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## **The General Counsel's Manual on Leading a Legal Team**

**Law Department Management**



It'd be nice if every job came with a manual or video tutorial, but rarely do lawyers take the easy way. Pearson General Counsel and Chief Legal Officer Outside Bjarne Tellmann — and ACC *Docket* Career Path columnist — combined his legal expertise and writing talents into the

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book [Building an Outstanding Legal Team](#) to help the new leaders in corporate law. Tellmann recently discussed his book at “Legal Teams Built to Win,” an event hosted by [Outside GC LLC](#) and [Patent GC LLC](#) at the George Town Club in Washington, DC. *ACC Docket* attended the swanky and informative event, and here’s what we learned.

The book discussion was set in a cozy room with a stone fireplace, which thankfully wasn’t lit during the balmy DC summer night. There, Susan Sneider, author of [A Lawyer’s Guide to Networking](#), lead the interactive discussion with the audience. Her first question: What inspired him to write the book?



Susan

**Sneider and Bjarne Tellman speak to an audience about his book.**

Tellmann joked it was his “sodomasochist streak.” But what actually inspired him was when he was at a previous company, and a talented new legal counsel asked him if there was a manual on leading a legal team. The only problem is that there wasn’t. With encouragement from some Harvard Law friends, Tellmann wrote the book that he believed GCs need to successfully run a law department.

But apart from the traditional responsibilities that GCs typically face, they must now tackle the modern challenges from the rapid change in the in-house industry. These changes stem from technology, globalization, and regulations, the latter of which Tellmann says have “expanded exponentially.”



**Audience members enjoying the happy hour sponsored by Outside GC LLC and Patent GC LLC.**

On top of that, GCs are expected to do more with less, often juggling several roles as once. Thankfully, there is a way to cope with the work overload. “Don’t do it yourself,” he reminded the audience. “You need an outstanding team.”

Sneider then directed the conversation to another office woe: intergenerational rifts. The key to integrating a multigenerational office, Tellmann recommended, “is to have clear communication between the generations.” Whether it’s face-to-face chats with baby boomers, emails to gen-Xers, or instant message to millennials, find what form of communication works best for your team so that they can succeed.

For more leadership advice, order Tellmann’s book [\*Building an Outstanding Legal Team\*](#).

[Karmen Fox](#)



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