

Strategic and Business Operations Manager

Reports To: Partner responsible for Patent & Trade Mark Paralegals and Business Support Administration		
Purpose: To provide strategic and operational leadership across the Patent Paralegal, Trade Mark Paralegal and Business Support Administration functions, ensuring teams are effectively structured, resourced, trained and managed to deliver a high-quality, efficient and client-focused service to fee earners and internal stakeholders across all Barker Brettell offices. To lead, coach and develop the Technical & Workflow Specialists, Patent Paralegal, Trade Mark Paralegal and Business Support Administration teams, building capability, capacity and consistency through effective performance management, workforce planning and resource utilisation. To drive operational excellence by reviewing team structures, workflows, working practices and service delivery, and by leading process improvement, organisational development and change initiatives that support current and future business needs. To act as a trusted advisor on workforce capability & organisational effectiveness and capacity, building effective working relationships with Partners, Fee Earners, Department Heads and Team Managers to understand and assist with operational management.		
Responsibilities:	Technical Skills and Qualifications:	
Leadership and People Management • Lead, coach and develop the Specialists, Paralegals, Administrators and Business Support teams, promoting accountability, engagement and continuous improvement. • Manage direct reports through regular and effective one-to-one meetings, probation reviews, performance reviews and development discussions. • Foster strong, positive and trusted relationships with direct reports, supporting open communication, engagement and effective team working. • Foster a positive, collaborative and inclusive working environment that reflects the Firm's values and supports employee wellbeing. • Work closely with the Technical & Workflow Specialists to ensure consistent management practices, performance standards and development opportunities are applied effectively across all teams.	• Significant experience in a senior operational leadership or strategic role, with a proven ability to influence decision-making. • Demonstrable experience managing multi-disciplinary teams within a professional services environment. • Proven ability to lead organisational change, continuous improvement and operational strategy initiatives. • Proven experience shaping and delivering strategic and business plans that drive operational priorities, build future capability and support organisational growth. • Strong commercial awareness and ability to align operational priorities with business objectives. • Strong analytical skills, with the ability to	

Performance Management and Employee Relations • Set clear expectations for performance, behaviour, attendance and service standards, ensuring these are applied consistently across all teams. • Identify and address performance concerns at the earliest opportunity through coaching, guidance and development support. • Manage informal and formal performance, capability, conduct, attendance and employee relations matters effectively, in line with Firm policies and employment legislation. • Implement and monitor performance improvement plans, using coaching, guidance and formal processes where appropriate. • Lead disciplinary, grievance, capability and attendance management processes, ensuring fairness, consistency and compliance with Firm policy and employment legislation. Strategic Workforce Planning and Resource Management • Develop workforce plans that align team structure, skills and resource levels with business objectives and anticipated workloads. • Use management information, workflow data and operational metrics to identify trends, risks, resource pressures and improvement opportunities. • Report regularly to the Partnership on workloads, collaborating with Technical & Workflow Specialists and other departments to identify efficiencies and support effective resource planning. • Ensure key processes are clearly documented, regularly reviewed and accessible to support consistency, continuity and effective knowledge sharing across teams. • Develop and implement short-, medium- and long-term strategies, including one-, three- and five-year plans, to support operational effectiveness, future capability and business growth. • Anticipate future resource and capability requirements, making and implementing recommendations to support business growth and operational effectiveness. • Oversee recruitment, onboarding, succession planning, talent development, absence cover and resource allocation to maintain service continuity.	interpret management information, workflow and performance data to support decision-making. • Strong leadership, coaching, mentoring, stakeholder management and influencing skills. • Extensive experience managing informal and formal performance processes, including improvement plans, disciplinary, grievance, capability and attendance procedures. • Strong understanding of employment legislation and best practice people management principles. • Experience developing workforce plans, succession plans and talent development strategies. • Experience supporting budget management, salary review processes and bonus-related input to inform effective workforce and financial planning. • Excellent communication, organisational and problem-solving skills, with the ability to work effectively across departments, managers and senior stakeholders. • Knowledge of Intellectual Property administration, Patent or Trade Mark processes. • Preferable CIPA and/or CITMA qualifications, or a sound understanding of the Intellectual Property profession with a willingness to undertake relevant training. • Preferable familiarity with Inprotech, iManage and related Professional Support systems. • Relevant management, leadership or coaching qualification. • Proficient IT skills, including Microsoft Word, Excel, Outlook and PowerPoint, with the ability to analyse, manipulate and present workflow and management information. For use in reporting, analysis and workforce planning. • Ability to monitor, interpret and report on workload, workflow, productivity and capacity
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Operational Excellence and Continuous Improvement • Maintain strategic oversight of the Patent Paralegal, Trade Mark Paralegal and Business Support functions, ensuring services are delivered efficiently and in line with business needs. • Review team structures, workflows, processes, systems and working practices to improve efficiency, quality and service delivery. • Identify and implement opportunities to streamline processes, including the appropriate use of AI by Paralegal teams to improve efficiency, consistency and service delivery. • Lead organisational change, transformation and continuous improvement initiatives across Professional Support functions. • Work with Technical & Workflow Specialists, Department Heads, Partners and managers to agree, implement and embed process improvements and operational change. • Maintain a working knowledge of key systems, including Inprotech, to support operational decision-making and problem solving. • Champion innovation and a culture of continuous improvement. Stakeholder Management • Build effective working relationships with Partners, Fee Earners, Department Heads and Team Managers to understand service expectations and resolve operational issues. • Act as a trusted advisor on workforce capability, organisational effectiveness, resource planning and team performance. • Provide insight, performance information and recommendations to support senior stakeholder decision-making and continuous service improvement. Learning, Development and Organisational Capability • Ensure effective induction, training, process guidance and development frameworks are in place across all teams. • Work with Workflow Specialists to ensure technical and workflow training is delivered consistently and supports current and future role requirements. • Lead succession planning and talent development initiatives to support future capability and business continuity. • Promote knowledge sharing, collaboration and continuous professional development across the Professional Support function.	data to support resource planning and operational decision-making. • Strong understanding of workflow management principles, resource allocation and service delivery within a professional services environment. • Experience of identifying process improvements and implementing more efficient ways of working to enhance service delivery and operational effectiveness. • Good appreciation of equality, diversity and inclusion principles and their application within the recruitment, development and training of team members
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Service Delivery and Governance • Maintain oversight of service standards, quality measures, key performance indicators and operational performance across all teams. • Ensure services are delivered consistently, efficiently and in line with stakeholder expectations, Firm policies, procedures and professional standards. • Ensure appropriate operational controls, governance standards and risk mitigation measures are maintained across Professional Support functions. • Support Technical & Workflow Specialists in resolving issues relating to work output, work allocation, delivery standards and service continuity. • Support strategic and operational projects that contribute to the Firm's wider business objectives.	
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Please email your CV to: recruitment@barkerbrettell.co.uk