

MCCA's Top 10 Recommendations for In-house Women Counsel¹

1. Develop solid substantive legal ability and a reputation for being an outstanding lawyer.
2. Be honest with yourself about your strengths and shortcomings. Take stock of your personal and professional priorities, and be clear about what you want.
3. Get to know the business. "Promotion in-house is not a straight line, but rather a function of expanding [your] circle of influence within the company—both inside the law department and outside of it."² Use this knowledge to identify how you can fill a critical need, contribute additional value, and effectively communicate legal issues to non-lawyer business teams using "their language."
4. Be visible within your company and in your industry. In addition to not being shy about discussing your contributions, invest time getting to know your colleagues by developing your relationships with those in the law department as well as in the business units.
5. Don't simply play it safe—take appropriate risks with a view to those that will enhance your skills set, demonstrate "out-of-the-box" approaches, and distinguish yourself as a leader.
6. Cultivate mentoring relationships with people who can help guide your career and offer you sage advice. Relationships cultivated on the business side can be a rich source of mentorship. *The key is recognizing good advice and acting on it.*
7. Learn the art of effective time management: prioritizing and delegating in order to refocus your time and resources on value-added work.
8. Develop solid support bases at work and at home to help you maintain a healthy work/life balance that is in keeping with your personal values.
9. Avoid letting others' expectations shape your definition of success, and don't hesitate to shift your goals or priorities as your own needs and expectations evolve.
10. Develop leadership skills with sensitivity to the fact that the diversity of those you lead can be a key asset to your organization. Simultaneously, you must cultivate your ability to manage across differences and build a high-performing team.

NOTES

1. These recommendations are adapted from *Creating Pathways to Diversity: From Lawyer to Business Partner—Career Advancement in Corporate Law Departments*, Minority Corporate Counsel Association (2003) pp. 27–37 and p. 43, at <http://www.mcca.com/site/data/researchprograms/RosePathways/index.shtml>.

2. *Id.* p.17.

MCCA® 2005 FORTUNE 501–1000 Women General Counsel

By Industry

	Number	Percentage*
Electronics, Office Equipment (A)	7	10.6
Insurance: All (B)	4	6.1
Energy, Gas, Petroleum Refining, Pipelines, etc. (C)	11	16.7
Food & Drug Stores (D)	1	1.5
General Merchandisers, Specialty Retailers, etc. (E)	10	15.2
Financial Services: Diversified Financials, Securities, Banks (F)	4	6.1
Transportation & Logistics (G)	1	1.5
Telecommunications (H)	1	1.5
Pharmaceuticals, Medical Products & Equipment, Healthcare (I)	5	7.6
Food Services, Consumer Food Products (J)	2	3.0
Motor Vehicles (K)	1	1.5
Industrial & Farm Equipment (L)	1	1.5
Diversified Outsourcing, Temp Help (M)	2	3.0
Real Estate, Hotels & Casino Resorts (N)	2	3.0
Chemicals (O)	4	6.1
Forest & Paper Products (P)	0	0.0
Publishing, Printing (Q)	3	4.5
Wholesalers: Diversified (R)	3	4.5
Railroads (S)	0	0.0
Construction, Building Materials, etc. (T)	3	4.5
Scientific, Photo Control Equipment (U)	1	1.5

* Percentage of all Fortune 500–1000 General Counsel

By Race

	No.	%
Unknown	1	1.5
Asian/Pacific Islander	2	3.0
Hispanic	3	4.5
African American	3	4.5
Caucasian	57	86.4
Total	66	99.9

