

California Minority Counsel Program

Title of Activity: **"GC Panel: Lessons on Managing and Leading"**

MCLE Written Materials

Date of Activity: September 22, 2020

Time of Activity: 10:25am - 11:25am

Moderator: Randall Collins

Panelists:

- **Iris Chen**, Deputy General Counsel, Product, Airbnb, Inc.
- **Cassandra Knight**, VP, Chief Litigation Counsel, PayPal, Inc.
- **Kerry McLean**, EVP, General Counsel and Corporate Secretary, Intuit Inc.
- **Michael Tang**, SVP, General Counsel & Secretary, Agilent Technologies, Inc.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this program, participants will:

- Be able to identify their own leadership potential
- Be confident seeing themselves as leaders
- Understand the role that leadership and management skills play in career development
- Know the basic foundations of effective leadership/management
- Understand that minorities face unique challenges as they grow into leadership/management positions

1. What is leadership?

- a. There isn't a single definition, but representative definitions include:
 - i. Motivating your team to achieve more than the sum of its parts in an authentic way
 - ii. Being yourself and showing yourself so that people know YOU and what your expectations are
 - iii. Avoiding the fiction of "a leader should be this way". Just be who you are. You become more of who you are as you become a better leader.
 - iv. Developing people's trust so that people are willing to go above and beyond for you
 - v. Setting expectations for yourself and others
 - vi. Bringing your diversity/background to work and how it impacts your decision-making
 - vii. Leadership vs. management and how leadership is more invisible

2. How to be an effective leader in your organization

- a. What are the most important skills to have as a leader?
 - i. Self-awareness
 - ii. Fairness
 - iii. Humility and vulnerability
 - iv. Authenticity
 - v. Ability to learn from mistakes and owning mistakes

- vi. Seeking and being excited about feedback
- vii. Bringing diversity, inclusion and belonging
- viii. Examples/stories illustrating how these skills are important to leading an organization and how these skills can be acquired
- b. Importance of empathy/compassion as a leader
 - i. A simple conversation with a non-attorney employee can make the employee feel valued
 - ii. Delivering bad news like a termination with grace
- 3. Unique challenges minorities face while growing into leadership
 - a. How does being diverse shape the idea of what it means to lead?
 - b. Common challenges minorities face
 - i. More pressure to deliver and perform.
 - ii. "I only got the job because I'm diverse." Who cares?
 - c. What actions can we take to minimize those challenges?
 - i. Giving younger attorneys access to good work
 - ii. Embracing your heritage without forgetting who you are
 - d. Increasing minority representation in leadership positions
 - i. Must be intentional seeking out of diverse candidates
 - ii. Consider recruiting solely or majority from HBCUs, women of color
 - iii. Force your company to rethink how they are recruiting and structuring work assignments
 - iv. Make sure younger attorneys are reaching out to leaders to seek good work
 - v. Making sure the diverse attorney is great at her work
 - vi. Say what you think during meetings so that people know who you are and recognize you for important thoughts

Audience Poll Q1: Take a moment to reflect on when someone looked up to you or took direction from you in the past month, this year, since graduating law school, maybe a job during law school or after college, and share in the comment box.

Audience Poll Q2: What's the most important leadership skill to you?

Additional Resources:

1. <https://www.abajournal.com/voice/article/lawyer-leadership-secret-to-success>
2. https://www.americanbar.org/groups/law_practice/publications/law_practice_magazine/2018/ND2018/ND2018Bradley/
3. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/pauladavilaack/2018/02/22/6-new-leadership-literacies-lawyers-must-build/#38d776552334>
4. <https://www.attorneyatwork.com/how-to-become-thought-leader/>
5. <https://www.mcca.com/mcca-article/4-leadership-skills-moving-legal-career-ladder/>
6. <https://www.law.com/corpounsel/2019/03/20/from-lawyer-to-leader-how-to-build-a-strong-legal-team-culture/?slreturn=20200818214640>