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Chair and
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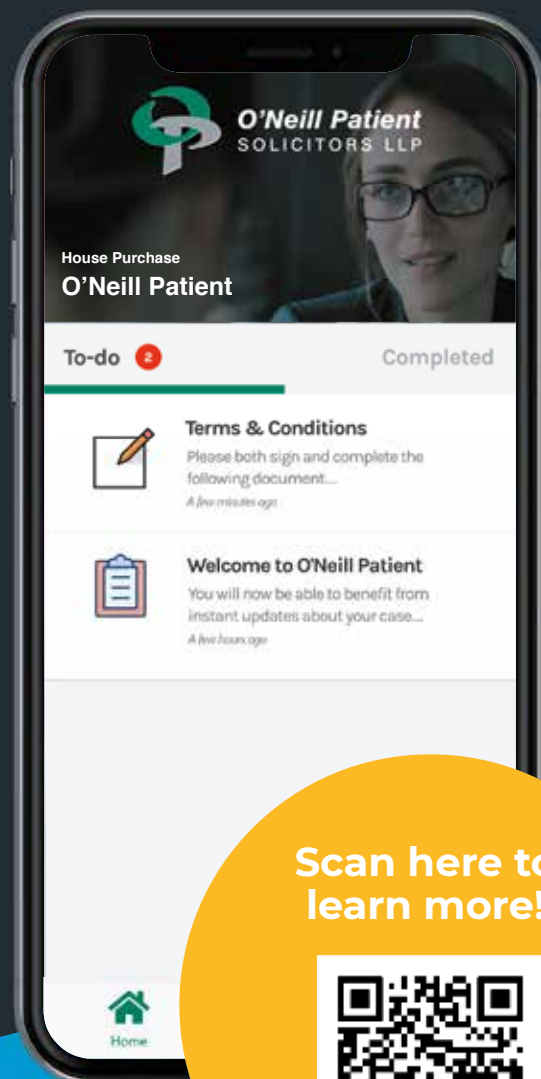
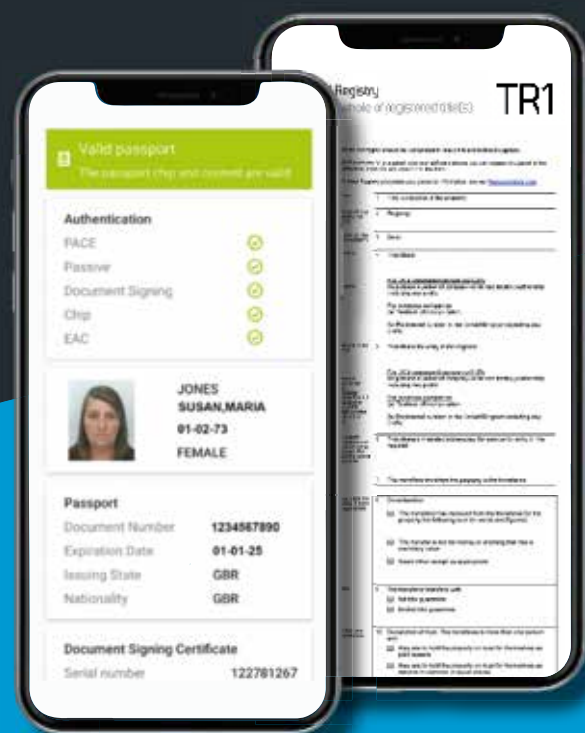
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Success

GOLLY GOSH

The previous issue of Technology in Law Land (TiLL) was a huge success. The roundtable discussion and feature titled, 'Fighting Tanks with Brand Banks: Brands in Arms - Judgment Day for Law Land', has been hailed "the best yet" as it was lauded far and wide across the world, touching at least 25,000 readers on my LinkedIn profile post alone. Normally we expect to be (and are consistently) read by the legal fraternity, business eco-system, tech community, entrepreneurs, and start-ups, whether by representatives from large, medium, or small businesses. However, this time around, we attracted and piqued the interest and curiosity of readers from the US Army, US Navy, US Air Force, the 'Big Four', the BBC, Google, Amazon, Microsoft, Solicitors Regulation Authority, The Law Society, Legal Services Board, MOJ, MOD and more. Interesting ... Hmmm ...

I use the word 'success' here in a rather general and simple context. 'Success' means the article was read globally, across every continent, by a whole range of interested parties, whether lay person, lawyer, general counsel, whizz-kid, wunderkind, genius, one-(wo)man-band business, start-up, or head of a large multi-national conglomerate.

I also use the word 'success' in both a quantitative and qualitative sense. Over 25,000 readers on LinkedIn alone is a KPI professional and business achievement for us, aka a successful quantitative metric achieved in our measurement of reaching a target legal, business and tech audience. Yet, the breadth and depth of readership – the variety of readers who were personally touched and intrigued by the content, and moved to engage and feedback – represented the successful qualitative nature of the subject matter.

Speaking of quantitative and qualitative, I spy *The Naked Lawyer* fidgeting with her utility belt. Burdened with the usual plethora of quality ammo, I fail miserably in my attempt to keep her mischievous nature at bay ...



Whizz-bang* *Whoosh* *Zing
... Incoming ... *The Naked Lawyer* hurled her first muse bomb into the ring to officially begin the roundtable gathering.

Yep, you guessed it, 'success' is our theme of the day along with the inevitable nemesis 'failure'; or is it? Let's discuss ...

But before we dive right in, it would be remiss of me not to mention the hugely successful 4-day celebration last month of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. What a brilliant long weekend it was, and how proud I felt to have been born and reside in this wonderful nation. Thanks Ma'am.

The Party at the Palace had fabulous star performances and light displays, including the drone animation of the corgi floating head. This was a highlight for me, together with the pageant rolling out 70 years of change via the aptly decorated London buses, representing the past 7 decades packed with the accompanying relevant celebrities.

Her Majesty The Queen has led an exemplary successful life. 70 years as our Sovereign; 70 years of unwavering service and duty for the good of the people. 96 years as a formidable lady. Her Majesty has been Head of State in Britain and Head of the Commonwealth since her father's death (George VI) in 1952. HM The Queen is now the oldest and the longest reigning monarch in British history. I have huge admiration and respect for our amazing Queen for being so steadfast over all these years in her unwavering goal to be a successful monarch for the people of Britain and the Commonwealth...

I watched a handful of documentaries and some of the televised events during the bank holidays. But what Her Majesty The Queen, Elizabeth II, said here, struck and resonated with me deeply:

"Some cultures believe a long life brings wisdom. I'd like to think so. Perhaps part of that wisdom is to recognise some of life's baffling paradoxes. Such as the way human beings have a huge propensity for good and yet a capacity for evil" [and] "We share the same world. But we do not share the same opportunities."¹

As is the bewildering paradox of success and failure. We humans have a great capacity for success, yet proclivity to fail. We might well share the same world, but we do not share the same triumphs or setbacks. They are unique to every one of us ... And on that note, let's begin, shall we?

1. HM The Queen commenting on her visit to South Africa, Cape Town, 1947.



Success

Good morning ladies and gents, or should I say tech ambassador aficionados? Great to see y'all in such fine fettle. As you have just witnessed and experienced, *The Naked Lawyer's* boredom threshold has climaxed. Brush the muse bomb dust from your person and let's begin on a gentle note and see where the chat takes us ...

What, in your opinion, does it mean to be 'successful' with regard to the following 3 elements:

- Personally?
- Professionally?
- In business?

Martyn: Ah, success? Is it that elusive bird of paradise? Is it something we should strive for? Is it just an illusion? Success and its well-known sister, Miss Failure – what do these challenging siblings mean to us?

Like many of our readers, we would probably have 'success' or 'successful' as a leading adjective and character in our lives, rather than that sullen and oft-disappointing miscreant Sister Failure. However, if we live too long in the hope of success, we know we are going to also have that cloudy cousin of these two, Doctor Disappointment, knocking on our doors.

So, for me, success is merely a function of expectation. We must have read that UPSET = UNFULFILLED EXPECTATION, so therefore, tweak the expectation and tilt it towards reality, and that upset will be less severe.

Ah-ha, I hear being shouted – that's merely a lack of ambition, and an excuse for failure. Christmas is a long way off, but I can still retort – "OH, NO IT'S NOT!!"

Set your expectation, and set it as high as you think you can go, and add an inch for the effort of trying. Then throw in the truly remarkable perspective – there is no such thing as failure, only learning, and bingo, there's a recipe of sorts for success. Now clearly, there is such a thing as failure, but if the philosophy is of learning, and one does actually take heed, then we are one step closer to success.

Our dear old friend and inspiration, Thomas Edison, didn't view it as anything but, "I did not have 10,000 failures, I had 10,000 lessons, and then I discovered the light bulb!"

So, armed with that, we can then see that 'satisfaction' as a benchmark has a more fulfilling element to it than that brazen flirt, success. Satisfaction in an outcome brings with it a sense of learning, and a sense of fulfilment and PROGRESS! It also starts bringing us a fundamental core by which we can drive our personal lives, by which we can create business cultures, and by which we can draw companions and colleagues into the journey. If we can highlight to people that we are on a journey and a road to discovery, we can start to build a powerful culture of achievement.

I'm a bit concerned that I'm starting to sound a bit hippy-ish, but stick with me and you may see that this is now about creating a totally solid cultural foundation where creativity can flourish, where people are respected for their input and ideas, where teamwork can flourish, and where, dare I now unveil the plan – success can be achieved.

But, as soon as one success is bagged, then off we go again, just like a never-ending chase for footballing glory. You win a trophy, brief joy, and then what next? Football fans are never happy for long and they just become a meme of fleeting ecstasy and perpetual disappointment.

However, I am distracted by the end of the football season and the dawn of a few weeks of respite from the hamster wheel – and yet there are lessons to be learned and applied here to both our personal and business life.

Basically – make sure we enjoy the moment to the full.

Martyn Best
Managing Director,
Document Direct



I love and agree with your view of 'failure' as a sibling rather than a nemesis, Martyn. Sister Failure, and Cousin Doctor Disappointment are inextricably linked in the 'success' conundrum IMHO. Your opinion that "satisfaction" as a benchmark has a more fulfilling element to it than that brazen flirt, 'success' certainly caught *The Naked Lawyer's* attention – although I can't think why *wink*.

What else can we bring into the mix? Alex?

Alex: I strongly believe in values. To me, being personally or professionally 'successful' means to regard these values as a guideline or foundation in order to improve myself constantly. For instance, Hyperlex's values are the following: ambition, quest for excellence, creativity and – last but not least – a great deal of team spirit. These are the core values that all our team members accepted and chose, they reflect on us and serve, somehow, as a compass for our company.

Regarding a more specific view of success – our goal was first and foremost to offer a promising high-quality product. Contract Management tools are no longer niche products, so their success is due to their popularity/quality and relevance to a wide range of companies. In this way, we have the potential to become a key player on the market – by pursuing growth and sustainability.

I would also like to add that, in order to reach the goals I set for my company, I have to constantly apply them on an individual level. In my opinion these three aspects (personal, professional and success in business matters) are interconnected, even though they might be part of different elements of our everyday life. The more successful I become on a personal level, the more my success can enrich my professional life and my business relations.

So, what you are saying is that for you, the journey toward 'success' personally, professionally and/or in business has your core values as its foundation. I can buy into that. What about you, Priscilla? Welcome to the gang btw, it's super to have another lady lawyer and tech evangelist onboard! *applause*, "hear-hear" s and *cheers* vibrate around the room ...

Priscilla: In my opinion personal, success is to be able to get out of bed in the morning with a purpose, with a goal for the day, no matter how small. Those who have experienced a personal tragedy, who still manage to find the strength to wake up with a purpose are the most successful people in life. They carry an invisible backpack, naked to the eye, but very much felt in their every waking moment. These are the people who battle every day with an unseen negative energy. They only have themselves to look to, to try and overcome this overwhelming feeling and turn the negative energy into something positive, even if it lasts a couple of minutes of the day. To the outside world they seem fine, but within they are broken and crushed. These are the people that are the most successful in this world.

Success in a professional capacity is being able to look back each year never losing sight of the first door that opened your career. That door is your measure of success. If you fail to look back and reflect at your achievement, you will forever be thinking whether you are professionally successful or not; you need a barometer to assess success. As they say "never forget your roots". The same can be applied to your professional capacity.

Alex Grux
CEO and
Co-Founder,
Hyperlex



Priscilla Sinder
Director, Property
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Together with this mentally, be mindful of your expectations and what your career path is. Have a start line, be ambitious throughout the journey, with an end destination, which can be measured in many ways: monetary value, your audience, or simply a personal best. The point of my answer, which can be summarised quite simply, is always reflect upon *your* achievement, no one else's. Your reflection is your future success.

As for business success, a business is tangible. One can think it can easily be measured by size, growth, and profitability. That would be the normal metric. However, since the pandemic there has been more of a focus on an interior culture; the mental attitude of the business itself and those of its employees.

A business that is large in size, pays handsome dividends and has an aggressive expansion plan yet has a staff culture of oppression could be termed as materially successful, rich in cash but poor in culture.

A business of any size, be it rich or moderate in cash, that has staff with a positive attitude and are growing the business with their own skills, is, in my opinion, more successful than the above-mentioned business model. The growth of the business is created on people passion. This to me is business success. The fusion of both is creating a strong foundation for the business's growth and wealth.

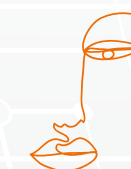
My closing comment as a businesswoman is if you want to create something unique, look at the non-tangible elements of a business first, your goal, your ambition and how *you* define success. Work on these values, and put the hours in, then the tangible element, e.g. the finances of the business, will start to follow and more importantly the finances shall continue to flow as the ethics of the business come from a good moral source; your willpower to succeed. Measure your business success on *your* business metrics, not on what society measures success in the material world. No one is living your life, so you are the best person to measure your own success.

I couldn't agree more, Priscilla, in all three of the elements you eloquently opined. And as *The Naked Lawyer* would say and agree, success is really about *your* ability to "Get Naked", with yourself and others! That is, being comfortable with the morals and values you set for your authentic self and purposefully BE your true/naked self in your personal and professional life and business endeavours. 'Success' is then what *you* define it to be, and not what external barometer is placed upon you.

Any further thoughts on this gang?

David: For me they are all (personal, professional, business success) inextricably linked, as I don't think you can have true success without a good work-life balance. Ask yourself this: If I were God and I could give you the three things you wanted most in life, in each of those three areas, what would those be? Now ask yourself, what are you doing about each of those right now? If the answer is everything you can, then you probably are successful, or on the road to being so. If the answer is nothing, then I doubt you are. Go back and ask yourself the first question again.

Hmmm ... *scratches head* ... as *The Naked Lawyer* looks quizzically at us all. Muse bomb time!!!



**Whoosh* *Zing* *Whizz-bang* *Ping* ... The Naked Lawyer lets rip with a handful of muse bombs to assist with the debate as she performs figures of 8 around the room on her sparkling Segway ...*

Moving on, but picking up on what has been raised so far,

Business

Satisfaction

Is 'success' inextricably linked with 'satisfaction'? If YES:-

- what would you class as satisfactory in a business sense?
- what would you class as satisfactory in a technological sense?

That is, is something 'good enough', even if not perfect, in order to provide a successful product / service?

Alex: Yes! To provide satisfaction in a business sense to me means having a good market fit: a good message, a good value proposition (pricing x product x market), a good level of maturity and a good team. You don't necessarily have to be perfect in all these areas, but you should at least have an average level for each criterion.

A parameter to measure the success is a more universal vision of our product, particularly the brand awareness. The more my brand stands out as a "love brand", the more potential customers I can attract/persuade and thus, convince with its quality.

To provide satisfaction in a technological sense to me means guaranteeing customer satisfaction through the user experience. It's a mix between user-friendliness, problem-solving skills, and collaboration with the customers. You don't need to be perfect either to achieve these goals. The willingness to strive for excellence is way more important. I am convinced that a collaborative mindset can help to overcome the little 'imperfections' that each team member has. I consider this complementary approach as a key to success. So yes, 'done is better than perfect' which is an intrinsic part of any start-up, a "start-up spirit" so to say.

In a technological sense, we rely on the feedback we receive from our clients on a regular basis. Thus, we can evaluate processes, workflows, difficulties, and the strengths of our solution. Our progress depends a lot on the product we are selling, so the quality of our software defines our growth, and consequently, our success. For that matter, the satisfaction of our customers is our priority, therefore we need to constantly improve our product. In order to rise to a challenge, I have to be able to rely on my team partners' input and value their skills, as well as acknowledging any of their shortcomings.

I also think that a satisfied employee is more likely to leave his or her comfort zone to go the extra mile for the customer - it's an important ability to think outside the box and to come up with creative solutions.

Such, we haven't heard from you yet. I'm confident you will have something to add here, particularly on the technology satisfaction / success angle. Thoughts?

Such: Success in technology has got to be linked to adoption. A piece of technology that has limited, or next to zero, take-up will struggle to be labelled as 'successful'. Although I strongly believe that the chances are the idea was a good one, but the execution probably wasn't. It just means that you found one way of how not to do it.

Thomas Edison who invented the lightbulb was once asked by a reporter about how he felt about failing so many times. His response was "I didn't fail 1,000 times. The light bulb was an invention with 1,000 steps". He added, "Great success is built on failure, frustration, even catastrophe". Personally, this second quote resonates strongly with me. I've not experienced instant success...or seen it elsewhere. Every successful product, service or technology will have had years of hard work and failures before eventually reaching its full potential. Success to me is the perseverance to keep going even when logic and maybe people are telling you to give up.

**Sucheet Amin
(aka Such)**

CEO and Founder,
inCase



Err, may I suggest you and Martyn get your heads together over a beer and decide which Thomas Edison story is the correct one, factually, *wink*.

Okay, you guys have touched on this a wee bit already but let's be more specific to help one another and our readers ...

How do you quantify and qualify 'success' in general? And how would you recommend 'success' is quantified or qualified?

Alex: In a business way, I would add the revenue growth and the Churn, more particularly the Net Churn. This term defines the balance between clients that stop using our product and clients that decide to invest in more options, by adding additional services. Consequently, the upsell of our product contributes to our growth. It's a good proxy of your success on the market.

Alex Grux
CEO and
Co-Founder,
Hyperlex



An important parameter to measure success is also the NPS (Net Promoter Score). It measures the amount of users that are willing to recommend our product or service. In this sense, our clients are promoters of our product. It can be a very decisive parameter when you don't have a strong business traction yet and if you want to be sure about the good quality of your product for the market.

However, the NPS could sometimes have biases:

- not everybody wants to take the time to give you feedback and most of the time the detractors are the only ones who offer it; and
- It's not very realistic to reach the 10/10 score in a country (in France for example only God has 10/10)

That is why satisfaction can be objectively measured by the adoption of the product aka, its usage. Our customers are on the one hand promoters that recommend our products, but on the other hand, they are the ones who use our product on a daily basis. Facebook is a good example for this: It was one of the first applications that users turned to regularly, sometimes even several times per day.

As you have raised the 'adoption' spectre, Alex, I am curious to hear from David and Such your answer to the following question:

How would you successfully implement and deploy LegalTech and LawTech, in:-

- a law firm;
- a legal department;
- to the public i.e. directly to consumers and businesses?

David: My approach is to always start with understanding the customer's objectives for the solution, the ROI they expect from it and who's going to use it. Let's face it, marketing teams at technology companies are very good at selling the dream of a user-friendly solution that's going to transform the legal department's productivity or increase revenue for the law firm, with ambitious payback periods. But the reality can be very different as teams struggle to successfully deploy the technology and get end-users to adopt it.

LegalTech

Prepare

So, any transformation project involving new technology, a change to the norm, needs to begin with an in-depth discovery exercise. Firstly, you need to understand whether it can be successfully adopted at all and then, if it can, what needs to be put in place to ensure success.

Once you've identified whether the tech can deliver and that the customer's environment is set up for a successful implementation, you then need to take everyone on the journey. We work with customers to help them get buy-in from stakeholders, educate them about what's required of them to deliver a successful project, manage expectations (especially any enthusiastic marketing claims) and put in place end-user adoption programmes and support.

Such: I've not seen LegalTech being deployed with instant success and zero issues/challenges to overcome. However, I regularly see firms striving for instant success and perfection when deploying. With good reason, firms want to spend too long assessing all the risks, all the consequences and all the problems that 'might' come up when deploying a piece of tech. That can be a waste of time, effort, and resources. I'm a strong advocate of making sure all the known risks are covered off and then just go for it. Deploy and see what happens. Be ready for the feedback and be agile to respond, implement change and build from there. The best way to identify risks and challenges – the 'what if's – is to get users to tell you in a live environment. There may be a risk that confidence will diminish quickly but only if it takes too long to resolve. If you're ready to adapt and be agile in a live environment, the rewards will come faster as will the improvements.

Which then begs the question:

What would you say is a successful implementation and deployment of technology / LegalTech / LawTech?

Martyn piped up with his traditionally confident manner ...

Martyn: Oh, that is so easy to answer – one word – PREPARE. Oh, maybe another too, LISTEN.

Within that preparation we would understand, we would listen, we would engage, and we would learn.

We would start at what the expectation is (ooh, remember that word), we would understand where we currently are, and why we want to move from that position. We would start to appreciate what the current pain consists of and aim to assess the current and long-term cost of that pain.

Then, and only then, would we draw our client to the obvious conclusion.

The other truly important element once the decision is made is to identify an important, and well respected, internal person to be the champion of the deployment. Someone who is willing to engage, and learn from the usually inevitable, but short-lived, disappointments of the journey to a successful, and satisfying deployment. Someone whose own expectations are properly calibrated, and will appreciate that Mr Kipling (Rudyard, not the cake man) was correct in his deployment pathway advice "If you can meet with triumph and disaster, and treat those two impostors just the same".

An internal Champion is so vital to a successful implementation – you have someone with great knowledge of the organisation, and the obstacles that may be thrown in your path, you have someone who appreciates the benefits of success, you have someone who can give the project internal credibility, and you have the perfect scapegoat when it all goes wrong! Only kiddin' on that last point, of course.

guffaws ... I'm not sure about that ... *laughter*...

Jeroen, you've been quiet so far. Fun aside and in all seriousness now, let's hear your thoughts on this please ...

Jeroen: A successful implementation and deployment of technology within a law firm or department goes way beyond the purchasing of a new tool. In a world with any tool or application at the tip of your fingers, it is crucial to avoid an ever-growing and complex tech stack full of tools which aren't being used by your organization. To facilitate the proper implementation of new technology, ensure that the tool integrates seamlessly into the existing IT landscape and infrastructure. Having various tools which do not integrate with one another, and function independently, is detrimental to your digital strategy. Instead, build a tech stack which works in harmony to empower your organisation.

First and foremost, you need to be truly familiar with the issues and needs of your industry, clients, and employees to make the right technology investments. By purchasing the right tools, you optimise the conditions for successful implementation: people will consistently use what they truly need. By selecting or developing applications and technology which are truly required by your firm, you ensure that end-users will adopt the tools.

Secondly, to get your organization to use a new technology you must foster a true understanding of the tool. Ensure that your employees know a) the key benefits of a certain application, and b) how to use it. A great way of doing this is ensuring that there are key knowledge hoarders within your firm who can teach others. You could also run implementation workshops or inspiration sessions, events, or competitions to inspire use.

Successful implementation and deployment of technology changes slightly when it is produced internally by a firm. Here's the benefit of custom-building your own solutions by enabling business users within your firm to participate in the application development process: those with the problem are those building the solution. True implementation and deployment of the technology, thus, is assured by putting investment in the hands of the business. Meanwhile, the adoption of low-code/no-code (LCNC) development by business users goes way beyond familiarity with the platform. Instead, this is a question of culture and a way of working. Changes occur from development in a traditional mindset where requests from the business or clients are communicated to IT, who then independently develop and deliver a final product. Instead, with LCNC development, departments work together in development processes which are shortened into agile, iterative cycles. Once these ways of working are incorporated in your organization, and multidisciplinary teams are building applications which map onto the needs of the business, you have successfully implemented LCNC technology.

All fabulous points, Jeroen. I can see the benefit in LCNC development by business users. No-brainer IMHO.





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Priscilla, I read a passage in your recently published book *Client Care in Conveyancing* (huge congratulations BTW and I trust you credit this as one of your 'success' barometers?!) which resonated with me on this subject. Can you share your thinking and a little of the content from that chapter please with the gang and readers?

Priscilla: In answering this question, a roadmap needs to be delivered:

Stage 1 – Mindset:

A successful implementation and deployment of tech in law firms stems from the mindset. Once the mindset changes to implement tech the first hurdle is accomplished.

Stage 2 – Visualisation:

Next the firm needs to visualise its identity for the future. This entails dividing the business into two main compartments: the back-facing operation known as the business model innovation and the front-facing operation, known as the service and delivery innovation.²

The back-facing operation:

This operation looks at processes and initiatives that drives efficiency. One then compartmentalises this further into:

- Strategy and organisation innovation – the key question that needs to be answered is: what is needed to support change?
- Market and Market Development Innovation – how does the firm displays its presence?

The front-facing operation:

This operation focuses on the firm's clients. This is further compartmentalised into:

- Product innovation – what are the new services to meet the new demands in a changing market?
- Process innovation – what is the process in running a business?

Stage 3 – Evaluate:

Stage three is to evaluate whether lawtech will make your business competitive; and in doing so there are four main considerations:

1. Defining the firm's strategic priorities – what skillset do you have in the business, and what is needed? If you need to resource skillset into the business, then invest in such staff, consider giving them an invested interest so that they are more likely to retain their position with you.
2. Understanding market drivers and tech trends – to successful implement tech you need to understand what change is needed specifically to your business needs. Research³ has concluded the top three sources of intelligence/information for firms to investigate legal tech are:
 - a. Legal tech providers;
 - b. Market research;
 - c. Internal staff knowledge: consider making these team players champions of tech change for the firm.

Stage 4 – Implementation:

Create a task force who are responsible for implementing the product; what is the:

- Growth factor?
- Improvements?
- Effects on client care?
- Staff feedback?
- How do you measure success? What formula/metric do you have? For example, have your client reviews swayed in a particular direction since implementation?

The best measure of successful implementation is the staff input, and their approach to tech. If your staff are not willing to use the new product and are falling into the 'old system', or worse creating workarounds, then the tech has not been implemented successfully.

Successful implementation is a long-term measure, therefore always review and analyse the results measuring the impact. Tech is moving fast, and your mindset needs to be prepared to adapt to this revolution in law firms, especially the high street to medium-sized firms. Tech is applicable to all; it's how you implement it to *your business needs* that is the overarching measure of successful implementation.

2. Sinder, P (2022) Client Care in Conveyancing: The Law Society, pp.90-93.
3. Sinder, P (2022) Client Care in Conveyancing: The Law Society, pp.93-94.



Priscilla Sinder
Director, Property
Conveyancing Consultancy

Expectations

Cracking stuff. As an aside, and because, as you all know, I'm keen to understand how AI and the metaverse can be used successfully in professional service firms, I came across a couple of articles in TechNative⁴ and Law.com⁵ which covered how to achieve successful AI and Metaverse use, respectively. They are well worth the read when you have a quiet moment.

Thanks again for sharing, lovely lady. Your comments remind me of a key message from The Naked Lawyer book,⁶ which declares throughout the pages in every chapter "it's all about THEM". So, I'm curious...

What are you, as a LegalTech company (or lawyer) doing, to help lawyers (personally and professionally) and law firms, legal departments, consumers/businesses be successful in using your technology/tools? That is, how are you being successful in helping THEM be successful?

Martyn: The key to helping law firms be successful is to practice what you preach – or basically for me, to follow what I've been saying so far in this meandering journey to satisfaction.

The obvious core strength of a lawyer is the law and its interpretation. Many will supplement those core skills in the firm with many other professionals from many other disciplines, but often, many will not. So, the key is to understand that, and listen and empathise.

There is no silver bullet here – and if there was, then it's not the tech – it's the people. It's all about understanding needs, it's about understanding the expectations, and it's about careful, step by step management of the journey of many people to a different place.

David: I think it comes back to the discovery piece and getting a really good understanding of their objectives for the technology and what success looks like for them, then aligning the tech with that vision.

It's also about building a long-term relationship and continuing to support them on the journey. It's a cliché but legal transformation is a journey not a destination - it's a moving target. Your data isn't going to stop growing, technology isn't going to stop evolving, demands from customers or internal stakeholders for further innovation or more efficiencies aren't going to suddenly stop, and external factors can disrupt at any time. Therefore, you've got to think about your customers' continued success and how you can support them long term.

It's also key that you have identified in the organisation the three key roles to make the tech successfully adopted. The C-level sponsor (the person who drives the adoption from board level leadership), the Advocate (the person that on a day-to-day basis ensures everyone knows how to use it and why they need to) and the Evangelist. They love it. They know every aspect of the software, read up on it in their own time, get every aspect and will happily spend hours helping co-workers learn.

Martyn Best
Managing Director,
Document Direct



Jeroen: As a tech company, we understand better than anyone that the purchasing of a digital product or solution is only the first step towards its successful implementation. This is especially true for low-code/no-code (LCNC) application development, a tool designed to enable business users without coding abilities to participate in the development process while being governed and guided by IT.

Without providing your organization with proper understanding of the key benefits and user capabilities of the platform, and grasp of how to use it, LCNC technology remains just another mysterious tool purchased by a firm. This is because no-code development is much more than a technology.

At Betty Blocks, the support provided to clients in order to reach success using our platform goes way beyond the sales cycle. As we said, LCNC development is about much more than a platform: it is a way of working, a culture shift. At Betty Blocks, we not only onboard clients onto our platform, but also onto our philosophy: guiding them towards success.

Our Customer Support Managers create a strategic out-roll plan with each client. They establish how a client wants to use the platform, and what the end goal is. Accordingly, a plan is constructed which introduces LCNC development to the organisation and onboards key users.

Customers get a designated no-code consultant, in charge of onboarding, training, and guidance. The coach helps clients with establishing a development team and training the first users of the platform. The team is further coached in how to collect, validate, ideate, and build ideas into first applications. Users, too, are introduced to agile development methods, developing apps in iterative cycles. With the help of the Betty Blocks consultancy team, thus, an application delivery pipeline is established, ensuring the successful launching of applications which consistently add value. Through this system, users get excited and inspired by the platform and development process.

At Betty Blocks we take a consultative approach towards our clients, fostering success by providing all of the guidance, tool, best practices, and support necessary.

Priscilla: My foundations are that of a property solicitor, but my life experience has pushed me out of my comfort zone and utilised my skills in ways that are more creative. I am moving away from traditional tasks one would expect from a property solicitor and generating my thoughts to add value to the new way of conveyancing. I certainly want to be the voice of the smaller conveyancing establishments who fear this new era. Therefore, being confident in my ability to achieve this goal and being a tech ambassador for TiLLL is one of the ways that I am embarking on this journey.

I want to be able to demonstrate to these lawyers that tech has the same principles as the PC they use every day. Does every lawyer know the intricate details of how the motherboard operates – I guess not, so in the same way the new variations of tech that 'will' be the future of conveyancing should be approached with this mindset.

Conveyancing will not change, but the tools in 'how' we do our job will change, that is all. If you want to be in business in the next 5-10 years and beyond, then you must replace your favourite pen with a new one – voila!

And as Albert Einstein once said: "The measure of intelligence is the ability to change". *wink*



Jeroen Versteijne
Legal Tech Expert,
Betty Blocks

⁴ <https://technative.io/why-youre-deploying-ai-incorrectly/>
⁵ https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6942368430347968512?utm_source=linkedin_share&utm_medium=ios_app - Will the Metaverse Help Young Lawyers Break New Ground?
⁶ <http://entrepreneurlawyer.co.uk/products-services/ebook/>

Measurement

Speaking of measurement ...

How do you measure 'success'? And how would you recommend a law firm and/or legal department measure 'success':

a) in general; and

b) in the utilisation of technology per se for themselves but also THEIR clients/customers?

David: The metrics you use need to be aligned with your objectives for the technology. In some instances, this could vary between different organisations or different activities. For example, in marketing you'll use different metrics to measure the success of a brand awareness campaign compared to a product marketing campaign.

In terms of contract lifecycle technology, for most organisations the contract risk indicator would be a key metric to measure whether the tech is successfully managing risk exposure and reducing the risk of financial loss.

Another metric when deploying CLM tools is Deviation from Standard Clauses. Standard Clauses in the contract management process ensures compliance with regulations and governance, both internal and external, as well as increasing productivity. Similarly, order value variance (OVV) indicates potential errors, changes of scope, and existing conditions associated with agreements, and therefore, where there's most room for improvement. A value that is less than 5% is generally considered acceptable. Whereas a margin of error greater than 10% indicates significant issues within the contract management process.

Jeroen: Operating in a competitive market and volatile business landscape, defining success is extremely important for any law firm or department. Does being successful mean having a loyal customer base, or consistently attracting new clients? Having a growing workforce, or increasing profit margins? Making a social and environmental impact, or investing in pro-bono work and projects? Regardless of what it is, once you and your firm have established a definition of success (DOS), you can begin determining your success measures.

A law firm can have both qualitative and quantitative measures of success, both of which are crucial metrics for tracking your route to success. Quantitative measures are hard measures often defined through figures and parameters. These include how much time or money is saved, what a return on investment (ROI) is, how many clients signed or extended contracts in a year, how many cases were won in a month. LegalTech or applications which automate internal processes, such as a document generation app, often have clear measurable success metrics. Firms can look into how much an application is being used, when, and the key benefits experienced by users.

Qualitative measures are those which are harder to measure but just as important to look at: such as becoming trusted advisors for customers, empowering a workforce, strengthening partnerships. These, in turn, can be translated into quantitative measures such as employee satisfaction.

Within low-code/no-code (LCNC) development, various elements can be measured to determine the success. Often, these depend on the goals a firm or department wants to achieve: is the aim to launch a specific application, or to turn your legal professionals into completely capable no-code developers? Regardless, the success of LCNC development can be measured through metrics such as: how much is the LCNC platform being used, how quickly and easily is adoption happening. How much time and resources are being saved through LCNC versus traditional development. What benefits are being experienced by the workforce and working culture? For a specific project or development of a specific technology or application, success can be measured through metrics such as the buy-in from partners, the number of lawyers that could benefit, the time or money a technology would save or deliver, and the number of clients who would be impacted.

In essence, regardless of what your firm defines as success, and no matter how you decide to measure it, it is crucial to keep track of your success journey.

Ah, yes, 'money' and 'time', the omnipresent barometers of 'success'. Which begs the obvious question:

Should 'success' simply be measured in the amount of PEP (Profit per Equity Partner) and/or time saved in dealing with aspects of the everyday elements of running a law firm and/or legal department, or is there something much more?

David: I think there's more to it. I rate the customer experience as a key metric of success. With my legal transformation hat on, and thinking about what makes me feel that a project has been successful, it's the customer feedback that the work not only delivered the outcomes they wanted, but they enjoyed the experience of working with us. If they enjoyed the experience, they'll recommend us and come back for more.

David Wybourne

Head of Legal AI,
Cloud Business



Of course, however much our superiors might like to think they subscribe to this ethos, they still want to see the numbers. So, success is still measured by hitting sales and revenue targets, but also with CSAT scores and customer surveys to help understand the customer experience and value of that.

Jeroen: The 21st century has brought many changes to the business landscape: standing desks, vegan options in the canteen, hybrid work, and 4-day working weeks. Globally, elements within organisations, working environments, and offices which improve the employee satisfaction and experience are being implemented and normalised.

In the war on talent, attracting and retaining talent is crucial to becoming or staying a successful business. This no longer just involves being the biggest or the best. Today's applicants care about much more than just a job description and a good salary, instead considering the extra benefits – working environment, colleagues, atmosphere, and opportunities at a company.

In the legal industry, where jobs are demanding, workloads are constantly growing, and competition is fierce, this is especially crucial. Firms should be thinking beyond their client satisfaction, market share, and economic growth. Instead, today the measure of success should be building an organisation where the current generation wants to keep working, and the next generation wants to start working.

Beyond comfortable couches and a good coffee machine, the tech-stack at a firm is a crucial element contributing to successful employee satisfaction. The technologies and applications used in a firm or department by its employees should consistently alleviate workloads, simplify processes, and empower users.

Low-code/no-code (LCNC) development empowers business users to participate in the application development process while being guided and governed by IT, and without needing any coding capabilities. Here is the true beauty of this technology: LCNC development hands employees the tools to fix all of their own problems in a quick and easy way. This means investing in your existing expertise rather than outsourcing, and turning your employees into proactive problem solvers. Additionally, problems or issues at your firm are consistently tackled and solved through rapid application development. This fosters a working environment where your organisation is never held back, and is instead truly empowered through the technology available to them.

Finances

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Priscilla: Success has so many elements to it, but in my opinion, it is certainly not about PEP. What is the point of having swollen wallets when your staff have coins to jingle with? Why should there be such a gap? I certainly believe in working hard and reaching the top through sweat and determination, not from your surname or the circles you happen to be in. Work hard, aim high and one day you will get there, so long as you are fluid enough to adapt to new expectations and obstacles.

Tech today is an ecosystem that allows all parties to be a part of the collective financial wallet of the firm. I am not saying everyone is equal, of course business owners/partners will naturally have a bigger pay-out due to their experience and knowledge and their own creation, which is value, but success should be based on fairness and not greed. In short, success should be measured on staff's ability to 'want' to work for you. When staff 'want', they achieve, for themselves and for you, the growth of a healthy business together. Money is just a measure of success, it does not define success.



Priscilla Sinder
Director, Property
Conveyancing Consultancy

Hear hear, Priscilla. Well said! I believe this mantra is well-reported, but it certainly deserves repeating and amplifying. Let's explore a bit further ...

What would you recommend a law firm and/or legal department do to successfully identify the right type of technological solution to solve a problem and/or merely to bring about positive improvement in time saving and/or cost savings?

David: I've just kicked off a project to create a legal transformation manifesto which will help legal teams do exactly that. However, you'll have to wait until later in the year when it's written! In the meantime, if you want to get involved let me know...

Jeroen: A firm should be truly thinking about their problems and challenges to identify what tech could tackle or solve these.

The legal industry is constantly changing, and clients' demands and needs fluctuate quickly. Additionally, there is a pressure to deliver quickly and flexibly, and offer unique solutions which address market trends. A law firm, thus, needs technology which offers full flexibility, governance, and customisability.

Remember that the same technological solution doesn't match everyone's problems. Just because a tool is good quality, does not mean it is the right tool for you. This is no different from the process most firms go through with their clients, not just taking on anyone. Instead, firms are specific about which clients are taken on and which cases get assigned to which legal professionals according to their needs and expertise. Think of your tech investments or purchases as partners rather than tools: who is the right person for you to do business with? Be selective and hold your technology providers to a high standard.

Such: The first step is to get the right people in the room. Is it the senior leadership, the shareholders, the lawyers, or a representative from each of these areas? This is really important as it is often overlooked. Before identifying the right tech solution, people in the business who are either decision-makers or influencers need to be clear about what solution they are trying to tackle. Is it client service which has dipped recently? Is it improving efficiency to increase profit margins? Is it to offer something different to competing law firms? Is it to mitigate a specific risk?

The right people in the room can help answer these questions to distil exactly what solution the firm needs. If that process is done well, that will help a firm get 80% of the way to choosing and implementing a successful piece of LegalTech. Where we see the most successful firms adopting our tech is where they have clarity around what they need and why they need it. It helps everyone move to solve the challenge that much faster and ensure there are no distractions or questions like, 'what else can your tech do?'. That question can be answered later once the tech solves the primary challenge...that is the original reason for investing time and effort to start this journey in the first place. It is equally important that we find out what the law firm is wanting from our solution so we know if it is right for them, and we can meet the firm's expectations.

Solution

Client Care

All super points guys. Thanks for sharing. Many of you have made reference already to customer experience and client focus, therefore,

What do you believe ‘success’ is, in relation to client care? And how can technology help with this?

Priscilla: Success in relation to client care is very hard to determine. You need to understand the value of success and how it is defined, therefore you need to measure what its quality is. Research⁷ refers to five values that defines what quality looks like:

- experience;
- outcomes;
- technical skills and knowledge;
- values/morals;
- value for money.

These metrics try to define an intangible commodity for the law firm. This is important because once a firm knows what quality looks like from *their* clients’ viewpoint, then success follows in the form of client care.

In my opinion, success in relation to client care is being able to make an intangible value a tangible value. It is easy to see how tech can enhance a client’s experience by providing a service with speed, such as client onboarding, or the ability for AI to read a lease that highlights key terms, which lawyers can produce in a summary report and email out to their client in minutes.

Today, clients want to be able to use legal services like any other service, such as online banking or Amazon shopping. The legal industry, although they are gaining momentum, started off late in this space and thus, are playing an aggressive game to play catch-up with client demands. Tech propels lawyers to be able to supply the service needs of a client today.

There are law firms that are already using tech to enhance their standards of client care such as cloud-computing, where disasters such as the pandemic do not have such a detrimental impact on service issues for the client. Or through the use of blockchain, which will align the UK with other countries showcasing how fast conveyancing can take place on this platform, compounded with the use of AI for basic transactions.

One thing I never lose sight of is so long as humans are buying properties, a transaction will need to be predominately human-based, it is only when robots start to buy and sell houses will conveyancing become fully technologically-infused. Humans and humans create a great rapport, humans and tech create a desired client care service.

Jeroen: In today’s consumer society, one thing is consistently true: the customer is king. Today’s consumer is more demanding and harder to convince than ever, having both:

- constantly increasing expectations for quick, easy, affordable, and tech-enabled customer service; and
- a plethora of options and choices, and the capabilities to compare all of these.

This, too, applies to the legal industry where loyalty is no longer enough for retaining clients. Instead, in order to attract new and existing customers, firms need to have competitive and tech-enabled customer offers and support. According to Forbes, 22% of law firms are losing clients to firms using software automation. Success, then, is dependent on creating the best customer experience. How should a firm achieve this? With the right technology.

In law firms, technology and applications should be used to save internal resources and time capabilities, making legal professionals more available for the needs of clients. Technology should consistently empower lawyers to support their clients, whether directly or indirectly. Contemporarily, consumers are used to teach-facilitated services, using applications for banking, travel, and medical care. These expectations, too, are reaching legal services.

7. Sinder, P (2022) Client Care in Conveyancing: The Law Society, pp. 41.

Through rapid application development using a LCNC platform, law firms and departments can build applications which automate and optimise internal processes, and client-facing applications which elevate the customer experience. Successful client support is achieved through applications which save time capacities and resources in a firm, enabling legal professionals to focus solely on client support instead of manual tasks. Additional, bespoke customer-facing applications combine your firm’s human expertise with technological capabilities for an optimised customer experience.

Through self-serve customer-facing applications, such as a Legal Services Request Application or an ESG Assessment Application, clients become more independent. These applications enable your clients to access your firm’s expertise quickly and independently, 24/7 from anywhere without the help of a legal professional. Meanwhile, clients can decide when to involve a legal professional in their questions or issues. Legal aid and services which are repeatable are thus, standardised and digitised, ensuring that legal professionals’ time and knowledge are used in the most effective ways and moments.

Success in relation to client care, thus, means using technology to consistently optimise your client offer and support, combining your firm’s human expertise with technological capabilities.

David: Self-serve solutions are both good and bad examples of how technology can help with client care. We’ve all experienced the bad like the chatbot that takes you round in circles, and ultimately, tells you to call the customer service number during office hours only. But there are some excellent examples of chatbots and other self-serve tools that really help customers find answers and achieve what they want to do. This is all the more valuable when you’ve got a distributed workforce, working remotely or outside of core business hours.

My advice when comparing different legal tech solutions is to explore what end-user support they offer and if they don’t have a 24/7 service desk, what self-serve tools are available for end-users.

Hmmm. GREAT point, David.

Alex, you’ve been a wee bit quiet of late. Can you pick up on this point about service support and/or add to this, perhaps?

As if on cue *The Naked Lawyer* whizzed by on her trusty Segway peppering muse bombs amongst our gathering ...

Alex: An important question to ask in order to be successful: What does my client want and how can I meet his needs? Technology can offer solutions to problems that we probably are not aware of in the first place.

Innovative solutions that we use on a daily basis have become a crucial part of our lives, but many companies are still “stuck in the past”. In terms of digitisation, the legal field has been a little bit neglected. Technology has always been a means to an end, and should simplify and improve our lives. We want to help our clients to keep up with the fast-paced rhythm of our digital era.

As similar as some of our challenges in our work life might be, every company is unique. That is why we also have a very personal approach in terms of client relations. Our Customer Success Team is always there to provide support and work on any issue that might arise.

We value the uniqueness of our clients. This is why we provide a tailor-made solution that meets each client’s expectations/that is customer-centric. For example, we often develop or test new functionalities just for our clients! The most important aspect for the relationship between a client and a company is trust. Clients appreciate our ability to treat any request instantly.

Alex Grux
CEO and
Co-Founder,
Hyperlex



Top Talent

Our responsiveness is fundamental to establishing trust. But this goes further: Our clients also trust in our ability and competence to find solutions to their problems. We understand issues and always aim to provide the best solution. Our ability to improve our service and to solve technical problems or problems of any other kind is what makes us stand out.

I think you can imagine that loss of trust is a fatal error and should be avoided at all costs. Once lost, it is very hard to re-establish this foundation. We need to be trustworthy, empathetic, and competent at the same time. So, we constantly have to prove to our clients that we are capable of solving any issue that might arise - in the best possible way. Client care is crucial and will always be our priority. This approach is also in line with our values: we try to find solutions without being too static, and rather excel through flexibility.

And picking up on something that was mentioned earlier also,

How do you think law firms are and/or will successfully retain and attract top talent by utilising technology, whether the lawyer operates remotely permanently from home or is present at the bricks and mortar law firm office?

Recall a top UK law firm made headlines in May for offering a 20% pay cut for permanently remote lawyers,⁸ and PwC recently declared a 9% salary increase in line with inflation.

David: I would ask your top talent what tech they want. There is an issue in some organisations and law firms that corporate technology is not fit for purpose and that the consumer tech employees have at home and in their pockets is far better. This is especially true for those people at the start of their careers (Millennials and Gen Z) who are used to having the latest consumer tech and can't believe what they're being asked to use at work!

Be led by your end-users. This will help you retain and attract talent and also increase technology adoption for the solutions that deliver on your organisational objectives too.

Such: Speaking to young lawyers, and there are few in my extended family who I recently caught up with, it is interesting that what attracts them to firms is not just the technology in use right now, but their 'technology plan'. What has the firm got planned in the coming months and year? Is there a commitment to the investment in technology, even if they don't know what it is?

It appears that young lawyers see the value in technology and the inevitable defining role it will play in the future. I suspect that has something to do with the fact that they have grown up in a technology world where their equivalent of my ZX Spectrum as a child is a portable computer wrapped up in a mobile phone with the processing power greater than those used to first send astronauts to the moon!

I struggle to imagine young talented lawyers not wanting to be a part of a firm that has a clear technology development roadmap, possibly even a committee which they can contribute towards. Technology that is used to aid lawyers to do their job are expected as the norm...whether that be remote working facilities, hot desking, advanced case management systems, document delivery, digital signatures, video conferencing and so on. I don't feel there is much ground to make up as all of these are expected technologies as the bare minimum. It's the 'what's next?' that excites lawyers and will aid recruitment and retention.

I can empathise with all that you guys have said here *wink* but I'm also acutely aware that what we and readers are keen to learn and understand is,

Sucheet Amin
(aka Such)



How would you recommend a lawyer / GC / tech entrepreneur go about getting buy-in from colleagues and/or 'the powers that be' to fund a LegalTech or LawTech project / product / service?

David: What's the business case for the project? You need to demonstrate the economic value and the wider positive impact on the organisation, and ideally, you need data to make your case. The good news is that you shouldn't have to do this alone. If you've identified a solution you want to deploy, the provider should be able to help you articulate the business case and calculate ROI.

Make sure you add in a healthy dose of realism to manage expectations. If a project is deemed to be a failure, for example you didn't realise the payback period as promised, it could be an uphill struggle to secure budget for future projects.

Ah, there it is again, that word 'expectation' ... hmmm ... another sister to 'success' alongside Sister Failure, perhaps? Which prompts me to comment and ask:

Lawyers' aversion to failure and taking risks is well-known and documented. In order to succeed in convincing a lawyer/law firm and/or GC/legal department to try new technology, how would you go about convincing them that it's okay to fail IF it doesn't match their expectations?

Priscilla: My immediate thought is 'be brave', 'try' and do not be complacent. Being complacent is not trying, which is worse than failing. Only when you try, you will realise failure. When you know what failure is, you know how to improve. When you know how to improve you will succeed. Each lawyer wants to succeed.

Comfortability creates complacency; complacency leads to missed opportunities; missed opportunities creates a law firm destined for a natural decline not by intention but by design.

Succinctly put, Priscilla. Guys, what's your thoughts please?

David: If you're risk-averse you need a proof of concept (PoC) or a pilot project. There's no scope for failure with a PoC. This is how you learn how to make your next project a success, whether it's rolling out the technology to a wider user base or starting again with an alternative solution.

Martyn: This is absolutely about setting expectations. If done properly, and bringing together all that I have said today, then there is no failure.

We only need to go to Yoda – "DO OR NOT DO, THERE IS NO TRY". Yoda did not decry failure, just lack of effort. However, we all have experienced times when it's not so much lack of effort, but lack of prioritising. It is so hard to grab the attention of someone who will benefit from change, but for whom the pain is not quite enough to go through that journey.

The legal sector is a fine example here – it's an exceptionally, generally, profitable area. It's a generally stable environment, and so what can be the driver for change – what will motivate someone to yearn for improvement if there is a short-term cost for that long-term gain.

How can we help? I guess it's about visualisation, it's about case studies, it's about comparison with contemporaries, it's fundamentally about building trust and respect, and giving confidence that you can deliver.

Within all of that, it's just about being clear and honest. It's about understanding what people want, how they define success and understanding what they ultimately want.

Failure

⁸ https://www.lawgazette.co.uk/news/city-firms-home-working-pay-cut-makes-headlines/5112353.article?utm_source=gazette_newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=%27Toxic%27%3a+firms+loses+bid+to+identify+reviewer+%7c+City%27s+home+working+pay+cut+%7c+Merger+flurry_05%2f03%2f2022

Development

Ah yes, therein lies the rub. Your thoughts are aligning with Priscilla's and mine in what we aired earlier, that is, it's about how they and/or you (with them), define success.

Jeroen: Success and failure are often used as antithetical concepts, and failure regarded as the worst-case scenario in business. In reality, this way of looking at failure does much more harm than it does good. Failure has practically become free as the risks and costs involved are minimised, making failure an essential component of success.

The first time you ride a bike you will probably fall, and your risotto will probably taste much better the sixth time you make it compared to the first. This does not mean you fail until you succeed. Instead, this means that **failing is an inevitable and important part of succeeding**. Not only this, but each time you fail you take critical learnings into your next attempt: only by over-salting once do you know how much salt to use the next time.

Failure should be seen as an important and necessary element of utilising and implementing technology. When it comes to creating, conceptualising, developing, and launching technology, mistakes are inevitable, and should be used in the most constructive and effective ways.

Here's the beauty of agile application development processes using a low-code/no-code (LCNC) platform: the system is designed so that you **fail quickly and succeed fast**. Additionally, the risk reward ratio for failure has been significantly improved, bringing the risks of failure to an absolute minimum. Because of this, the possibility of reward has increased exponentially.

In traditional application development, solutions are built in slow development cycles without input from the users, and are delivered as final products. Often, this results in mistakes or problems being noticed far too late in the process. One version of a solution is produced, which either fails or succeeds.

With LCNC development, applications are instead built rapidly through agile development processes. First of all, those truly experiencing the need for a solution are closely involved in building it, ensuring the right product market fit (PMF). Additionally, through the involvement of end-users, any problems or additional requirements are noticed immediately, and incorporated during the development process.

Applications are first tested as a minimum viable product (MVP): a first version with enough functionality for first users to test viability and provide feedback. Based on the feedback, the MVP is further developed and tested again in (typically) two-week iterative cycles. In these cycles, mistakes, flaws, or failures are used as constructive learning opportunities which are immediately built into the next version of a product.

Because the development process is secured and governed by IT, the scope of mistakes which can happen is reduced, eliminating any truly harmful failures. Meanwhile, making any adjustments or changes is facilitated by the ease-of-use core to a LCNC platform. The time and resources needed for developing iterations is thus minimised, while the cost of any mistakes is eliminated.

Failure, then, is not the opposite of, but the key to success.

That's good to hear, Jeroen. I can empathise with this!

chriessie's frank finale

I've written two books that focus on how to be successful.⁹ Heck, the word is even in the title of *The Naked Lawyer 2*.¹⁰ I did this because we humans strive toward success. We welcome and applaud it. And of course, readers are more inclined to buy a book about how to be successful rather than how to fail.

But what about failure? Is it such a bad thing? Apparently not. I have failed. LOTS! But it got me to where I am today...

Content. Satisfied. Happy. Wiser; or so it seems, you can be the judge of that.

Looking back, I now realise I was wrong about some things in both books. And I'm not ashamed to say it. You see, striving for success and evolving requires getting things wrong and trying again. Continuous improvement is a sound way of approaching evolution and natural change for the better, IMHO. Success doesn't happen at the end of a journey, whether in business, love or life. It occurs in a myriad of ways during it. There are degrees of success. We just fail to recognise it whilst on the path along the way ...

In the movie 'Downton Abbey: A New Era', the Dowager Countess, Lady Grantham, on her death bed, in relation to the successful marital relationship of her son and the wealthy American, Cora, said she did not think Cora would "stay the course" (of the marriage). Continuing along this thread she declared, "I was wrong" and "that's not something I have said until now".

My advice is don't leave it until the end of your life to admit you were wrong. Or to regret saying it at all at any time during your life. We are all wrong at times. We all fail at times. What defines success is accepting and building on failure. Success lies within us all. It is already within us – you and me. And like failure, you will have already achieved it. For it is what you choose it to be. It really is as simple as that, IMHO ...

Success may simply be deciding to manage your life so that you prioritise your health over your work. For example, pre-COVID, I used to work a stupid number of hours every week (up to 100), often putting my alarm clock on. But as many peri-menopausal and menopausal women will tell you, your body (and mind) will not allow you to do this, even if you still want to. You must learn to work with your body, not against it. Making a simple tweak in your daily routine such as allowing your body and mind to wake up naturally (aka, sleep as much as you need) and not being awoken by a shrill alarm clock at a ghastly hour is what I have decided 'success' to be.

As long as I manage my schedule, appointments, and meetings (wherever possible, but of course there will be exceptions) to take place from 11am, I came to realise that I can still fit everything in, that is, rest, exercise, work, leisure, family/friends. Everything still gets done in the day because I can do some work in the evening too. Acceptance and proliferation of the WFH culture supports this shift to a healthier lifestyle, so why not take advantage of it?

9. <http://entrepreneurlawyer.co.uk/products-services/ebook/> (1) The Naked Lawyer: RIP to XXX – How to Market, Brand and Sell Your (best-seller) ; <http://entrepreneurlawyer.co.uk/tomorrows-naked-lawyer/> (2) Tomorrow's Naked Lawyer: NewTech, NewHuman, NewLaw – How to be successful, 2015 to 2045.
10. <http://entrepreneurlawyer.co.uk/tomorrows-naked-lawyer/> Tomorrow's Naked Lawyer: NewTech, NewHuman, NewLaw – How to be successful, 2015 to 2045.

Wellbeing

I guess I'm sharing some secrets with you here. For those of you who have Zoom meetings with me (and in person in Leeds or when I visit London on business), this is why I tend to request our meetings from late morning through to early evening. There is always a day that can accommodate both our diaries. Ironically, I probably could have a meeting at sparrow fart 'o' clock as I generally wake (naturally) around 6am and then go for a 2-hour walk; my 'work walk' as I call it, where part of the time I plough through emails, schedule meetings, read related business material, carry out social media activity and even make early calls.

But I have learned that my body and mind will take whatever time it needs each day for sleep/rest overnight, and therefore, it is best to start the day stress-free by waking gently, exercising gently, and working gently to prepare it for the demands and likely bigger challenges that I and others place on it for the remainder of the day and eve. Never a boring day at Lightfoot Towers.

I never used to prioritise my wellbeing before peri-menopause and pre-COVID. I do now. I was your typical workaholic, prioritising work whilst juggling my husband's and family's needs before my own etc., abusing my mind and body consistently ... relentlessly. Where did it get me? Burnt-out, that's where. Exhausted. Sleep-deprived. Rest-deprived. Leisure-deprived. Happiness-deprived. Success-deprived. Divorced ...

If there is one thing you take away from this article, please make time to read this remarkable report by Deloitte and the research group Workplace Intelligence on "The C-suite's role in well-being."¹¹ The headline finding is that the burnout fuelling the Great Resignation is being felt on both ends of the organisation chart; aka, 57% of employees say they're seriously thinking about quitting their job for one that better supports their well-being, and an astonishing 69% of executives say they're considering making the jump. Not surprisingly, as reported by Axios:¹² "81% said improving their own equilibrium is more important than advancing their career right now."¹³

For me, 'success' (now) is about achieving that equilibrium; that balanced lifestyle with wellness/health of body and mind a key priority for self and others. Success means contentment, acceptance, caring, goodwill, and courage; whether applied in my personal, professional or business life:

Contentment - The Desiderata's¹⁴ key message is about contentment; or as my dear Mum advised me decades ago: "be content with your lot in life because you'll be much happier for it"; wise lady - I wish I'd listened back then! Maybe contentment is a form of satisfaction?

Acceptance - accept the good, the bad and the darn right ugly for whatever happened or happens in relation to love affairs, family affairs, career/business affairs, financial affairs, because acceptance will make you happier. If you are searching for 'peace' you will find it in acceptance. Acceptance IS peace. Tough, I know, as we reflect on the Russia-Ukraine war, pandemic, inflation, crypto and stock-market crashes. Acceptance requires a mindset shift to achieve peace.

Caring - caring for yourself as well as others. To make a difference in someone else's life (or business), you don't have to be a genius,¹⁵ rich, beautiful or perfect. You just have to care and to have their back when it matters most. There is a real pleasure to be experienced in succeeding in helping someone else be successful (in however they define it to be), because you care, genuinely. But you're no good to anyone if you do not take care of your own wellbeing first. To be there for others requires you being healthy, well and strong, otherwise you become the burden rather than the crutch.

Goodwill - Benevolence. As the Queen said in her uplifting message to the nation during her Platinum Jubilee celebrations: "I continue to be inspired by the goodwill shown to me, and hope that the coming days will provide an opportunity to reflect on all that has been achieved during the last 70 years as we look to the future with confidence and enthusiasm".

Courage - having the courage to make difficult decisions and choices in order to evolve and live the life you truly want to, or need to, in order to feel fulfilled and become true to yourself; aka, to be truly happy. This inevitably means 'change' which usually entails making sacrifices and going through a challenging period for some time.

11. <https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/topics/leadership/employee-wellness-in-the-corporate-workplace.html>

12. <https://www.axios.com/2022/06/22/ceo-csuite-burnout-pandemic-great-resignation>

13. https://www.linkedin.com/posts/ariannahuffington_even-your-boss-wants-to-quit-activity-6945474517783764992-FZxt?utm_source=linkedin_share&utm_medium=ios_app

14. <https://www.desiderata.com/desiderata.html>

15. https://bigthink.com/the-well/einstein-hawking-genius/?utm_source=mailchimp&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=weeklynewsletter

Courage

That cliché mantra "you only get one life" so "make sure you are happy", "live it well", and "it's your life" so "make the most of it" and "do what makes you happy" rings so true, particularly in the turbulent world we currently find ourselves wading through. But being happy is inextricably linked with succeeding in creating balance between the needs and care for ourselves and others, IMHO ...

I have come to learn that you can succeed in 'doing it all' and 'having it all'. 'All' being whatever you define it to be. I define it as 'success', and 'success' is what I define it to be as above ... It just took me a long time to realise it ... and my priorities. Hopefully it won't take you fifty years ...

After the last few difficult years, I feel like I have succeeded in taking control of what is a unique and traumatic transition for me personally and professionally - well, almost there. As the great Winston Churchill famously said: "Success is not final. Failure is not fatal. It is the courage to continue that counts".

Moving on from a personal marriage and business marriage, dealing with peri-menopause and facing the menopause (for us ladies) are unpleasant experiences and journeys for the majority of us. This IS life. Accept it.

I am confident, due to COVID, the shift to WFH / hybrid working, current world affairs, climate change, the 'change of life' for us ladies, that the majority of you reading this article will be going through your own transition right now, questioning your career, marriages (both kinds), lifestyle, happiness and future. But if it helps a wee bit, what came out of this roundtable is 'success' is something we must define for ourselves, first. And then, courageously take personal action in order to achieve success for ourselves and others, together.

Success can be many things and attributed to many things. The perception is that 'success' in the legal ecosystem, business community and tech world, is determined and measured by the size of one's swollen wallet. But is this really the case nowadays? Should it be? Have the marching sands of time finally created a necessary welcome move or forced an uncomfortable shift away from this, due to wars, pandemics, runaway advanced technology, pending catastrophic climate change and economic instability and uncertainty?

For some people, wellbeing accompanied with coins to jingle is the meaning of success. Which is it for you? There is no right or wrong. There is no magic silver bullet. It's whatever you decide is right for you. Truly, IMHO.

Just remember this: If you don't live an authentic life, you can't represent it.

My challenge and question to you therefore is this: are you courageous enough to make the decisions and changes necessary to achieve 'success' in, and on, your terms?

If so, I raise a glass of Johnnie Walker Red to you, whilst *The Naked Lawyer* puffs on a Romeo y Julieta, reminding us of (arguably) one of the most successful Scotch and cigar aficionado's, British Bulldog politicians, and Prime Ministers of all time, Sir Winston Churchill. Lest we forget his famous words, may I respectfully and kindly remind you ...

"Here's to not bugging it up!"

By Chrissie Lightfoot
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Chrissie is an Independent Non-Executive Director and Advisor, a global multi-award winning Legal Futurist, Consultant, Influencer, Entrepreneur, Lawyer, AI LawTech Pioneer, Strategist, Marketeer, Brand builder, best-selling Author and Keynote Speaker. Founder and CEO of EntrepreneurLawyer Ltd.





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