

SPOTLIGHT

Values come into their own

How the Firm's values help drive our 2025 Strategy.

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The Firm launched its values – pioneering, united, human – in early 2020. They will play a vital role in the delivery of our 2025 Strategy.

Oliver Brettle who is responsible for the values on the Executive Committee, explains: "When Hugh launched the values at the GPM in London, he was very clear that they were based on things that the Firm has stood for.

"The launch was a chance for us to formalise those values and ensure they were truly embedded in everything we do, including our processes, across the entire Firm.

"Since we set out our new 2025 Strategy, it's clear how important the values will be in our mission to provide our clients with an experience that stands out to them as being distinctive and to deliver the best of the Firm."

The close relationship between the values and the 2025 Strategy is illustrated perfectly by the image of the compass we've chosen to symbolise it, says Oliver.

"I think when you look at every point of the compass, they're all things that will be driven by our values.

"For instance, the first bullet under Distinctive Client Experience on the north point is Shared Sense of Purpose and clearly having shared values can only encourage that.

"Indeed, our values are at the heart of our core goal of delivering the best possible experience to our clients.

"To the east, we have Compelling Offering, which is all about integrating our offer and being joined up. Again, if everyone shares the same values of pioneering, united, human, we'll be better placed to deliver this.

"The west point is all about embracing New Ways of Working, including the future of work and equitable development. This is about making the Firm a truly inclusive place to work, where all our people have clear opportunities to succeed.

"Finally, at the south point of the compass under Future Proof, we talk about building a Culture of Trust. Clearly, trust can be nurtured when you know you are all pushing in the same direction, with shared values that are known and lived. It is a strategy that has all three values at its core."



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OLIVER BRETTLE



2025

Differentiated
by a distinctive
client experience

Distinctive client experience

A consistent experience of the Firm strengthens our client relationships.

- Shared sense of purpose
- Global clients and complex work
- Prioritized, protected, understood

New ways of working

Our people are diverse, agile and equipped to meet future client needs.

- Future of work
- Tomorrow's lawyers
- Equitable development

Compelling offering

Our capabilities are joined up and focused on client impact.

- Industry expertise
- Integrated offerings
- Innovative delivery

Future proof

The Firm is set up to thrive in an uncertain world.

- Right size and shape
- Financial strength
- Culture of trust

Oliver believes the Firm's response to the Covid-19 pandemic has illustrated White & Case's ability to put the values into action and this will continue as White & Case adapts to agile working around the world.

"I think the way in which the Firm reacted to the global pandemic clearly demonstrated the values of pioneering, united, human because we proved that we care about our people and reacted in a very sensible and measured way.

"We provided the necessary support globally during an unprecedented challenge and this also displayed the passion we have to pioneer, adapt and stay united.

"This has continued with the recent discussions between our Agile Working Taskforce and the executive team, where we've been pioneering in our approach, united in our plan, and human in recognizing that our plans may vary from country to country.

"Nobody can accurately predict how the world will change over the coming months, but you can be sure that whatever our future of work looks like, for us it will be closely tied to all three values."

It's now been two years since the values were launched and Oliver is pleased with the progress made so far.

He says: "Right from the outset, it was clear that we were embarking on a long-term change that would take at least five years, so it's still very much a work in progress.

"Our values underpin everything we do at White & Case. As you look through our client service principles, employee value proposition, or think about how we give feedback and approach developing our careers, all three values guide the behaviors that bring these ideas to life."

DAVE MOWERS,
GLOBAL PEOPLE ENGAGEMENT DIRECTOR

"It's far too early to judge how we've done on this long-term journey, but we've achieved a lot.

"In the early weeks, we ensured our values were integrated in two global surveys of our people, so we could get an idea of what we were doing well in relation to the values and where we needed to do better.

"Since then, we've embedded the values in our upward feedback processes, new partner promotion materials and into our performance management and evaluations, so everyone knows the values should be considered in all our daily decisions. Our business services leaders across all the functions and sub-functions worked with their teams to build the values into our way of working. These changes are organic to our culture.

While these changes are helping to ensure a close link between the Firm and its values, Oliver is clear that they will only become the driving force behind our 2025 Strategy through a united team effort.

He says: "The values were never going to be delivered and lived from the top down. We all need to live them because it's essential we make them real to our colleagues and our clients.

"In doing so, we'll make the Firm a better place, drive our strategy, provide our clients with an experience that stands out to them as being distinctive, and attract and retain the best talent.

"This is so important because living the values will help us set ourselves apart through our distinct client experience."

"Every person across the Firm at every level, in every office, practice or role, will have a part to play."