



Equal Times

Serving the BCWBA for 30 Years

President's Column

I've written in the past about my desire to "study" more about what it takes to be an effective leader—and about the many books I've purchased on the subject which remain in stacks on my bedside table! I'll get to them eventually, but in the meantime, I like to glean tidbits and advice from articles and blog entries I find online, and from speakers at our many BCWB events and other CLEs.



In March, I attended the State Bar's Women in the Law CLE, and was thrilled by the information I received from the fantastic speakers (which led to more books—and more stacks on my bedside table). One of the speakers was Gindi Vincent, an attorney for Exxon Mobil who has published a book entitled *Learning to Lead: What Really Works for Women in the Law*. (Yes, I have this book. No, I haven't read it yet. But I carry it around in my work bag so that as soon as I have the opportunity to read it, I can!) Gindi also publishes a fun, informative blog about her life as a wife, mom of triplets, leader, and attorney. (con'd on next page)

August Luncheon: Justice Gina M. Benavides

Please join us on August 5 to welcome Justice Gina M. Benavides, Thirteenth Court of Appeals. During her first term as an appellate judge, Justice Benavides authored over 600 opinions. As a member of the Court, she has been actively involved in implementing internal procedures and policies to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Court. In light of the U.S. Supreme Court's recent cellphone ruling, Justice Benavides will discuss warrantless searches. She will also discuss the Texas blood draw, its validity, and the circumstances of its use. CLE accreditation is pending.

When: Tuesday, August 5, 2014

Time: Noon to 1:00 p.m.

Where: Club Giraud

Cost: \$25 for members, \$30 for non-members, \$20 for students, payable at the door.

RSVP: Club Giraud has asked for a headcount 48 hours in advance of the luncheon so please RSVP by Friday, August 1, 2014 to Events@bexarcountywomensbar.org. Include any dietary restrictions in your RSVP. We understand that schedules change, but we cannot guarantee a spot to individuals who do not RSVP by the date above. Walk-ins will be charged \$35 to cover the additional demands on Club Giraud's staff and no-shows will be billed. Please make all checks payable to the Bexar County Women's Bar Foundation or BCWBF. For more information, contact Lindsay Riley (liriley@coxsmith.com) or Lauren Horne (Lauren@Rosenblattlawfirm.com).

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Events to Attend

- Aug. 5: monthly luncheon
- Aug. 20: Julian Gold Event
- Sept. 2: monthly luncheon
- Oct. 16: Autumn Affair
- Oct. 29: Speed Networking Event



Save the date for the Mentor/Mentee Speed Mentoring Event!

By Hella Scheurman

This year's Mentor/Mentee Speed Mentoring Event will take place at St. Mary's University School of Law, on October 29, 2014. We will be planning this event with the Women's Law Association. There will be volunteer

opportunities for attorneys in different areas of practice, to serve as roundtable leaders. We will work with WLA to finalize the program and provide more details on how you can volunteer in our next newsletter.

*"Body language. It can propel you to leadership and success or be a nail in the coffin."
~ Gindi Vincent*

President's Column (con'd from p. 1)

While my stacks of books may be gathering dust, I've managed to learn quite a bit from Gindi's posts focusing on women in leadership. She recently posted about "Leadership Body Language," and her tips struck me both because of their simplicity and their positive effects. With Gindi's permission, I'm providing her advice here for you:

Body language. It can propel you to leadership and success or be a nail in the coffin.

Here are a few practical tips to communicating well using no words at all:

1. **Make eye contact.** Is this the most overused tip in the world? Well, it's repeated because it is KEY! So much of being a leader comes with being comfortable in your own skin. The more confident and more authentic you are, the easier it is to look someone straight in the eye when having a conversation. There are still people in leadership positions that regularly struggle with this – their eyes either dart around the room because they are not comfortable holding someone's gaze or they dart around the room because they are looking for something or someone more important or interesting. Either reason undermines your ability to lead.
2. **Lean in.** This isn't just a tag line for Sheryl Sandberg's career advice, it's Body Language 101. Leaning back, crossing your arms across your chest, turning your body away from the speaker exhibits, at the least, disinterest, or at the most, outright hostility. If you are sitting in a conversation, lean up and in. At a table, you can lean over it. If you're standing, then face the person with whom you are conversing and don't look like you're ready to step out at any moment.
3. **Engage.** Look interested. Nod your head to show you're listening. Smile. Look receptive. Raise your eyebrows in surprise if the story warrants it. Let the speaker know they have an engaged and interested audience.
4. **Pay Attention.** This comes down to the simplest of tips: **put your phone down!** Do not check emails or the weather or your text messages when someone is talking to you. I see it so frequently now, and it is terrible form and shows disrespect.

So many of us excel at this in our every day conversations, but it doesn't hurt to take a moment and check. The next few times you're having critical conversations, pay attention to what your non-verbal cues reflect. Also pay close attention to the person(s) to whom you are speaking as it can give you great insight into whether they understand and are receptive to you. A leader hones her intuition and body language provides some of the best clues.

<http://www.gindivincent.com/2014/leadership-body-language/>

Interested in more tips from Gindi? Go check her out at www.gindivincent.com. And be on the lookout for new opportunities coming from the BCWB for development of your leadership skills.

Dress to Impress

By Lauren M. Horne

We all have common sense. We all know (or, I would like to think should know) what is considered appropriate workplace attire. This article is not about that (well, not quite).

Coming out of law school in 2008, I got the professionalism memo.* What I didn't get was that professional does not mean plain and neutral. As silly as it sounds, I was afraid that jewelry or too much color might give people the impression I had gone to law school because I aspired to be someone of the likes of Elle Woods.** Plus, a first year associate's budget doesn't necessarily lend itself to a large variety of fashionable clothing. After four years of pulling clothes from a sea of black and gray pants, plus nine months of highly comfortable maternity clothes (some of which I may or may not still be wearing), I finally realized I was stuck in a wardrobe rut; and have become all too comfortable with "business casual."

While living in San Antonio, I have met so many incredible, classy, polished, and stylish members of the Bar. One thing these ladies have in common: they dress to impress. The way we present ourselves really does affect others' impressions of us, including clients and judges. Wanting to get out of my black pants rut and desiring a more sophisticated look, I did what any reasonable lawyer would do and turned to Google and a few colleagues. Along the way, I have found some tips and blogs worth sharing.

Tips. Dallas attorney Lindsey Griffen offered five practical tips for young lawyers in her piece, *Dress For Success, And For Fun*, that originally appeared in the February 2013 issue of TYLA's e-Newsletter. They are reprinted here with Ms. Griffen's permission.

1. The tailor is your best friend.

The rule of tailoring is basic, but so often forgotten. Tailoring is the number one key to good style. Fit is everything, particularly with work wear. Ill-fitting clothes are an automatic turn-off. You can get away with more liberal fashion choices if the fit is right and the overall look is polished. Start by investing in staple pieces made of high-quality fabrics. You are going to get a better fit if you go with wool or silk as opposed to rayon, nylon, or polyester. Then, have the clothes tailored to fit you perfectly. If it is within your budget, check into custom-made clothes.

2. Dress for your body type.

Know what works for your body type and go with it. Do not dress outside of your comfort zone. For the ladies, A-line skirts, straight-leg trousers, and sheath dresses are safe bets for all body types. A belt can work wonders to define your waistline and streamline your look. Smaller is not always better. For a sleek and slim appearance, stick with darker colors and vertical patterns. Confidence is key, so work with what you have.

3. Be mindful of your clients.

How to dress around clients depends on who your client is. Get to know your clients, including their typical dress, then dress accordingly. Contrary to popular lawyer opinion, defaulting to a suit is not always the right answer. A suit can be intimidating for a client who is not accustomed to that attire.

4. Go bold in small doses.

If you have the itch to incorporate a new trend or style into your work wardrobe, start with your accessories. Shoes, jewelry, and bags are a great way to be fashion forward at work without shocking your co-workers and clients. For example, ladies, leopard heels function as a neutral and add a bit of pop to any work outfit. A bright bag or statement necklace will also do the trick. (con'd on next page)

*Figuratively, of course. At least one law school, however, in addition bar associations and law firms, has felt the need to send a written memorandum to their students regarding professional attire. Above The Law wrote about it: <http://abovethelaw.com/2014/03/law-school-sends-memo-about-inappropriate-student-cleavage-hooker-heels/>. Let's not get started on the men vs. women debate.

**Elle Woods refers to the character played by Reese Witherspoon in *Legally Blonde*. For more information, consult IMDB here: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0250494/>.



Dress to Impress (con'd from p. 3)

5. When in doubt, go conservative, but not boring.

At the end of the day, we are still professionals in a field that is behind the fashion curve. Therefore, we must mind our fashion manners. When in doubt about what is appropriate to wear, lean towards the conservative side. In a client-driven industry, the number one goal is to make a good impression on your clients, both in your appearance and how you handle their case or deal. You only get to make a first impression once, so put your best fashion foot forward.

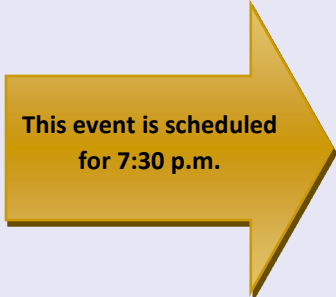
Blogs. There are hundreds of fashion blogs out there, but the following are go-to blogs for reference:

The Classy Cubicle – Mary Orton illustrates “that you can have a lot of fun with fashion within the confines of professional appropriateness.” She provides pictures of herself wearing the clothes she describes and offers direct source links. At a minimum, her “Top Ten Cubicle Crimes” are worth reading.

House of Marbury Fashion and Style for Women Lawyers – the name says it all. This site is run by two Chicago lawyers, Kate and Desiree. They offer a fabulous list of wardrobe essentials and a “splurge v. save” section.

A Preponderance of Fashion – this anonymously written blog is described as a “fashion law and career fashion blog by petite top law school graduate.”

Corporate Fashionista – Kristina Moore, the founder and editor, makes it her mission to support women. She writes, “Today’s professional woman is smart, active, dynamic, dedicated, constrained for time, and understands the impact that personal presentation has from the office to the neighborhood party...Helping women to look, and, consequently, feel their best is my way of making a contribution.” Personally, I loved her recent post about 15 office-friendly looks for summer.



This event is scheduled
for 7:30 p.m.

Save the Date!

Exclusive After-Hours Shopping Event
for BCWB Members at

Julian Gold

Wednesday, August 20

Drinks, Lite Bites, Door Prizes, and Private Shopping

More Details to Come

September Luncheon: Autumn Affair Beneficiary, The Rape Crisis Center

Please join us at noon on September 2, 2014 at Club Giraud as we welcome Mary Cheuvront and Miriam M. Elizondo, MS, LPC-S, co-executive directors of this year's Autumn Affair Beneficiary, The Rape Crisis Center. Ms. Cheuvront and Ms. Elizondo will inform attendees about the services The Rape Crisis Center provides, what can be accomplished with the support received from the Autumn Affair, and how to get involved.

When: Tuesday, September 2, 2014

Time: Noon to 1:00 p.m.

Where: Club Giraud

Cost: \$25 for members, \$30 for non-members, \$20 for students, payable at the door.

RSVP: Club Giraud has asked for a headcount 48 hours in advance of the luncheon so please RSVP by Friday, August 29, 2014 to Events@bexarcountywomensbar.org. Include any dietary restrictions in your RSVP. We understand that schedules change, but we cannot guarantee a spot to individuals who do not RSVP by the date above. Walk-ins will be charged \$35 to cover the additional demands on Club Giraud's staff and no-shows will be billed. Please make all checks payable to the Bexar County Women's Bar Foundation or BCWBF.

For more information, contact Lindsay Riley (lriley@coxsmith.com) or Lauren Horne (Lauren@Rosenblattlawfirm.com). This is a luncheon you don't want to miss!

