

2025 STRATEGY

New Ways of Working has the client experience at its heart

Oliver Brettle explains why the New Ways of Working component of our 2025 Strategy is vital to delivering a differentiated client experience.



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New Ways of Working has the client experience at its heart

In the first in a series of 2025 Strategy columns from our Executive Committee, Oliver Brettle explains how the New Ways of Working component of our 2025 Strategy is vital to delivering a differentiated client experience.

You will have heard a lot over the past year about our 2025 Strategy and our vision to create a client experience that sets us apart from our competitors. There are several elements to our 2025 Strategy that will help us achieve this: A Distinctive Client Experience; Compelling Offering; Future Proof and New Ways of Working. We believe that in combination, these four strategic imperatives will create a client experience that no other law firm will be able to match.

What do we mean by New Ways of Working? It has become vital that everyone in the Firm is able to deliver a differentiated experience for our clients. To anticipate our clients' needs and apply the most effective solutions, we need everyone at the Firm to have the right skills and knowledge.

Having the right skills and knowledge is not just technical and legal knowledge, but also industry-specific training and skills to be better client advisors, stronger legal project managers, more effective business communicators and colleagues who build and work in teams. This applies to all of us. Clients care about all the people they work with, not just the partners and not just the lawyers. How they feel about the people they work with is a big factor in their choice of firm.

We also need to ensure we provide everyone in the Firm with equitable opportunities to gain experience and grow, enabling our clients to benefit from diverse teams and our people to achieve their true potential. Clients want associates with a set of skills, among them understanding their business, use of technology, and so on. Clients want to work with diverse teams.

One of the early outputs of our New Ways of Working discussions was to agree three core elements of focus – Future of Work, Equitable Development and Tomorrow's Lawyers (see panel, below).

Indeed, all of us in the Firm have an important role in delivering New Ways of Working and making it a reality. None of these changes will matter without the support, feedback and buy-in of everyone – whether you're an associate, counsel, trainee or Business Services professional.

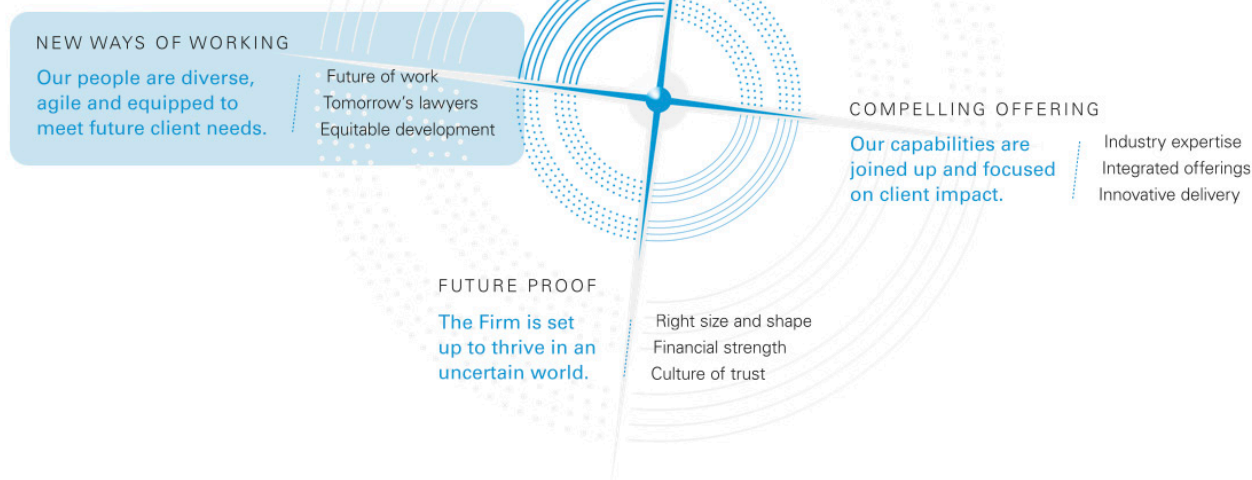
Our vision is for our clients to view us as standing apart from our peers and for their experience with White & Case to be different from, and more valued than, the experience at other global law firms. So please play your part and be open to challenging our assumptions. If you see an area for improvement in how we work, please raise it with your global practice leader, regional section head, office executive partner or Business Services leader.



“To anticipate our clients’ needs and apply the most effective solutions, we need everyone at the Firm to have the right skills and knowledge.”

OLIVER BRETTLE,
MEMBER OF THE
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE





Tomorrow's Lawyers



Future of Work



Equitable Development

With a specific focus on associates, this part of the initiative focuses on how we train, manage and involve our associates in our decisions, ensuring they receive the necessary support to be able to flourish and reach their potential.

As our largest client-facing group, we are looking first at our associates and putting programs in place to ensure they have the right skills and knowledge clients need and will satisfy our associates' wish to grow and develop as professionals.

Although New Ways of Working initially focuses on associates, the concepts apply to everyone. Business Services professionals have a large part to play in ensuring that new ways of working are embedded across the Firm. This includes greater Business Services involvement in client-facing work such as Legal Project Management, and investment in their development.



Tomorrow's Lawyers



Future of Work



Equitable Development

This part of the initiative focuses on how we'll deliver work in the future. It's about questioning how we currently do things with fresh eyes and looking at who does what, where the work is done, and how it's done, taking into consideration the opportunities created by new technology and ways of working. By doing this, we will ensure we are always at the right place, at the right time to support our clients in the way best for them.



Tomorrow's Lawyers



Future of Work



Equitable Development

Equitable Development means giving all our people fair, equal and transparent opportunities to develop and succeed in the Firm. Our immediate focus is on work allocation for associates in groups with the greatest need for enhanced coordination.

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Associate empowerment central to early progress

Some early wins have been achieved thanks to recommendations from our Associate Empowerment Task Force formed late last year.

The taskforce identified associate training, work allocation and associate involvement in leading the Firm as three areas for initial focus.

These will be prioritized in the following three ways:



Enhance professional skills



Revamp work allocation



Launch associate leadership

As a result of associate feedback, we are adjusting training programs so they focus more on on-the-job experience, allowing associates to get the right skills and experience at the right time in their careers. We also need wider support and contributions to these programs, including from partners.



Enhance professional skills



Revamp work allocation



Launch associate leadership

It is important that we get this right as more fairness in development opportunities drives diversity and helps everyone gain the right skills. We want to ensure client work is allocated to associates in an effective, consistent and equitable way. We are setting guiding principles and establishing tools and resources to support consistent, transparent work allocation globally, while allowing for customization by office and practice.



Enhance professional skills



Revamp work allocation



Launch associate leadership

We want to ensure that the voice of our associates is heard at leadership level and will improve associate representation on leadership and client groups. This will allow the Firm to benefit from our associates' energy and diverse thinking. We have already begun creating associate roles on our partner-led strategy task forces and will involve our associates in Firm committees and other important groups.

