workgroup

FRI 15TH MAY
LEEDS
@ THE MET HOTEL





FIONULA SCANLAN — MANAGING PARTNER, PRIVATE EQUITY, REAL ESTATE & INFRASTRUCTURE, DLA PIPER

KUNAL WHARTE — PARTNER, EMPLOYMENT, DLA PIPER

VERONICA SHACKLETON — PARTNER, EMPLOYMENT, DLA PIPER

DERRY LITHACRE — PARTNER, EMPLOYMENT, DLA PIPER

FARZEH BOHAYZA — PARTNER, EMPLOYMENT, DLA PIPER

OLIVER WILSON — PARTNER, EMPLOYMENT, DLA PIPER

NICOLA GIFFORD — PARTNER, EMPLOYMENT, DLA PIPER

group therapy FOR GCs

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH Brabners LAWAU

workgroup group therapy FOR GCs

How does it work?

"Workgroup" isn't just our namesake, it's the main format of the day. Workgroup are discussion groups run by you - the GCs.

The day alternates between these closed-door group discussions, and full-audience panels tackling the juiciest topics in legal leadership.

WORKGROUPS

A workgroup is a 50-min GC-led discussion group of up to 8 GCs.

Each group has 3 rounds of workgroups, each with 5 options to choose from.

PANELS

Panels are where we discuss the spiciest and scariest topics in the GCs world, with the whole full audience involvement.

There are 3 panels over the course of the day.

Our previous GC attendees include:

GREGGS · Hargreaves Lansdown · Zenith · Pets at Home · Marshalls · Primark · Cancer Research UK · Asda · Taylor Wimpey · Plus many more

Schedule

09:00-09:30	REGISTRATION
09:40-10:30	FIRST PANEL
10:30-11:10	FIRST WORKGROUP
11:10-11:30	ROUND-UPS
11:30-11:50	BREAK
11:50-12:40	SECOND WORKGROUP
12:40-13:00	ROUND-UPS
13:00-13:50	LUNCH
13:50-14:30	SECOND PANEL
14:30-15:20	THIRD WORKGROUP
15:20-15:40	ROUND-UPS
15:40-16:00	BREAK
16:00-16:40	THIRD PANEL
16:40+	DRINKS

09:40 FIRST PANEL

Board(room) Call.

How do I land the right NED or trustee role?

What makes we stand out above others in Chairs and boards. And, how do I overcome the fact that I'm not right insurance if it goes sideways?

How do I build a portfolio career without it becoming just a vanity side-hustle?

MODERATOR

Leeds Bradford Airport · allsectech · convatec · bcl

KUNAL WHARTE — PARTNER, EMPLOYMENT, DLA PIPER

ERICA THOMPSON — PARTNER, EMPLOYMENT, DLA PIPER

NICOLA CARBON — FORMER REGIONAL GC, CANCER RESEARCH UK

TOM FLEET — DIRECTOR

10:25 FIRST WORKGROUP

pick your first workgroup

NO.1 HOW TECH IS TOO TECH?

Should I stick to Legal - or actively seek wider portfolios? CFOs, commercial, COO and beyond? Is there a risk that I'm not seen as a subject matter expert? Is it dangerous to diversify too far from the core of being a GC?

Oliver Wilson — Chief Legal Officer — Jaja

NO.2 LET THE GAMES BEGIN ...

How do you build a legal function from scratch without overcomplicating or burning out? Let's keep focused on the basics, and not get lost in the detail. Also, what's the best way to get the right processes in place when it's all yours to fix.

Rebecca Piper — GC General Counsel — Ascendis

NO.3 SIDE-FIRST? SIDE4 LATER?

Want to really like to join a new business at the start? Or do you like the idea of an initial period to see the ropes? Is the flexibility of side-hustle appealing or do you prefer working with a core set of colleagues? How has the conversation here changed for you?

Yeyne Fitzgerald — General Counsel — Developer PLC

NO.4 SHORTLIST TO, SHORTFALL?

All can get an MBA (sure - but don't we all have one?) Is there a way to show how what to cut from the noise and stand out? How do you show up in interviews as to properly develop our lawyers when they're looking for the next big opportunity might be thrown?

Veronica Shackleton — Senior Counsel — Pinsent Masons

NO.5 STAKES-BASED BUSINESS?

How do I budget for legal when the business is changing so much, so fast? Especially when we actively want to, and we're trying to be more agile. How do I avoid the cost control that simply have to exist?

Emma Costello — Director of Legal — Barclays

11:50 SECOND WORKGROUP

pick your second workgroup

NO.1 RISKY BUSINESS.

How do I get the risk appetite right? Do I go with the flow, and hope we don't get caught out? Or do I put a lot of processes in place, and risk being seen as a blocker? How do you know when conversation is the right one to have? Is there a right and wrong answer?

Francis Stanton — Group General Counsel — Mortgage Trading Group

NO.2 TRICKS OF THE TRADE.

How can GCs work together to support each other? Is there a way to collaborate? Let's sit down and talk about collaboration making and persuasion.

Kerry Lisnock — GC Legal Director — Lumen Group

NO.3 THE COMPLIANCE PROBLEM

How do you identify the real value that you add? Is it the ability to say no a bit more, is it really about to "be strategic", and how do you demonstrate that? Is compliance all your own strengths to achieve it?

Chris Birch — Group General Counsel — Molesworth Group PLC

NO.4 FOREVER YOUNG?

How do I prepare my organisation for the future? Is there a way to future-proof it? Is it about the right skills? Is it some bit of attitudinal work? Or are you just a complete dinosaur. How to you keep your organisation relevant and agile as disinformation creeping in?

Lauren Rochard — General Counsel — Mantra Trusted

NO.5 BUT SURE WHAT I'M DOING.

Where are other GCs at on this? At what point do you feel like you've succeeded? Should I be further ahead than I probably am? If so, how do I actually catch up?

Amina Taylor — Head of Legal — Portsalon

13:50 SECOND PANEL

Brabners

Should I stay or should I go (interim)

Do GCs up here only move jobs when another GC (probably in this room) retires?

How do we escape this dead-me/them-shoes scenario? Interim? Fractional? Sideways moves?

Are "squiggly" careers the future of the legal market and how do we create progression for those lawyers "stuck underneath"?

MODERATOR

National Grid · SHS · ABERIA Lifestyles · Brabners

FARZEH BOHAYZA — PARTNER, EMPLOYMENT, DLA PIPER

ANTHEA NELSON — PARTNER, EMPLOYMENT, DLA PIPER

LAUREN DUNFORD — PARTNER, EMPLOYMENT, DLA PIPER

KATE VENABLES — PARTNER, EMPLOYMENT, DLA PIPER

14:30 THIRD WORKGROUP

pick your third workgroup

NO.1 DON'T SHOOT THE GC

When lawyers are in conflict with the objectives don't we get stuck with what we're trying to achieve? Is it the GC's job to be the bad guy? Is it our job to use contracts to reinforce our commercial terms? Or to negotiate in your own hands, and die they back you or bicycle?

Judy North — Head of Legal — Ideal

NO.2 CAPACITY CRISIS.

How do I stop being the firefighter all call for every legal question? Is there a way to delegate? Is there any way to make sure that I'm not going to make your team and business more self-sufficient before my time goes?

Nicola Gifford — General Counsel — Brabners

NO.3 THE GREAT RETURN.

What challenges come up when returning to the office (or workplace) hour? How can we, as leaders, make that transition smoother for both ourselves and our team?

Ruth Emma Bringer — General Counsel — Jewson

NO.4 TRANSACTIONS BEFORE EARLY

How do in-house legal teams build a deal team that delivers? What's the right fit for the business, working hours better etc? And how do you get the right level of resource, the right budget, and feedback and right?

Nicola Cowan — General Counsel — Formerly Evenbuild Plc

NO.5 NEGOTIATE IT NOW, OR REGRET IT LATER?

What should ALL negotiations before they start? Is there a way to make sure it's done - to give themselves the best shot at real influence?

Chris Martin — Legal Director — Ideal Heating

16:00 THIRD PANEL

LAWAU

Sink or swim?

AI is flooding the legal space- but is it solving the right problems, or just making tech headlines?

How do you separate the useful AI, from the rest and how can AI make your job easier, with not replacing it?

MODERATOR

ACAS · TransUnion · mercer osborne · LAWAU

KRISTEL GRAHAM — GENERAL COUNSEL

NEIL BENTLEY — GENERAL COUNSEL

VERONICA SHACKLETON — GENERAL COUNSEL

NEIL SMITH — LEGAL DIRECTOR, TRANSUNION UK & IRELAND

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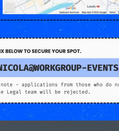
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH Brabners LAWAU

WHERE IS IT?

THE MET HOTEL, LEEDS

FRIDAY 15TH MAY 2026

9:00AM-17:00+



HOW DO I REGISTER?

EMAIL NIX BELOW TO SECURE YOUR SPOT.

NICOLA@WORKGROUP-EVENTS.COM

Please note - applications from those who do not lead an in-house Legal team will be rejected.

workgroup Legal