



# Secrets to Make Yourself Indispensable to Your Company

GC Advantage<sup>SM</sup> Webinar  
January 2022



# GC Advantage<sup>SM</sup>

- Complimentary professional development program for corporate legal and compliance leaders.
- Visit the GC Advantage<sup>SM</sup> web page for Future & On-Demand webinars
- [BarkerGilmore.com/GC-Advantage-Webinars/](https://BarkerGilmore.com/GC-Advantage-Webinars/)

# Questions & Answers



Submit questions to panelists at any time throughout the presentation via the Zoom **Q&A feature**.

# Featured Speakers



**Michael Williams**  
Senior Advisor  
**BarkerGilmore**

*Former EVP, Chief Legal Officer, and Secretary of Staples, Inc.*



**Ronald Wasinger**  
VP & General Counsel  
**LG Electronics U.S.A. Inc.**



# Secrets to Make Yourself Indispensable to Your Company

GC Advantage<sup>SM</sup> Webinar  
January 2022



# However: “Prendre Garde”



The graveyards are full of indispensable men.

(Charles de Gaulle)

[izquotes.com](https://www.izquotes.com)



# Secrets to Make Yourself **Indispensable** to Your Company

GC Advantage<sup>SM</sup> Webinar  
January 2022





# Secrets to Make Yourself “Valuable” to Your Company

GC Advantage<sup>SM</sup> Webinar  
January 2022





# Start with an Assessment: Both Internal & External

- **Internal: Be Honest with yourself**
  - What are my strengths?
  - What are my weaknesses?  
(Ok, **H**uman **R**emains Department would say areas for improvement)
  - What is my job?
  - What is my **Purpose**?  
**To build a sustainable business for the future**
  - How do you verify your analysis?

# Start with an Assessment: Both Internal & External

- External:
  - How am I perceived?

# Are You Viewed As A Team Player?



# OR, Are You Viewed As Royalty?



# Are you Willing to Tackle Tough Problems?



# OR , Do you Pass the Buck?



# Start with an Assessment: Both Internal & External

- **External:**
  - How am I perceived?  
Team Player, Buck Passer, Amiable, Expressive, Analytical, or Driver
  - Where do I add Value?  
[Core/Context matrix for the Legal department]

# An Example of the Core/Competency Matrix



	Non-Core	Core
Context		



# An Example of the Core/Competency Matrix in Retail



	Non-Core	Core
Context	Litigation - antitrust - securities Investigations - internal - external CPSC matters	Merchandising Marketing Advertising Employment counseling Real Estate (?) Manufacturing(?) Securities (?)
	NDA's EEOC charges Business & PI litigation Contracts less than \$\$\$	Service Agreements Employment Litigation Real Estate Privacy

# Start with an Assessment: Both Internal & External

- **External**

- How am I perceived?  
Team Player, Buck Passer, Amiable, Expressive, Analytical, Driver
- Core/Context matrix for the department
- Where can I add value? (i.e, you should be working in the Northeast quadrant)
- How do I validate my assessment?

# Four Internal Qualities in “Valuable” Lawyers



## 1. Selflessness

- Concerned more with the needs and wishes of others than with one’s own
- Acting with less concern for yourself than for the success of the joint activity (think of Spock)



# Four Internal Qualities in “Valuable” Lawyers



## 2. **Courage** (Moral)

- The ability to do something that frightens oneself; strength in the face of danger
- A quality that enables you to face uncertainty with resolve
- Your client is the company – you are not the personal lawyer for a particular manager or executive

## 3. **Integrity**

- The quality of being honest and morally upright
- It is the one quality that cannot be stolen or taken away from you

# Four Internal Qualities in “Valuable” Lawyers



## 4. Leadership

- Do not confuse Management with Leadership
- Management is doing things right
- Leadership is doing the right thing
- The job title makes you the manager, the people who you manage make you a leader
- **You choose leadership**

# External Behaviors & Attitudes in Valuable Lawyers



1. **Fix the problem, not the blame**
  - Don't engage in a blame game



2. **I would rather do it right, than right away**  
Set and maintain high standards for yourself in everything you do

3. **When given a task, look at your watch and not a calendar**



A good plan executed today is better than a perfect plan executed tomorrow

# External Behaviors & Attitudes in Valuable Lawyers



## 4. “When you’re dying of thirst, it’s too late to think about digging a well.”

- Be proactive, think ahead and look around the corners

## 5. When the client asks you what time it is, don’t tell them how to build a clock

- Efficient communication is the key
- Keep your client informed. If they are repeatedly asking you for updates, that is a red flag to look at how you communicate.
- How would Laverne explain this to Shirley

**AND NEVER FORGET !**

# External Behaviors & Attitudes in Valuable Lawyers



## 6. Even monkeys fall out of trees



Everyone makes mistakes.

Learn from your mistakes, but do not repeat them



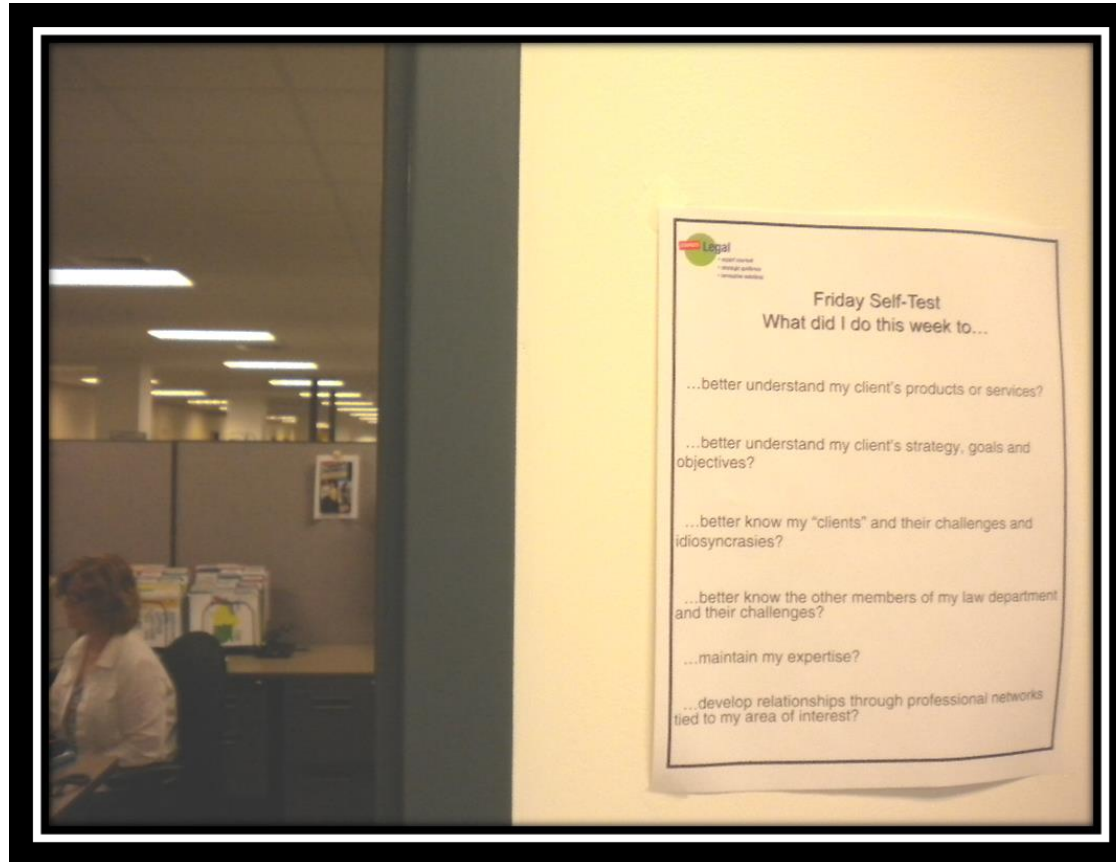
# How to Become More “Valuable”: The Monday Self Test



**On Monday, ask yourself:  
What will I do this week to....**

- ... better understand my client’s products or services?
- ... better understand my client’s strategy, goals and objectives?
- ... better know my “client’s” and their challenges and idiosyncrasies?
- ... better know the other member of my department and their challenges?
- ... maintain my expertise?
- ...develop relationships through professional networks tied to my area of interest?

# The Self Test.....It's For Real



# Tips for Operating a “Valuable” Function

Focus on your client and work backward  
**No, really, focus on your client**



Jeff Bezos,  
Founder and CEO. Amazon

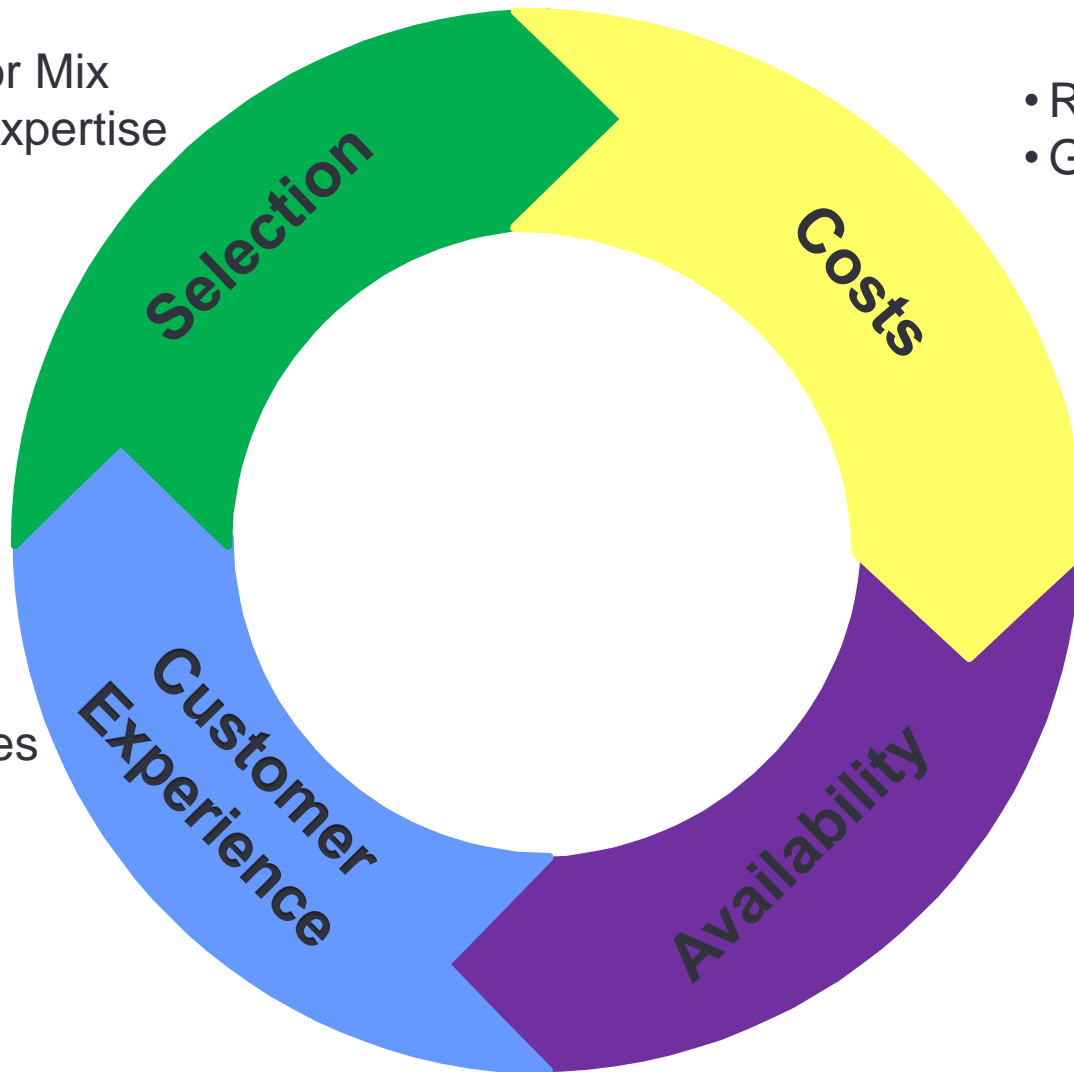
“The most important single thing is to obsessively focus on the customer. It’s our job everyday to make every important aspect of the customer experience a little better.”

# It Is All About Inputs, Not Outputs



- Senior / Junior Mix
- Skill Level / Expertise
- Diversity

- Reasonable
- Good Value

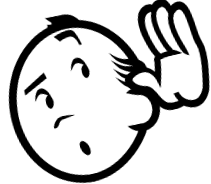


- Timely Updates
- No Surprises
- Proactive

- Accessibility
- No Bait and Switch

# Final Tips for Your Success

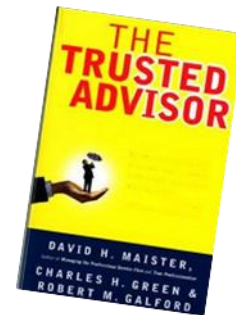
- **Grow Big Ears**



As the Greek Philosopher Epictetus said in 55 AD:  
“You were born with two ears and one mouth for a reason”

- **Become a “Trusted Advisor”**

Be the first lawyer the business person wants to call



# “Learn and Master the Trust Equation, You Must”



$$\text{Trust} = \frac{\text{Credibility} + \text{Reliability} + \text{Intimacy}}{\text{Self-Interest}}$$

# Consider Doing the Following

- Read “The Trusted Advisor” by David H. Maister, et al
- Read “ It’s Your Ship” by Captain D. Michael Abrashoff
- Read “ How to Win Friends and Influence People” by Dale Carnegie
- Take a Dale Carnegie course
- Take a public speaking/presentation course
- Take a time management course, e.g. Franklin Covey
- Engage an Executive Coach or Perform an Assessment of your Function



# Q&A Session



Thank you for attending.



Please let us know how BarkerGilmore can help  
you succeed.

**Michael Williams**, Senior Advisor  
[mwilliams@barkergilmore.com](mailto:mwilliams@barkergilmore.com)

**Bob Barker**, Managing Partner  
[robert.barker@barkergilmore.com](mailto:robert.barker@barkergilmore.com)