

# Crowd Sourcing

ALPMA Conference 2007



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# Without paying them more, how can you better attract, retain and empower Gen Y talent to add more long-term value to your firm?

Crowdsourced Solutions from ALPMA 2007 inspired by Funky Thinking 3.0

Dear Frustrated Legal Practice Manager,

It was a pleasure speaking to you on October 26<sup>th</sup> at the 2007 ALPMA Conference. I have had a chance to compile and comment on the crowdsourced solutions you offered to the question above, and these comments and solutions can be found in the ebook on the following pages.

There are some gems in there, and I have done my best to flesh out some of the solutions and add a layer of funky detail and implementation to them.

Additionally, we have now officially kicked off the thought cross-fertilisation on [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) to develop and enhance the conversation, so please shoot me an email on [anders@thinq.com.au](mailto:anders@thinq.com.au) if you'd like to be invited to this group blog. Additionally, if you know of anyone else who would value from this thought exchange, please tell them to email me and I will invite them to share and benefit from the quality ideas generated by the community.

Also, I am keen to hear of your progress and your improved retention and productivity rates, so please keep me in the loop by emailing me, sms:ing me your victory stories, or blogging to your heart's content on [www.thinq.com.au/blog](http://www.thinq.com.au/blog).

Equally if you have on-going challenges around turn-over, staff engagement, and cross-generational friction, please contact me so that I can provide some food for thought and fuel for action at your firm.

I trust you will enjoy this ebook, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Cheers



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## Encourage and find soft-skill development / training opportunities

- Flexible working hours
- Harbour cruises during work time
- Car racing
- Art gallery and movie ticket promotions
- Sponsor bank
- Working from home
- Ask them to set their own work goals (within reasonable job parameters) and then reward the reward structure then they will be tested and results assessed and valued and get them to commit to that new structure
- 48/52 = pay at 48/52 per week to give 4 additional weeks leave p.a. – I like it – meaning is the new money for Gen Y and this is another spin on the 80% for 4 years, paid leave in the 5th year model – albeit with a tangible benefit straight away
- Invite participant in practice development/innovation workshop – yep, Gen Y are the bloodstream of change and having their voice heard is important so this is a definite win/win
- Encourage and facilitate networking opportunities
- Encourage and find soft-skill development/ training opportunities – soft skills is the No 1 area that Gen Y seek training in – training is also the No 1 retention tool there is, even though this may seem paradoxical. Train them and you'll retain them. For Gen Y life long learning is a mantra and if you make them more employable, they will stay. Did I mention it is a whacky world? In 2008 Emotional Intelligence training for Gen Y is totally on trend – shoot me an email on [anders@thinq.com.au](mailto:anders@thinq.com.au) if you're interested on the research and concrete programs around this
- Provide technological updates
- Ask them what makes a difference to them! – blog, survey, and ask in person
- Restructure the management = team rather than individual based
- Give them challenging work at early stage
- Allow them to put their own goals, work patterns and working environment. This would have to have more contact so they have a boundary

## Challenge them at recruitment stage by setting problems/exercises/projects to be completed before the interview.

- Offer flexibility and challenging with persons who mention and develop their strengths
- Allow them to work the hours they wish. To work from home or internet café if they wish. To use any technological device they wish while working e.g. Ipod
- **Funky offices – yep, spot on**
- Break out rooms
- Environmental ownership on future
- **Exchange programs to other firms overseas – keep your ‘enemies’ closer – why not encourage Gen Y to leave (and come back with valuable experience) – this is true empowerment and an enlightened retention strategy**
- Flexible work hours: full time salary flexible start, finish, work from home.
- **Flexible work conditions: Increased annual leave conversion of sick leave to annual leave – spot on.** For a Gen Y the question is ‘if I am healthy, why shouldn’t I get the same access to me-time as someone who fully cashes in on sick-leave?’ give annual leave in lieu.
- Ownership for effort
- Leadership opportunities appoint MD
- Make them managing partners for a week
- **Give them \$100,000 in monopoly money to spend on improving the one thing that annoys them the most – nice way to encourage innovation and see what is wrong from a Yer’s perspective**
- I regard ‘Gen Y’ as illusory. ‘Gen Y’ is the product of an indulgent opulent lifestyle. Are there Gen Y’ers in China/Africa/Middle East?
- **Make work environment fun – we all want this – self-actualisation– not just harmonious, but a place where they can develop relationships; where they have lots of cutting edge technology and freedom to use it; ask for their ideas and use those that are good. Give them attention and chance to do interesting work with experienced people (mentoring) as contributing team members. Give them time to wander and explore.**
- **Within each new recruit’s fortnight/month give one day for personal development or a project of their choice. – google/ 3M time – allows for innovation, fun and experimentation Provide the freedom to explore and develop their project.**
- **Challenge them at recruitment stage by setting problems/exercises/projects to be completed before the interview.**  
– let them self-select – turning the tables on the equation that Gen Y

Form an advisory board to management to help develop; firm strategy, generate ideas and find solutions.

flipped. This is a good way to make sure the fit is the right one from word GO. Once you have your chosen Gen Y person on board you have a pre-determined plan for them (which you don't share) other than in chunks of appropriate rewards once they've met your plan KPI's. Rewards are; days off just because; new job and responsibilities; specific duties that they have to work for managers. Reward them verbally and sing their praises all the time.

- Ask them what they want (why should I presume to know!) – explore Get them to design the program for their generation and commit to implementing it.
- Involve them in management – get them on the inside. Let them have a say or input on important issues
- Give them an expected outcome and let them achieve it (subject to any regulatory or internal control requirements)
- Ask them to design their own job to achieve the firms objectives – how would they do things differently?
- Give them client contact much earlier than previously. – and make sure you have trained them in Emotional Intelligence first ;)
- Get/source ideas on it [?] the project.
- Allow them to work for you from anywhere in the world and give them the technology to do it.
- Attract: Make them feel important
- Retain: Offer challenging work
- Empower: Give opportunity to make a difference to the world
- Mentor
- Consult and Invogue
- Flexibility in hours [?]
- Form an advisory board to management to help develop; firm strategy, generate ideas and find solutions. – absolutely, and make sure their opinion is valued and ideas permitted to flourish
- Assign them non legal projects (in areas of intent) to deliver solutions or ideas for the firm.
- Arrange for [?], exchange programs
- Provide people flexibility – work hours, days to suit themselves
- Pro bono opportunities in foreign lands
- Provide up to date technology

## Have them take on the role of workplace funk generator

- Include them in business planning of the firm
- Treat them as an equal
- Manage their careers from the day they arrive
- Don't silo them into an area of practice, give them opportunities to have diverse experience.
- Let them scope out their own career prospects
- Offer [?] opportunities around the world
- Provide management opportunities
- Invest in them to travel, research other law firms and construct new ideas/models and technology solutions – and why not look outside your industry what other professional sectors are doing that is working?
- Staff rep on partners committee with voting rights and ability to report back to staff
- Ipad for every worker
- Work anytime day/night/weekends
- Remodel sites to come to work i.e service centers
- Work them remotely via remote computer/laptop access tot eh office server and give them VOIP and blackberry
- Change modify business hours (let them determine)
- Training/ Self learning
- Involvement on high profile cases
- Virtualisation
- High technology/gadgetry focus
- Not traditional office environment
- Have them take on the role of workplace funk generator – could not agree more
- Time off the telephone
- Involvement in decision making
- Recruit several onto a Dreaming Team for 2020 Firm – worthwhile vision – for ideas on generating a think tank around this, shoot me an email on [anders@thinque.com.au](mailto:anders@thinque.com.au)
- Shoot the partners or retire them
- Get an old person much older then the partners (much older) – to act as a mentor e.g grandparent/grandchild

## Appoint Gen Y spokesperson in the firm

'type' relationship – they have more in common, relate better than e.g. child/parent type relationship – this could work – and why not introduce reverse mentoring while you are at it? This may also save you money on your IT training of firm technophobes.

- Have totally flexible hours – no fixed working hours – so long as they service clients properly and learn
- Get the staff to have a say in the remuneration of partners and others in the organisation. – interesting point
- Employer share ownership – this is worth exploring – see Slater & Gordon model for more insights
- More flexible working environment – choose your hours
- Free shares for attracting new Gen Y – saving on recruitment costs and giving them more ownership/inspiration to work – this is a positive double whammy
- Gen Y feedback teams
- Start them at the top, make them responsible for their actions/achievements
- Flexible work hours, so long as work gets done
- 7 days/week
- Values – live by them, do not accept bad behaviour
- Encourage open, honest communication
- Encourage freedom of expression – of opinions and clothing
- Involve interest/hobbies/passion in business - sure
- Allow them to design their workplace – design, colour, layout of workplace
- Flexible work policy
- Offer them promotion and growth and advancement
- Invite them to [?]
- Let them on the board of the firm – I would recommend having people from each tier of the hierarchy be represented – better decisions are made when thinking preferences are heterogeneous rather than homogenous. For more info on this research and concrete application please email me on [anders@thinque.com.au](mailto:anders@thinque.com.au)
- Appoint Gen Y spokesperson in the firm – if you're not ready to give them a voice on the board, at least do this as a minimum

## Purely performance based progression

- Encourage social collaboration firm-wide
- Consider 4 year 80% pay with 1 year funded leave – I like this. Only question is whether they are willing to consider 4 years. Different mathematical formulae can be explored.
- Ask Gen Y how they want the firm to be for them as a unique solution to each person's needs, so they are what matters, not the firm at the individual level, in the expectation that in aggregate everyone's needs are met
- Give them time to promote/learn/educate themselves
- 10 life skills lessons – check out Thinqe's 7 Career Mistakes You Must Avoid Ebook by emailing me on sales@thinque.com.au
- International seconded and exchange progress
- Flexible salary option – 48/52
- Short term career [?]
- Purely performance based progression – interesting concepts, would like to hear more about this
- Allow them direct input into the form – focus group input
- Benefits other than money
- Forum for their ideas and actually implement them – think tanks on a quarterly basis
- Offer non-monetary things i.e flexible working hours, unpaid leave for overseas holidays etc
- Set long term benchmarks for promotion
- Give them a stake in the business with returns conditional upon longevity within the firm
- Negotiate their role with them – allow them to write their JD...then give them the opportunity to go to the heights they want to go to
- Appoint them managing partner from day one
- Give them 6 months to design new strategic plan – nothing else to do – could work...
- Provide work life balance and live values
- Promote at [?] and not in structural [?] v traditional career path. Fast track promotion
- Flexible working conditions – hours of work and place of work
- Fun work environment – team, limited hierarchy

## A voice – in meetings of all Gen-Y'ers for input. Seek and recognise input

- Increased involvement in all firm activities – input/participation, transparency, learning and education
- Provide latest technology e.g. mobile devices
- Spend time with them and listen
- **Motivate Gen Y and reward them through structured career path – including study leave, offer paid overseas travel, ensure your Gen Y staff have regular holiday breaks within first 2 years and overseas holidays at 3 ½ - 4 years. Offer them input into management team or board of management so as to use innovations Gen Y thinking – there are many ticks there – some good ideas that can be concretized**
- Constant communication
- Rapid response
- Understand them
- Accept them
- Challenge them with meaningful work
- Flexible work environment
- Succession planning
- Other benefits e.g. annual leave, paid parental leave, gym memberships, car allowances, mobile phone etc
- Work/life balance – ability to leave work at a decent hour e.g. 6pm to be able to enjoy life. This will also reduce burn out of solicitors
- Negotiated annual leave entitlement
- Flexibility on working hours and leave
- Promoting possibilities for secondments into clients
- **A voice – in meetings of all Gen-Y'ers for input. Seek and recognise input - yep**
- Gym membership/ in house gym
- Sponsor them to have one year overseas and return before developed practice
- Real teams – where they can participate
- Involvement them in management
- Let them drive planning process
- Get them involved in sponsorship decisions
- 80% salary for 4 years, pay you for your 5<sup>th</sup>

- Invite representation to leadership team
- Flexible hours/ jobs etc
- Innovation bank
- **Pro bono team – why not have an all Gen Y pro bono team (from SA to grads) – plenty of experience, client time and non-billable?**
- [?] team
- Flexible work environment
- Up to date technology
- Opportunity to have input in decision making
- Choice – location, specialization, payment options
- [?] membership
- Project task force representation to address policies and issues
- Make the work as good as possible
- Encourage life work balance
- Give them responsibility
- **Put them in charge of teams of senior lawyers on a rotational basis for 6 months – this is wild, whacky and funky – what would this look like?**
- Set them chair committees on issues affecting the firm
- Promote development plan
- Relationships
- Career Paths
- Give them a purpose, the clear knowledge that the work they do changes lives, adds to life.
- Look for and recognise their social skills in supporting, mentoring and supporting this [?]
- Accept their input to decision making and empower them to sponsor the pilot implementation
- Define tasks as adventures
- Ask them what they think
- Access to clients, business associates
- **Fund one or more ways in which they choose to self-actualise (eg education, secondments travel) – loyalty and attitude of reciprocity approach**
- Allow full use of available IT resources – blogs etc

## Make them practice managers 1 out of 4 days per week or IT person or Partner or HR person

- Put them on a 'change' committee to allow immediate feedback – for sure, for Gen Y change is a given so involve them in it
- Allow them to work collaboratively
- Give them decision making authority
- Play to their strengths
- Introduce music and other stimuli into the work environment
- Travel-related initiatives with loyalty ties
- Throw up the jigsaw pieces – have them redesign the future of client service
- Promote personal leadership, empower individualism – see what wild solutions they come up with – some may be totally implementable
- Delegate decision making
- Involve in innovation systems
- Make them practice managers 1 out of 4 days per week or IT person or Partner or HR person
- Set a budget of X new clients per year and no billable hours
- Surround them with like minded people
- Involve them in larger decision making activities – inform them where the ship is heading, why and what they can do to help
- Let them know that they don't need to be like the older lawyers in the firm to succeed (if that's accurate of course) – Gen Y think that to succeed they need to be like the people who are already there, that turns them away because they don't want to be those people. – this may be something you need to explore with Gen Xers also, as many Gen X women are also struggling to see positive female role models – explore what the funky misfits are who have truly made it and set up a panel discussion to explore how to position yourself in a way which is valuable to self and firm
- Emphasise teams, not hierarchies
- Dogs in the workplace (and Burmese cats!) – how can I say no to this?
- Provide a forum that allows their ideas to be heard and valued – they can be the leader for a session, project...
- Use NEO x's as a conduct b/w Y and NEO y's [? check]
- Consider geographic [?] the basis of attractiveness to Y travel. Eg UK, US

- Consider every interaction as an opportunity to reinforce employer brand
- Reward/fund overseas travel for [?] when overseas so they return
- Offer training on the job, be mistake tolerant to encourage innovation and do not micro manage, show leadership – think this is key
- Provide the option of more annual leave instead of salary
- Allow many different versions of flexible working hours/days
- Engage them on: travel/retreat
- Get their engagement on ideas – personal vision
- Exploration of the world and business world outside home
- Take them with you on client visits
- Learn what's out there “article” them
- Have young ones spend half their time with older people
- Arm all of them with the best IT and gadgets
- Offer them better working conditions with greater flexibility for them to do things outside of the firm e.g. set up a program where they can get holidays (long) etc
- Facilitate their ideas/provide opportunity for thought – why not explore the Herrmann Brain Dominance Indicator to build highly productive, diverse and cross-generational teams that fire on all cylinders? Email me on anders@thinqe.com.au for more info
- Training/develop
- Special projects
- Flexible work structures
- Different ways of working e.g. networked IT systems that allow groups to work on projects collaboratively at the same time
- Different office set ups from the traditional – allow music, individualism, colour etc
- Firm owns beach house for their use
- Paid maternity & paternity leave – we are in the 21st century and I think this is totally on trend
- Stress free days off
- Get them to set up blogs as discussion tool
- Use their ipods to receive firm messages – learning firm culture

- Understand them better, say we want to learn from them, teach us
- Put them in charge of integrating IT within the firm
- Attract: Pro-bono work, social conscience, flexible hours, work/life balance
- Retain: Planned career development, **mentoring and coaching**, leadership
- Empower: Autonomy, gap analysis for career path, goal setting
- Involve them in decision making ie. recruiting issues
- Flexible working environment/hours ie. work from home
- Attend partners meetings
- Committee (group or different name) to solve 'it' issues
- Alternate partners meetings only Gen Y to solve issues and business development ideas and report to partners
- **Vote on firm future ideas – or set up a panel a la 'Idol' where people get to present their ideas...**
- We understand the needs of Gen Y and see your point of view – come to a firm that understands and retains Gen Y
- Progressive firm
- Provide flexibility in all aspect of work/social life
- Have no [?] at all!
- You take over planning/management of business
- Tell me what is valuable
- Involve them in decision-making (beyond their experience)
- Expose them to the business (clients, management, financials, from Day 1)
- [?], Fun – Netball comp, fun comps, trivia nights etc
- Open door to the MP, GM, CEO etc
- Provide a nurturing encouraging challenging and flexible workplace and environment
- **Secondments (international – clients, associated law firms) – yep, I'd encourage a collaborative exchange structure**
- Forum for Gen y's (regular forum) to provide SA's and partners with feedback as to how they are performing, what they like about the firm, what they don't like, how could we be a better law firm
- Alumni, active

- Defined career paths, regular feedback
- Volunteering program (on firm time) to enable Gen Y to “give back” to their community

