

Women in Licensing 2017 Survey

Executive Summary and Results

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Women in Licensing Committee Chair



Nearly 45 enthusiastic attendees came together at the 2016 Annual Meeting's Women in Licensing ("WIL") Breakfast organized by Ada Nielsen and Soody Tronson.

From the discussions, it soon became apparent that there is a great opportunity for the LES Women in Licensing Committee to have a positive impact for its membership. Among the first set of actions was to conduct a survey to assess the expectation of the membership, what could realistically be addressed, how to deliver the expected programs and/or initiatives, and how to measure progress.

A survey of 18 questions was prepared and sent out in January to 373 members and non-members, with 128 responding. The recipients were selected based on attendance at the 2016 WIL Breakfast and members who have designated WIL as their interest area in their LES member profile. The survey had the following goals in mind:

- To assess and consider the aspects WIL could realistically address;
- To identify the strategies and means to do so; and
- To gain support from LES leadership to implement programming.

In the survey, we asked for volunteers in five areas: Programs, Outreach, Communications, Logistics, Speaker Recruitment, and Others. We have reached out to the many volunteers to develop a series of action plans to address the various areas identified through the survey.

The survey and the data, along with a summary and select high level recommendations, are available on the LES-WIL Committee Website at www.lesusacanada.org/group/E-124.

Survey Key Findings and Opportunistic Recommendations.

Below is a summary of key findings with a few high-level observations. A set of goals and strategies will be developed as we, the volunteers, work together during the next few months.

The results of the survey validated the diversity of the WIL membership, from experience to industry, to organization size. The majority of those surveyed had over 15 years of experience, with many over 20+ years, holding senior and executive roles.

The pool of those surveyed was made up of both legal and non-legal professionals, with the latter making up the majority. While participants represented diverse organization types (universities, law firms, non-profits, government, valuation firms, and hospitals) and sizes, larger private

entities represented the largest group followed by the smaller boutique-sized firms with a noticeable gap in the mid-size range. This collective diversity provides both a challenge and an opportunity for contribution. One area of opportunity for significant contribution, however, is to support visibility through means such as 'assignments,' as offered by various studies as key factors in professional advancement. Assignments, within the context of LES, may include appointments, speaking opportunities, and industry representation.

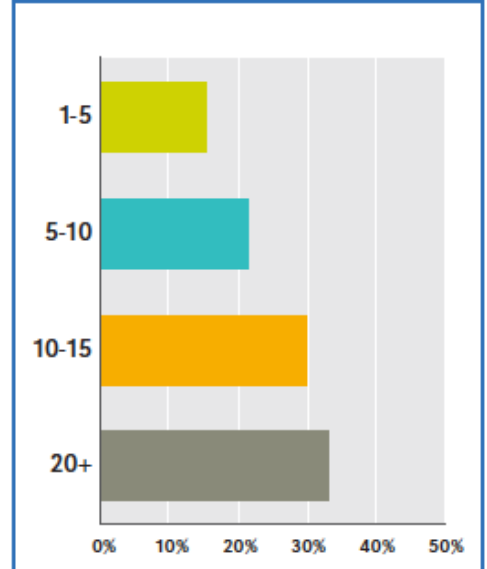
Hoping to build on existing history, we set out to uncover the experience of the membership with other women-focused professional organizations. This insight, we hoped, would help WIL minimize the less effective aspects of the programs while leveraging their positives qualities. Most of those surveyed had previously engaged with women-focused programs and although greater than 90% had a positive experience, almost more than half did not consider their experiences impactful.

Among the reasons for the lack of impact were: lack authority and influence over employer's actions, lack of focused programs and initiatives, and weak follow through. This lack of direct influence on the conduct of employing institutions is true with majority of independent professional organizations. The extent to which LES- WIL can bring about an impact, to a large degree, will be driven by how it fits in the overall organizational strategy of LES.

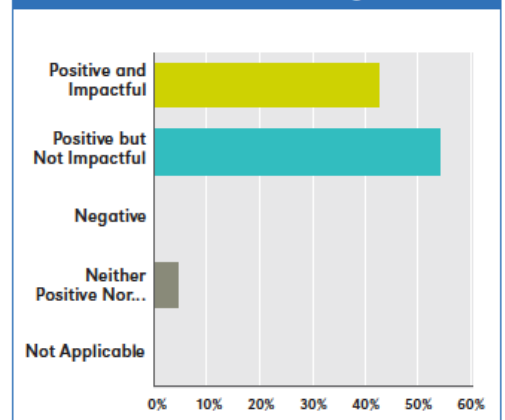
Networking, mentorship and engagement with role models, program content, continuing education, and speakers were among activities that ranked highest, in that order. However, it was not clear from the survey results, why networking was ranked so high: Is it because it is presumed to assist in career development, in which case, a key question is

"what has been the rate of return on networking events," and whether there are other complementary means to achieve the same or better results.

Q1. How Many Years Have You Been Working In Licensing?



Q6. What Has Been Your Experience With Other Women-Focused Professional Organizations?



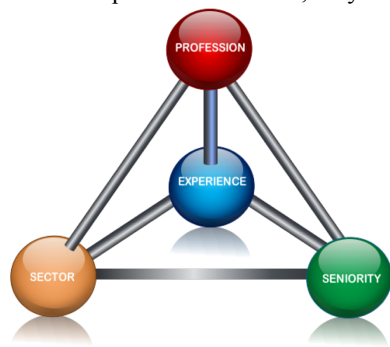
As expected, the type of and level of non-subject matter (non-licensing specific) programs needs to be commensurate with professionals' experience and stage in career. For example, some professionals in advanced career stages are interested in programs that could help them prepare to take on board positions.

It was offered that networking events must be targeted, with defined goals, and remain on track. This is noteworthy as it is reported that men and women do network differently and while social events may benefit men on a professional level, they may not have the same impact for women.

As to subject matter and continuing education, programs and courses on advancing licensing skills were among those the members sought the most. LES, being the flagship among licensing organizations, is in a unique position to curate, directly or indirectly, cutting edge programs on licensing.

These programs not only can address educational needs within, but can also help facilitate creating industry standards and tools in tackling the new market economy. LES leadership is in a unique position to support WIL in providing access to such programs to enable building the critical skills for advancing the members' expertise as well as highlighting the existing expertise of its members. Mastering these skills will be of great career value to WIL membership. These programs can be piloted by WIL with follow on organizational expansion.

Smaller group sizes were the most favored for networking, skill-building, and certain "subject-matter" oriented events, to allow for more meaningful and focused engagement. Considerations for future meetings may include changes to the format of some of the programming and networking events, such as subject matter panels (not women-specific topics) followed by smaller subject matter interest-group meetings; holding some of the evening



networking events in smaller venues more conducive to meaningful exchanges; and encouraging and recognizing members for their active and impactful engagement in career development of other members.

Members were, to a great extent, open to and suggested taking advantage of technology such as tele-video/audio tools to conduct a variety of meetings and educational programs as well as building a network. Among main benefits of the major meetings was networking. This is an interesting but not surprising observation which is neither unique to women members nor LES, as it is often a challenge to pry conference participants from networking segments back into meeting rooms!

“In designing the format of future meetings, LES may consider having small interest-group discussions following the panel programs.”

It is essential to note the importance of appropriate metrics which can be used to measure the progress and impact of WIL. Given the diversity of the membership, however, it may be difficult to have a uniform metric to evaluate success of all programs. A pragmatic and useful recommendation from among those surveyed was for each member to prepare her/his own list of goals and track their progress.

In conclusion, it was reaffirmed that areas of opportunity exist for LES-WIL to stay ahead of the curve in contributing to the professional careers of its membership by enhancing certain existing programs as well as creating and implementing new ones, such as: fostering more exchanges between senior and junior-experience level members; expanding LES-curated programs (directly or indirectly) for both internal and external use; whether educational or industry-leading, to advance and sharpen high-value executive skills for the new market economy; and taking on a more active role with organizations requiring licensing as a business tool and involving LES membership in such engagements.

We look forward to next stages of planning and execution, as the committee works through its strategy and implementation plan.

Areas of Opportunity for Impact

- *Credited visibility through meaningful assignments, e.g., appointments, speaking opportunities, and industry representation;*
- *Curating industry focused programs to advance and sharpen high-value executive skill sets for the new market economy;*
- *Taking on a more active role with organizations requiring licensing as a business tool and involving LES membership;*
- *Fostering more exchanges between senior level and less experienced members;*
- *Promoting and recognizing members' impact on other members' career development;*
- *Focused networking programs.* 🍷🍷

