

WOMEN IN THE PROFESSION COMMITTEE

Women Attorneys Encouraged to Embrace Change

By Maya J. Brown

ATTENDEES OF THE APRIL 26 WOMEN IN THE PROFESSION COMMITTEE MEETING were in for a life-changing treat when “The Lawyer’s Coach,” Phyllis Sisenwine, shared her tips on embracing change for a more productive, progressive and profitable 2016.

Sisenwine opened her dialogue with a story that stressed the importance of knowing why we engage in certain practices rather than continuing those practices simply because it is the way things have always been done. In order to truly embrace change, we must always be willing to evaluate, eliminate, educate and engage in positive “self-talk.”

Evaluate. Take a long, hard look at where you are now in your business and personal life. Compare your current position to where you would like to be in one year and how you have changed in the past year. Come up with a goal, think about it and write it down. You cannot begin to change until you realize what needs to change and how you can implement the changes.

Eliminate. When Sisenwine asked the attendees what their offices looked like, laughter erupted in the room. An easy change we can all make is to eliminate physical clutter from our desks and workspace. You will immediately feel more focused and ready to accomplish goals when you are not navigating around piles of paper you have not touched in months.

In addition to physical clutter, interruptions should be minimized, too. Studies show, once interrupted, it takes the average person 18-20 minutes to get back in the flow of working. Think about subtracting 20 minutes from your work day each time you are interrupted. It adds up. “Every hour is billable, every minute is money – you want to use your time wisely,” Sisenwine said. She suggests attempting to close your office door for an hour or two each day to work without any interruptions.

There is also energy-draining mental clutter. There might be people in our lives who zap our energy. It is not always easy, but you might want to consider spending less time with them. You might be on a board or in an organization that no longer fills your needs, so take some time to look at people or activities that no longer serve you.

Educate. Never stop researching and seeking different ways to do things better than they are currently being done. “Improve your systems, update your forms. Come up with an action plan now,” Sisenwine told the attendees. Once you have identified new ways to embrace change to create a more productive environment, share these practices with your staff, friends, family and other important people in your life.

Practice positive self-talk. “According to research, humans have on average, 65,000



Photo by Thomas E. Rogers

Phyllis Sisenwine, “The Lawyer’s Coach,” advises attendees on methods for being more productive, progressive and profitable at the Women in the Profession Committee meeting on March 21.

thoughts per day. Of those 65,000 thoughts, 90 percent are negative,” Sisenwine said. “Engage in positive conversations with yourself. Whatever you say to your brain, your brain believes.” Something as simple as telling yourself you will have a good day can change everything.

Before closing the program, Sisenwine conducted a business card raffle and gifted one month of coaching to two attorneys in the room. She left all of the attendees with a piece of advice, “Throw out your “to-do” list and create a “will-do” list.”

Sisenwine has earned an international reputation for her success in helping attorneys and law firms improve performance and increase profitability. She has helped them to become more organized, focused and productive. Her latest book “Market You Must... For Lawyers” is considered required reading for attorneys looking to expand their practices. For more information visit www.thelawyerscoach.com or email Sisenwine at Phyllis@thelawyerscoach.com.

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