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# How Will Legal Education and Training Keep Pace with Change?



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Policy



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Ferris Bueller famously quipped, “Life moves pretty fast.” Imagine what he would say now ...The pace of change is accelerating at warp-speed, buoyed by technological advances, communication, and globalism.

Dell Technologies authored a [report](#) by 20 tech, business and academic experts projecting 85% of jobs that will exist in 2030 have yet to be invented. Dell issued

a [statement](#) that "The pace of change will be so rapid that people will learn 'in the moment' using new technologies such as augmented reality and virtual reality. The ability to gain new knowledge will be more valuable than the knowledge itself."

Many lawyers might think this does not apply to them, but think again.

Deloitte released a 2016 [report](#) on the legal industry predicting “profound reforms” over the next decade. Several factors were cited including: automation, the rise of millennials in the workplace, and changing client demands. Deloitte projected a 39% loss of legal sector jobs. That will be offset by new positions in data analytics, legal technology architecting and design, risk mitigation, and other yet-to-be-identified fields. Consider that Deloitte has the world’s largest market share of legal services. The “profound reforms” are already underway.

### **Clients- Not Lawyers-Are in Control Now**

The transition of law from lawyer-centric, provincial, labor-intensive [guild](#) to a customer-focused, global, [digitized](#) industry requires new skillsets and training. Technology and business are now tools of the legal trade and legal education and training have lagged the marketplace. Clients are under intense pressure to “do more with less,” and they are applying that standard to legal delivery. They demand efficient, predictive, cost-effective, accessible, scalable, and agile delivery of legal services.

“Knowledge of the law” alone is insufficient for all but a handful of elite lawyers. “Practice” is narrowing as “the business of delivering legal services” is expanding. The latter requires a suite of new skillsets—project management, data analytics, business basics, technical agility, and collaboration, among others—that have yet to become standard fare in legal training. Bill Henderson, a leader in aligning the Academy with the marketplace, sums up the state-of-play: “Legal education and the legal profession are at an inflection point where traditional models of education and practice no longer fit the shifting needs of the market.”

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### .The Skill Gap

The reconfiguration of legal delivery and the skills now required has created a widening gap between demand and the supply of qualified labor. Most law schools continue to focus on doctrinal law and how to “think like a lawyer.” Their curricula are light on practice skills, marketplace changes, and business of law skills. Law schools prepare students for practice careers even as the [data](#) shows an accelerating market shift from law firms (practice-centric) to law companies (business/tech-centric).

Jae Um wrote a [piece](#) examining the human resource challenges-- the skills, knowledge and experiences that people need to realize innovation (change)—and the structural and cultural barrier legal innovation teams confront accessing the talent required. Ms. Um shines a light on the legal industry’s “skill gap” and provides a candid assessment: “high-caliber professionals with the necessary specialized business and technical skills are in short supply.”

The challenge confronting the industry is how to identify, mine, train, deploy and scale talent to fill the gap. The solution is a two-step process that involves: (1) augmenting legal expertise with additional skills focused on technological application and process/project management (as well as data analytics, collaboration, personal branding, and a learning for life mindset); and (2) economic, organizational, and cultural parity among legal professionals. If this sounds like a heavy lift, it is. Fortunately, there are a handful of training programs and international law schools that are paving the way for the legal industry’s future whose contours are being shaped.

### LawWithoutWalls (LWOW)

[LawWithoutWalls](#) is a part-virtual experiential learning program designed for practicing and aspiring lawyers. LWOW, powered by the University of Miami Law

School and ably led by Michele DeStefano, uses team building, mentorship, and an interdisciplinary approach to forge collaborative relationships for participants. LWOW has a three-pronged mission: (1) create innovations at the intersection of law, business, and technology that solve real problems and address market needs; (2) hone skills in what Ms. Destefano calls the “Lawyer Skills Delta” in her latest [book](#); and (3) improve the lawyer-client dynamic and promote collaboration.

LWOW provides participants with skills required of today’s lawyers and legal professionals—teamwork, communication, leadership, mentoring, project management, innovation, cultural competency, business planning, technology, and networking. The program’s hands-on, “real-life,” collaborative approach to problem solving and holistic solutions is ideally tailored for today’s marketplace. LWOW has provided a dynamic experience to approximately 1,000 students from 30 law and business schools around the world. Its legal mentors are drawn from the legal Academy, business, technology, and entrepreneur ranks. LWOW has conducted its program domestically and internationally, fostering a global perspective and network for participants. It has teamed with an impressive array of law firms, in-house legal departments, law schools, and global corporations to create an “everyone wins” response to the industry’s skills gap; participants acquire skills and sponsors acquire actionable knowledge and access to candidates with relevant skillsets.

### **The Institute for the Future of Law Practice (IFLP)**

The Institute for the [Future of Law Practice](#) (IFLP) in the words of co-Founder Bill Mooz, is “a partnership between all members of the legal ecosystem—corporate law departments, law firms, alternative legal service providers, and legal academics—to help modernize legal education and dramatically upgrade the skills of the next generation of legal professionals.” Mooz and Bill Henderson laid the foundation for IFLP at the University of Colorado and Indiana Law Schools where they staged a series of “legal boot camps,” exposing students to interdisciplinary real-life problem solving with an emphasis on augmented skills (beyond knowledge of the law”). The results were terrific, causing them to expand the breadth, scope, and resources by creating IFLP.

Henderson ascribes characteristically pragmatic reasons why law schools cannot go it alone where traditional models of education and practice no longer fit the shifting needs of the market: (1) legal practice requires an integration of law with problem-solving methods that are not legal in nature (e.g., data, process, project management, technology, and team-based collaboration); and (2) approaches to these new requirements are a work-in-progress being forged in the marketplace, not in the halls of academe. IFLP does the heavy-lifting for them.

IFLP has created a modularized curriculum that is available to law schools, enabling them to create new course offerings in areas that complement their traditional curriculum without incurring the research and development expense and time-lag. IFLP currently works with four law schools (Northwestern, Colorado, Indiana, and Osgoode Hall in Toronto) and has plans to expand domestically and internationally. Its interdisciplinary faculty, “mixed classrooms” of law students and mid-career professionals, and focus on augmented skills is, like LWOW, ideally suited to bridge the skills gap.

A handful of foreign law schools are already structuring their curricula to provide solutions to the skills gap. [Bucerius](#) (Germany) offers “legal” training that is equal parts law, business, and technology. Little wonder it is attracting students and collaborating with thought leaders from around the globe. [IE Law School](#) (Spain) provides an intensive focus on technology in content and learning methods to foster an entrepreneurial mindset among students. It teaches augmented legal skills necessary to bridge the talent gap and exposes students to business-related areas. Like Bucerius, IE takes a global approach, preparing graduates for the emerging [global legal community](#).

American law schools are somewhat hamstrung by the [ABA’s control](#) of legal licensure and legal education. The ABA’s recent rule change that encourages experiential learning, is encouraging, but the organization remains beholden to its dues-paying members-the profession-not the industry they serve. Legal education/training must be geared to satisfy the demands of consumers-and those in need of access to legal services, not the narrower profession. Professional training is a baseline, but it must be augmented by industry training. That’s

because the industry is quickly subsuming the profession, and delivering legal services requires not only lawyers but also an array of other experts and resources.

## **Conclusion**

Law's skills gap is the byproduct of the [culture war](#) between lawyers and the broader legal industry. Lawyers are having a difficult time embracing the profession's transformation from profession to profession-within-an-industry. Doctors traveled that path decades ago as medicine morphed from "medical practice" to "healthcare services." Both professions are service businesses, and the methods and tools to deliver those services are changing rapidly. Legal education and training must "mind the gap" and respond to the needs of the society its students serve.

I am the CEO of Legal Mosaic, a legal business consultancy; speaker; author; and Distinguished Fellow at Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law. I was recently appointed by the Singapore Academy of Law to serve as their inaugural LIFTED Catalyst-in-Residence. The ... [MORE](#)