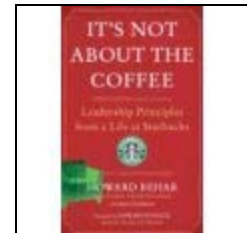
**Developing the Leader Within You –
John C. Maxwell**



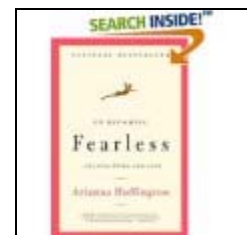
**If It's Going to Be, It's up to Me: The Eight Proven Principles of Possibility Thinking -
Robert H. Schuller**



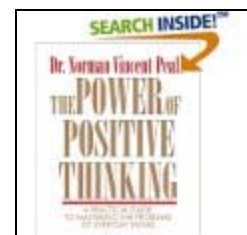
**It's Not About the Coffee -
Howard Behar**



**On becoming fearless: in love, work, and life –
Arianna Huffington**



**The Power of Positive Thinking –
Norman Vincent Peale**



Appendix C

Quotable Quotes

"Empty pockets never held anyone back. Only empty heads and empty hearts can do that." Norman Vincent Peale

"Holding on to anger is like grasping a hot coal with the intent of throwing it at someone else; you are the one who gets burned." Buddha

"The optimist sees opportunity in every danger; the pessimist sees danger in every opportunity." Winston Churchill

"People rarely succeed unless they have fun in what they are doing." Dale Carnegie

"Do, or do not. There is no try" Yoda

"Now is the time to fix the next ten years." Jim Rohn

"Without goals, and plans to reach them, you are like a ship that has set sail with no destination." Fitzhugh Dodson

"If you raise your children to feel that they can accomplish any goal or task they decide upon, you will have succeeded as a parent and you will have given your children the greatest of all blessings." Brian Tracy

"Since most of us spend our lives doing ordinary tasks, the most important thing is to carry them out extraordinarily well." Henry David Thoreau

"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."
Winston Churchill

"Remember happiness doesn't depend upon who you are or what you have; it depends solely on what you think." Dale Carnegie

"Success is getting what you want; happiness is wanting what you get." Dale Carnegie

"Happiness is a perfume you cannot pour on others without getting a few drops on yourself." Ralph Waldo Emerson

"Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes the time. Vision with action can change the world." Joel Barker

"The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams." Eleanor Roosevelt