



Williams Mullen expands legal project management program

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BOSTON, Mar 16, 2011 (BUSINESS WIRE) -- Today, Williams Mullen, a 300-lawyer firm with offices in North Carolina, Virginia, Washington DC and London, began the second in a series of just-in-time training programs on legal project management. The training is designed to help lawyers change their behavior and meet client demands to provide value-driven legal services that deliver high-quality solutions for a reasonable cost.

According to John Paris, who heads the firm's Innovation Committee, Williams Mullen plans to become the legal project management leader in its region.

Within the last twelve months, many large firms have begun teaching lawyers the theoretical principles of project management, but only a few have made the more significant commitment required by a behavior change program. Just-in-time training focuses on identifying immediate action items for partners, then follows up with them for several weeks to insure that good ideas are turned into action.

Today's Williams Mullen program was led by LegalBizDev founder Jim Hassett, and organized around the eight key issues in legal project management that are explained in his book, the Legal Project Management Quick Reference Guide. Each participant in the program first identified a particular matter that could be improved, then selected the most relevant of the eight issues -- including defining scope, managing budgets, and assessing risks. Then they used the book to review best practices from other firms and quickly find exactly the information they needed, just when they needed it. This process enabled these busy lawyers to save time and find the item that was most likely to produce immediate and practical results for each practice and personality.

When Williams Mullen tried out the approach in a pilot test workshop last November with six of their most senior partners, the firm was able to observe immediate improvements, including new checklists and templates for client intake and matter management.

Several firm committees and subcommittees now operate under plans that are organized around the eight key issues from the LegalBizDev approach, and the eight issues have also been used to organize new marketing presentations that have already brought in new business.

"Educating lawyers about project management is easy," Hassett said, "but changing lifelong habits is very hard. We are pleased that Williams Mullen has made the commitment to the work this requires, and that it has already started to pay off." SOURCE: LegalBizDev CONTACT: LegalBizDev Jim Hassett, 617-217-2578 jhassett@legalbizdev.com Copyright Business Wire 2011 -0- KEYWORD: United States

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