# Invest in Yourself and in Others

**Career Development**

It has been said that the best investment one can make involves investing in one's self. Whether that means furthering your education, expanding your world awareness through travel, volunteering for an organization whose mission you support, or simply indulging in quiet pastimes like reading or self reflection — it's important to continually strive to do and be better. Presenting the best version of yourself translates to all areas of your life.

In our professional lives, while it's important to work on personal goals and invest in the work that we do as individuals, it's more important, in my opinion, to invest in those we lead. I believe investing in people is essential to the health of your organization, and it's because of this belief that I introduced a leadership development program here at ACC.

Our people are our greatest asset, and when the team does well, the organization does even better. By investing in leadership development, you not only cultivate an environment of opportunities for potential advancement and professional growth, but you also send a clear message that you care about the people working hard to advance the mission of the company. Whether a company doing well today will continue to do well tomorrow depends largely upon the knowledge, skill ingenuity, and resiliency of its people. Therefore, current leadership must work to prepare the next generation of leaders, and organizations must commit the necessary resources to the ongoing development of their people.

ACC also invests in leadership training for committee and chapter leaders, as well as career

enriching initiatives like Women In The House. While official programs are great, it is also important to unofficially mentor junior staff or colleagues who are interested in expanding their skillsets. I understand that time is a precious commodity that we never seem to have enough of. However, the rewards of simply taking the time to listen, offer constructive feedback, and mentor someone are well worth it.

There are many ways to foster professional growth within an organization. This career-focused issue of the Docket offers some pretty good ideas to take back to your team, including articles on succession planning and management, how to leverage key strategies to advance your path to in-house leadership, and information on how to manage your public self, online. If you're looking for additional resources, check out a recent ACC CLO Roundtable, "Staff Management, Development & Succession Planning", or see what your local chapter has planned. For example, the Colorado Chapter's recent addition to its professional development series, "Body Talk: Why What You Don't Say Matters," offers tips on how to manage the messages you send without saying a word.

Professional development is more than a catchphrase. To be effective, it needs to be purposeful and organization-wide. It requires the commitment of senior staff and those striving to hold senior positions. I encourage you to seek out opportunities to not only advance your own development, but to support that of others. I guarantee that the investment in your company's people will pay great dividends — literally and figuratively.

Veta T. Richardson

Former President & CEO

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Veta T. Richardson is the immediate past president and chief executive officer of the Association of Corporate Counsel (ACC). Headquartered in Washington, DC, ACC is the world's largest legal association dedicated exclusively to serving the interests of in-house counsel. With an international membership of more than 45,000 in-house lawyers at more than 10,000 organizations in 85 countries, ACC serves as the "voice of the in-house bar" for corporate lawyers at 98 percent of the Fortune 100 and 51 percent of the Global 1000.

With more than 60 chapter operations around the world, Richardson's top priorities as CEO involve continuing to increase ACC's global footprint and charting the organization through a strategic plan and vision designed to strengthen its position as the global voice for in-house counsel. Members look to ACC to advocate in support of their rights and interests as in-house counsel, as well as to offer the practice resources, education, global legal and regulatory analysis, and networking opportunities needed to advance their professional development.