

GARD EXECUTIVE CONSULTING, LLC

applying
behavioral science
to enhance
executive and organizational
performance

The Problem: Associate Attrition

You've heard the statistics. For example, The American Lawyer's annual survey revealed that only 44.9% of associates predicted they would be at their firms in five years ¹. The direct costs of replacing an associate include recruiting expenses and signing bonuses. Indirect costs can be even larger including time spent filling the position, covering the exiting associate's caseload, training the replacement, reassuring clients, and managing firm morale. Factored together, replacing an associate can easily cost a firm between \$135,000 and \$200,000 ^{2,3}. And since clients don't appreciate underwriting the training expenses of new associates, it's certainly in a firm's best interest to retain seasoned associates.

Pay raises for associates have a marginal effect on retention, and in some cases fuel the desire to look for a better offer elsewhere ⁴. Work-life balance, recognition, meaningful responsibilities, supportive mentoring – they're all good ideas for fostering retention, but they're easier to talk about on paper than they are to implement in reality. Maybe it's time to try a different approach, one that would inoculate them against the pressures that hasten their departure.

What if you could give your associates an edge . . . a developmental opportunity that would enhance their growth and give them a satisfying, clear advantage during this early point in their career? Wouldn't that send a powerful message that the firm is committed to their long-term success?

Keep your sharpest – Give them an edge

The Associate's Edge is a time-efficient, four-month program that will help your associates gain critical insights and self-awareness. Working one-on-one with a consulting psychologist for just 45-minutes, twice per month, your associates will learn to:

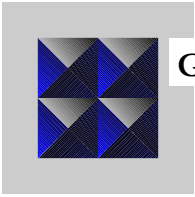
- Recognize their strengths, weaknesses, and how they are perceived by others
- Understand how their behavior and temperament works for them and against them
- Identify and overcome obstacles that impact performance
- Gain resilience and coping strategies for handling client demands and firm-based stress

If you've ever said "I wish I knew then what I know now" chances are it includes this sort of wisdom. Here's an opportunity to convey your commitment to your associates' development while giving them a valuable experience that will help them succeed.

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Key features of the program:

- Customized 360-degree feedback evaluation that provides the candidate with anonymous, powerful, and highly useful feedback from their colleagues
- Personality assessment using online business-based tools (includes written report)
- All sessions held on-site at your location by appointment
- Telephone support between sessions (by scheduled arrangement)

Fee structure for four-month program:

First year associates	\$4,100 per individual
Second year associates	\$5,200 per individual
Third year associates and beyond	\$6,300 per individual
5% discount for multiple participants	

For more information about The Associate's Edge and how you can implement this program as part of your retention strategy, please contact Larry Gard at 312-787-9620, or by e-mail at drlgard@gardexec.com.

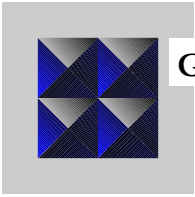
citations:

1. Press, Aric, "Annual Survey Shows the New Reality of Associate Life." August 1, 2007, Law.Com.
2. Poll, Edward, "So Associates Are Dissatisfied? It's Not Hard to See Why!" August 2006, ABA Law Practice Today.
3. Stark, Kristin, and Prescott, Blane, "Why Associates Leave: A Special Report", May 7, 2007, Hildebrandt International.
4. Galbenski, David, "The road to better retention of associates: Make sure the experience base sticks around." January 2008, Strategies: The Journal of Legal Marketing.

Larry Gard heads Gard Executive Consulting, a Chicago-based firm that develops leaders and organizations (www.gardexec.com). He is also a senior consultant with the Global Consulting Partnership, headquartered in Philadelphia (www.tgcpinc.com).

Dr. Gard has consulted in the area of performance enhancement and behavior change since 1991. He has worked with chief executives, key leaders, and managers from a variety of professions including law, accounting, engineering, banking, and architecture.

Larry did his undergraduate work at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. His doctorate in clinical psychology is from Northwestern University Medical School. Larry has presented throughout Chicagoland on a variety of workplace performance topics. He is a member of the Society of Consulting Psychology, Division 13 of the American Psychological Association.



FAQ about the Associate's Edge program

What is the 360-degree evaluation?

It is a web-enabled survey tool that allows associates to gather anonymous feedback about their performance from coworkers at all levels. 360-degree evaluations are widely used in business settings to enhance professional development. 360-degree evaluation tools typically consist of dozens of questions and they can be time-consuming for respondents to complete. For this program, a subset of 15 items has been selected that is highly specific to the role of Associate and can easily be completed in fifteen-minutes or less. For this program the associate should identify 8 colleagues, at least 4 of whom are superiors, who will provide feedback via the 360.

What is the personality assessment?

It is an online instrument that the associate will access at their convenience. The instrument, called the ASSESS Personality Survey, measures a number of personality traits and characteristics that can impact a person's job performance. Developed by psychologists, it is based on assessments of over 35,000 professionals and it has been refined over the past 25 years. For this program, associates' scores will be tabulated using a formula specific to the legal profession, and they will receive a written report that addresses how and where their developmental efforts are best focused.

What about confidentiality?

This program is not psychotherapy of course, but nonetheless Dr. Gard is a licensed psychologist and he is bound by the ethics and confidentiality guidelines of his profession. In order for the participants to be fully invested in this program and achieve maximum benefits, they need to be assured that the details of what gets discussed with Dr. Gard will remain confidential. That said, the associates will be strongly encouraged to share their findings, insights, and developmental strategies with their supervisors. Dr. Gard may disclose to the firm general information regarding an associate's participation in the program (e.g. individual "x" has begun the program, individual "y" has completed the program, individual "z" has discontinued the program). Dr. Gard will also share with the firm his broader observations about common concerns or circumstances encountered by the associates as a group.

Should the program be voluntary?

Given that the focus of the program is developmental, it's unlikely that individuals would not want to participate in this opportunity. Voluntary participants are typically more involved in the process and more invested in benefitting from it.

Should the program be offered to all Associates or just high-potentials?

This is a difficult question to answer. There are some who believe that developmental initiatives are best directed toward those with the greatest potential, the notion being that if you're going to invest in your people you should target those who are most apt to excel. On the other hand, excluding certain associates from this opportunity might cause resentment and poor morale among some – an outcome certainly at odds with the intent of this program. A compromise would be to do a trial run with a subset of associates before offering it to an entire class.