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Perspectives

FROM THE CHAIR OF THE LAW PRACTICE MANAGEMENT SECTION

Succession—it is one of those law firm topics that we often hesitate to properly address. After all, who among us wants to address something that so keenly evokes our own mortality? We spend years building our success and often grasp it with fists clenched and a sense of entitlement ... sometimes deserved, other times not. Be that as it may, though, the true visionary knows when to pass the baton.

At 35 years old, the Law Practice Management Section is no different in the need to plan for who will hold the reins in the future. Our Section founders built a resource that is invaluable to ABA members and the legal community at large. Accordingly, we too must recognize the need to continually reenergize the base, and thereby ensure that the next generation of contributors is primed and ready to carry on LPM's mission.

An important step in making this happen occurred when LPM and the Young Lawyers Division (YLD) combined for our Joint Spring Conference in New Orleans this past May. There, thanks to the two groups' chairs—Walt Karnstein and Liz Acee, who both gave up a little meeting ownership to allow the groups to meld—the two organizations were able to spend time together. We recognized that as these young lawyers "aged out" of YLD, they would be perfect future leaders for our Section.

We followed up that meeting by setting up an appointments process for this bar year that asked many of those same YLD participants to take active roles in our Section—not as liaisons or cursory adjunct appointees, but high-level members of LPM's most productive boards. The bottom line is that new people bring new ideas, and we are committed to making sure LPM stays current and keeps a pipeline of the best talent pushing out benefits to our members.

Along with the new ideas will come some tinkering to the tools we provide—from CLE programming to this magazine, from books to the *Law Practice Today* webzine. You just can't stand still when your Section is known by many as being on the cutting edge of providing information. Most of what we accomplish should be generally seamless and invisible to you—but behind the scenes we have mixed veterans and rookies, combed the waiver wire and picked up a few free agents, and put together a team built to win now and succeed down the road.

For LPM, change is being met with open arms. There are many law firms that have bit the dust in recent years owing to a lack of proper planning—be it in sharing books of business, developing associates adequately or simply "having a blueprint" for the future. Section leadership is committed to ensuring that the same thing will not happen to LPM. Thank you to YLD for not only engaging with us, but also welcoming with zeal the chance to help us build for the future. And, as always, a more important thanks to the long-term contributors who continue to donate enormous amounts of time and energy every day to furthering the Section's work. **LP**

Micah Buchdahl (micah@htmlawyers.com), Chair of the ABA Law Practice Management Section, is an attorney and President of HTMLawyers, dedicated to guiding law firms through business development strategies and implementation.

