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Linda, previously an Administration Manager in Banking, has been a Legal Manager for 20 years. She previously worked at Eversheds, Debevoise & Plimpton and Sidley & Austin.

Q. What are the major issues you face as a legal administrator in your country?

A. Keeping the brand alive, keeping up to date with the market conditions which change constantly, and not receiving the recognition the post deserves from lawyers.

Q. Where do you see legal administration headed in your country?

A. The signs are good that more responsibility is being given to legal managers and that partners are now listening to people who know how to manage “the machine.” The amazing thing now is to be involved in strategy and planning for law firms as the market is extremely competitive. Legal managers have a lot to offer in this regard.

Finish this sentence: By participating in PLMW, I hope to raise awareness of the multitude of duties carried out by legal managers so that both legal and non-legal staff understand the complexity of the job. Legal recruiters could also be targeted as this too would help raise the level of recognition.

Q. What initiatives have you taken or do you plan to take to promote the awareness of legal administration (one of the goals of PLMW)?

A. I will raise the issue with our local group of ALA. I will also use the assistance of our marketing people in order to try and get some press for PLMW. All press coverage has to be good as the legal press is free issue to lawyers.

Q. Why is legal administration important to people in your country?

A. I believe it is important that clients know that we are adhering to the guidelines of practice laid down by our Law Society. Having a Legal Manager in place gives clients confidence that this is being done. Also, this is a specialised field which allows lawyers to practice law without worrying about practicalities.

Finish this sentence: A career in legal administration has given me many headaches! Seriously, it has broadened my knowledge and my skillsets, and I get to work with people with great intellect and humour.

Q. How do lawyers in your country view the legal management profession?

A. They would do without it if they could but they know it allows them to do what they really want to do – practice law.

Q. What types of programs would you like to see implemented in your country to advance this profession?

A. Training programmes set up by The Law Society which governs our lawyers for Legal Managers. Also, training within firms for all support staff, not just legal managers, to show people at every level of support just how much they are valued and needed in the firm. It is likely therefore that a lot of programmes would need to be set up in-house.

Q. How has legal administration evolved since you entered the field?

A. When I joined a law firm 20 years ago as an office manager I was limited in what I could do and change without approval from the partners. Everything had to be agreed at committee level. This was stifling and did not allow them to see the potential of what could be done. All these years later, I am involved in strategy, lawyer recruitment and training, facilities, finance to name but a few areas responsibility. I now believe I have a voice in the running of the firm.

Q. What does PLMW mean to you?

A. Awareness of a Legal Administrator's role means more opportunity to spread my wings further and get involved more. That's all I ask. I work for a wonderful firm, and I feel blessed to be in the position I currently have

Q. How would you like to celebrate PLMW 2007?

A. With the partners of my firm, basking in the knowledge that they understand all that I do, and appreciate me for it!

Q. What advice would you give to someone who wants to increase awareness in legal administration?

A. Give it time, chip away at the edges and communicate.

Q. In what ways can legal administrators increase the awareness of the legal profession among students?

A. Provide open days, attend talks at universities, and get the firm to participate in work experience schemes.

Finish this sentence: When it comes to legal administration, I would be happy if I could finish all my work and leave my desk clear on just one day of the year!

Q. What advice would you give to someone in your country interested in entering the legal administration profession?

A. Be prepared for a job where no two days are the same, be patient and show patience to others, and multitasking is a must. The personal rewards are great and I do not mean just monetary. It's a job like no other.