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Michael is an MBA with more than 28 years of experience in law firm Management and Leadership. He is a Fellow of the College of Law Practice Management and holds various leadership roles in the Association of Legal Administrators.

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

A. Leadership and management development and training for law practice managers and non-lawyer administrator professionals, attracting and retaining the talent needed to maintain stability and growth, and delivering high quality legal work to clients at a reasonable cost.

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

A. Traditional administrator roles will continue. Further specialization will be necessary due to institutional growth. Supporting larger practice groups/sections will require a new breed of administrator capable of juggling multiple tasks (e.g. business planning, marketing, research, talent usage and inter-departmental coordination).

Finish this sentence: By participating in PLMW, I hope to encourage younger business professionals to prepare themselves for and pursue careers in law firm leadership and management.

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 have been and will continue to be an advocate for professional law firm management. By doing so at every opportunity, I will increase awareness of our capability and the contributions being made to the continued growth and economic success of law firms.

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

A. Successful administration of firms permits practitioners to devote their full energy to the service of clients.

Finish this sentence: A career in legal administration has given me the opportunity to work side-by-side with the best educated and most talented people imaginable. Many of them have become life-long friends and colleagues.

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

A. Our lawyers view the professional administrator as essential to the success of their practice and the achievement of their strategic objectives.

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

A. Too many “functional managers” and smaller firm administrators are missing out on career advancement opportunities due to their own success (admittedly a paradox) and insufficient preparation for the next level of responsibility. Programs preparing them for advancement must be improved. These should, at a minimum, include how to sell yourself, where to get the necessary advanced degrees, more in-depth leadership training and how to best document a “successful track record.” Thus far, training and certification have focused on technical competence, a good start.

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

A. The biggest change during my nearly 30 years in the profession has been the depth and breadth of responsibility. A number of the “branches” that I’m responsible for today are larger than my entire firm when I started out. In the beginning, a “top 40” firm had less than 200 lawyers. Today it is necessary to be north of 1,000 lawyers to stay in that league. The level of skill, knowledge, and experience needed to manage and lead firms of that size are much more demanding.

Q. What does PLMW mean to you?

A. It offers a showcase to exhibit, demonstrate, and market the value of the professional administrator.

Q. How would you like to celebrate PLMW 2007?

A. Present evidence of the value of the professional administrator by highlighting some accomplishments that have proven accretive value to the profession and the clients of the institutions we serve.

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

A. Get out of your office, be visible to your constituents, colleagues, the media, and professional organizations. Get involved.

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

A. Teach, mentor, lead.

Finish this sentence: When it comes to legal administration, I would be happy if there were a long line of candidates ready to step into the positions of high responsibility and visibility that will be available over the next few years when the pioneers of this profession reach retirement age.

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

A. Get a broad but thorough education. Go on to get an advanced degree and professional certification. Work hard to create a record of reliability, loyalty, and success. Work on your leadership skills and management techniques. None of us is perfect. We can all stand to improve.