



AI Counsel: Driving Team-wide AI Adoption

Information Governance

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Welcome to part three of my joint column with GC AI's CEO and co-founder, Cecilia Ziniti. While we have discussed [evaluating AI tools for in-house legal work](#) and [real use cases for in-house teams](#) in the previous editions, this final piece will highlight the ways that legal leaders can empower their teams and enterprises to adopt AI. For this column, I'll let Cecilia take it away:



Sharon Johnson

CLO, CCO, and Corporate Secretary at MODE Global

When Sharon Johnson, CLO, CCO, and Corporate Secretary at MODE Global, joined GC AI's all-hands meeting a few weeks ago, I was blown away by her approach to driving AI adoption within her team. With over 5,800 lifetime chats in GC AI and 100-percent team adoption, Sharon has created a blueprint that any legal leader can follow.

Here's what we at GC AI learned from our conversation about how she made it happen:

1. Make adoption essential

Sharon recognized the strategic potential of GC AI early on and conveyed its importance directly: ***"Adoption is not optional. You will either adopt or we will not be successful at this company."*** By framing GC-AI adoption as essential for the team, she created immediate momentum.

2. Show the data

Sharon implements a data-driven approach to adoption and provides usage statistics with her team. ***“To demonstrate tangible value, I shared my GC AI search data for the month alongside time-efficiency metrics. I did this because I believe that transparency plus data equals credibility. It paints a picture of what is achievable,”*** she explained.

This transparency accomplishes three things: It normalizes AI use across different tasks, cross-pollinates ideas by showing teammates new use cases they hadn’t considered, and creates gentle accountability by making usage visible to everyone.

3. Customize team encouragement and training

Sharon analyzes why team members aren’t using the tool and develops targeted strategies for each reason. ***“It helps to recognize the difference between someone who needs help learning and someone who’s simply resistant to change. Each requires a different strategy,”*** she explained.

This insight leads to personalized approaches:

1. For those needing training: Provide additional support
2. For those stuck in habits: Set specific goals
3. For the unwilling: Connect adoption to performance expectations

“And above all, make it fun!” she added, which they have done by creating contests and Tech Tip Tuesdays, each introducing new ways to incorporate the tool into existing workflows.

New! The [ACC AI Center of Excellence for In-house Counsel](#) is a brand new resource, designed specifically for in-house counsel, to help legal departments navigate AI with clarity and confidence. The AI Center of Excellence will offer:

- Curated tools and insights
- Peer learning from real-world use cases
- Ethics, risk and governance frameworks, and guidance tailored for Legal
- Leadership strategies for the AI era

4. Set clear goals and track progress

Sharon doesn’t leave adoption to chance. She asks team members to commit to specific goals during meetings and tracks their progress. ***“I’ll be posting stats at every meeting to highlight our progress,”*** she tells her team. This creates accountability while identifying who needs additional support. ***“This is important because individual performance drives our collective achievements.”***

5. Lead by example

One of the top GC AI users, Sharon showcases the value of AI through her own work. These results provide compelling evidence of AI's practical value in addressing real business challenges. ***“The volume of work in our business has increased, creating a workload that would be difficult to manage through traditional methods alone,”*** she explains. ***“Using GC AI, we’ve been able to absorb additional demand while maintaining (and in some cases, improving!) our quality standards — all without expanding headcount. Literally, some weeks I’ve saved entire headcount’s worth of hours. It has transformed how we scale our operations.”***

6. Position adoption as leadership

“We’re going to be leaders in this space,” she tells her team. ***“With AI disruption comes opportunity. By leaning into this technology now, we’re positioning ourselves at the front edge of legal innovation. We’re creating value for our company while evolving the way legal work gets done. Who doesn’t want to be part of that?”***

[ACC Members: Download the new Artificial Intelligence Toolkit for In-house Lawyers](#)

Bonus tip:

Invest in prompting education for your team. Look for AI vendors that offer comprehensive training programs, as proper prompting skills are essential for effective AI adoption. Many legal professionals report feeling more confident using AI tools after completing structured prompting courses that focus on legal workflows.

AI is now table stakes for in-house counsel

The message from our research and conversations with leading in-house counsel is clear: AI adoption is no longer optional for legal professionals who want to remain competitive and effective.

As AI continues to transform the legal landscape, those who embrace these tools will:

- Command higher compensation
- Complete more work with fewer resources
- Focus on higher-value strategic contributions
- Position themselves as leaders within their organizations

For the lawyers still sitting on the sidelines, concerned about hallucinations or other risks, the greatest risk may be inaction itself. The future belongs to lawyers who can effectively partner with AI, not those who compete against it or ignore it.

[Join ACC for more AI guidance and resources!](#)

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Chief Legal Officer

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[Spiwe Jefferson](#) is a board and executive advisor with over 20 years of experience leading in-house teams and designing legal infrastructure that drove more than US\$1 billion in revenue and eliminated inefficiencies across more than 50 countries. A sought-after speaker and thought leader on AI enterprise adoption, she has achieved over 710 hours (18 weeks) of AI-driven efficiency gains on one platform alone. Spiwe authors the [Mindful in 5](#) book series and podcast, providing leaders with actionable strategies for resilience and growth.

[Cecilia Ziniti](#)



Founder & CEO

GC AI

Cecilia Ziniti is the founder and CEO of a legal AI company, GC AI, built based on her experience as a 3-time General Counsel and AI expert. For two decades, Ziniti has driven product and company success across major tech shifts and turned early technologies into iconic products that millions of people use every day.

As a three-time executive team member for venture-backed tech companies including software

unicorn Replit, Ziniti has led all aspects of operations for hypergrowth. She has architected and closed partnerships with blue-chip companies like Google and Amazon and quarterbacked \$300M+ in venture capital rounds from top-tier investors like Andreessen Horowitz, Coatue, Index, and JP Morgan.

As the founding lawyer on Amazon Alexa and an early team member at Cruise, Ziniti understands tech adoption and how to earn public and regulator trust. Ziniti's strategic insights make her sought-after by founders and have earned her global media appearances including on CNN and NPR.

Before Amazon, Ziniti was an intellectual property litigator and technology transactions attorney and represented Apple at Morrison & Foerster, an Am Law 20 firm. Ziniti is an inventor on four US patents. She has invested in and advises dozens of breakout and unicorn companies, including Replit, Instrumental AI, and Seek AI. Her first tech job was as an online community moderator in London.