



Why In-house Lawyers are the Real Experts

Skills and Professional Development



This month's ACC Docket is one of your more valuable issues.

It includes ACC's annual focus on employment law. Here, you will find the latest practical advice on non-competes, independent contractors, workers' compensation, employee investigations, and cutting-edge views on worker surveillance.

You may not specialize in this field, but if you serve as in-house counsel for an organization of any size, employment law is always relevant. No matter your role or rank within the company, your client will always need good employment law advice. Even if it's just a hallway conversation, you are often the default advisor on sudden topics related to employment issues.

Reading this issue of ACC Docket won't make you an expert, but it will take you a step closer. And, as these articles show, in-house counsel are at the bleeding edge of employment and labor law.

Take, for example, the burgeoning field of privacy law, now enshrined in legislation worldwide. Back in the 1990s, it was in-house counsel who first started the dialogue about online privacy rights, before any government agency or external firm had developed the expertise.

Or consider the twisting path of independent contractors. Before state courts and regulators started opining on what it meant to be an employee in the gig economy, in-house lawyers were busy planning for laws yet to be written.

And when it comes to non-compete and non-solicitation clauses, in-house counsel can't be beat. We

anticipate the latest court opinions and guide our clients through a morass of conflicting customs and laws.

For in-house counsel dealing with employment law issues, experience is our teacher. There is comfort and solace in finding an external expert who can quote the latest case law. But there is efficiency and practicality when you have an in-house attorney who deals with the issues every day.

For these seasoned in-house experts, ACC is a secret weapon. Beyond the materials provided here, you have the online resources of acc.com, as well as the expertise of global colleagues who participate in the Employment and Labor Law Committee.

For ACC members, we joined the in-house bar for a variety of reasons. We probably didn't realize, however, that we would be dealing with so many novel legal issues, responding to clients who are challenging business norms. By the time legislatures and outside experts first hear about a new legal conundrum, in-house lawyers have moved on to the next frontier.

It's a perfect example of in-house lawyers working on the edge of theory and practice, and it is a further example of why we have the greatest jobs in the field of law.

[Bill Mordan](#)



General Counsel and Company Secretary

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