

Legal Project Management Training Case Study



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Overview

Customer

Addleshaw Goddard LLP

Products and Services

Legal Project Management Training

LPM Network

Organisation Size

Large

Country

United Kingdom

Industry

Legal

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Addleshaw Goddard LLP and Wellingtone Lead the Way in Legal Project Management Upskilling

The 2008 financial crisis was the beginning of a decade of change in legal services delivery. Reduced profitability and evolving client expectations presented a double challenge for law firms keen to retain the competitive edge. Consequently, alternative pricing models and effective matter management have become today's key procurement drivers for clients seeking legal services. This represents an unprecedented opportunity for law firms to harness the power of project management techniques for the good of both business and client.

In response, premium international business law firm Addleshaw Goddard LLP is pioneering a new approach to legal services delivery. In partnership with project management specialist Wellingtone and the Association for Project Management (APM), the firm is embedding project management techniques into legal matters via an innovative Legal Project Management training and networking programme. The programme gives legal professionals at all levels an insight into how best practice project management can support a significant strategic step change for law firms. Ian Kehoe, Addleshaw Goddard's Head of Legal Project Management, explains the nature of the work.

"There's a growing recognition that the whole model of legal services delivery is in danger of becoming outdated. It's driving us to test new and innovative ways of doing things."

Ian Kehoe - Head of Legal Project Management, Addleshaw Goddard

A Profession Poised for Project Management Transformation

Ian started his career just after the UK's financial crisis hit. He remembers the impact on legal services all too well. "For the first time in the sector's two-hundred-year history, law firms experienced a potentially disastrous hit to their profitability," he recalls. "In response, the sector spent the years following the crisis working on cost cutting exercises. But even that wasn't enough to satisfy an increasing client focus on value for money. So, the past five years have seen law firms shifting the focus to exploring new skills and capabilities that can drive more effective matter management – and with it cost efficiencies. As a result, recognition of the value of project management is on the rise, and that's creating two demands within law firms. The first is the need to recruit and develop specific project management skills across the administration functions of the firm – that's a key part of my role. The other aspect is the importance of upskilling fee earners and partners in this area, so that they can embed project management into their client-facing work. This is where Addleshaw Goddard has engaged Wellingtone's services as a training expert."

Delivering Accredited Legal Project Management Training to Legal Professionals

Having previously worked with Wellingtone, Ian engaged with Senior PPM Consultant, Vince Hines, to design and deliver a customised Legal Project Management training course. The materials were based on Wellingtone's APM Accredited Legal Project Management course – a unique offering in the marketplace that reflects their thought leadership status in this field.



Benefits

- *Driving industry standards in Legal Project Management*
- *Equipping law firms to deliver to client expectations of value for money*
- *Upskilling Legal Project Management across all professional levels, from paralegals to partners*
- *Pioneering techniques to support more effective matter management*

So far, the course has been delivered twice. It focuses on best practice principles including time-cost-quality, the project management life cycle, building project plans and estimating hours/costs using the Confidence Factor. It was a deliberate strategic decision to engage a broad scope of delegates that reflects the diversity of legal services roles, Ian explains. **“Project management is still a highly innovative area for the legal profession. Addleshaw Goddard may not be the first mover in this area, but we are nonetheless a pioneer – very few firms are currently adopting this skills development strategy. We have ambitious plans to put a large number of people through this training, so in these early stages it’s important for us to test the parameters with different personnel – from paralegals to partners - and assess where the training can achieve the most benefit.”**

Early feedback has been extremely encouraging, according to Ian. **“Our Associate who headed up and attended the first training course described it as ‘one of the best training sessions we have ever attended’. She told me that the delegates found the content ‘useful and informative in adding structure and practical advice to their previous experience of running projects’. She also confirmed that Vince was an ‘engaging and enlightening presenter’. The second course was delivered to a more senior group, with delegates representing the fee earning and partnership strata. This group similarly gave very positive feedback, but – as might be expected – they also made several pro-active suggestions as to how the course might be tweaked to fit their circumstances. That’s great, because it informs what we decide to do as we roll out the programme and helps us to ensure its relevance to every professional profile within the firm.”**

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Ian Kehoe - Head of Legal Project Management, Addleshaw Goddard

Driving Industry-Wide Legal Project Management Standards

As well as training internally for Addleshaw Goddard, Vince has worked with Ian to extend best practice concepts to the wider legal profession by initiating a Legal Project Management Network, with the support of the APM. **“If we can put our heads together as a profession and find ways to standardise our project management approach, that clearly benefits both us and our clients,”** Ian explains. **“Again, this type of network is something of an innovation for our sector. It’s a valuable opportunity to engage with colleagues and peers to introduce cohesion of standards and methods into our respective firms’ approaches. I believe that, in the next ten to fifteen years, the type of work we’re able to offer will be considerably enhanced by establishing these practices. Even in these early days, we’re getting glowing feedback from clients in recognition of the fact that we’re taking the first steps towards project management maturity.”**

In terms of the future, Ian explains that Addleshaw Goddard **“has an ambition to ensure that a large proportion of our people are certified project managers. We know from our clients how important this is to them – and we recognise the efficiency benefits it has for us as a firm. Vince is our key partner in delivering Legal Project Management training and networking and my experience of working with him has been fantastic. Lawyers – especially at a senior level – can be a challenging audience. They’re extremely shrewd and their time is precious. Vince has a disarming and very modest way of engaging and handling those strong personalities in the training room. He creates just the right atmosphere to quickly break down any preconceptions and ensure that everyone benefits from the learning. I think there’s a growing recognition that the whole model of legal services delivery is in danger of becoming outdated. It’s driving us to test new and innovative ways of doing things. I’m proud that Addleshaw Goddard is playing a leading part in that by adopting these upskilling and networking innovations, and I’m grateful to Vince for his continued support.”**

To learn more about Addleshaw Goddard LLP, visit <https://www.addleshawgoddard.com/en/>