In 2021, large law firms lost 20% of the associates in their ranks, and the emirges were not necessarily looking for new careers, higher pay or fewer billable hours, says author, business consultant and UVA Law lecturer Ben Sachs ’09, citing a recent study.

“In good times or bad, the law firms that are best able to hold on to top talent are the ones that manage our time and work-life balance,” Sachs said.

It starts with understanding what “good” culture looks like, he said. “Great teams have four traits in common: trust, ownership, productive conflict and accountability.” His book offers concrete guidance for building each of these qualities in legal teams.

He also points out how these traits build on each other.

“For example, legal teams that do not engage in feedback suffer from a lack of accountability. But they may not realize that the real barrier is a lack of trust,” he said.

Another challenge, Sachs said, is that today’s firms take the wrong approach to training. “Generic management training aimed at an entire firmwide cohort, like middiws associates, often falls flat.”

Instead, Sachs prefers to isolate a single team or practice group. Then he brings everyone, including junior associates and partners, into the session.

“When everyone is in the same room, we skip the hypotheticals and talk about our specific challenges. Instead of generic tips, we agree on concrete actions and leave with commitments,” he said.

According to Sachs, “It’s no longer just a training it’s change management.”

Building a stronger management culture, he said, means rejecting the idea of a free market and replacing it with a more intentional mentoring system that reduces that disparity.

Ultimately, he said, embracing a more structured approach to culture creation will pay off many times over for attorneys.

“If you can build a team that loves to work with you, they will run through walls to help you and the client achieve goals. That’s how you blow competitors out of the water.”

— Melissa Castro Wyatt
Intellectual property, and economic and commercial disruption in technology.

The book delivers an in-depth examination of the community, legal and commercial structures relating to the usage and exploitation of open source, enabling readers to understand the legal environment within which open source operates and what is required for its appropriate governance and curation in enterprise and the public sector.

CIRCUMCISION IS A FRAUD
And the Coming Legal Reckoning

PETER W. ADLER '83
SELF-PUBLISHED

Adler argues that unnecessary circumcision or male genital cutting is a complex 150-year-old multibillion-dollar-per-year fraud in the United States. He encourages men, boys, and their parents to bring lawsuits against physicians and hospitals to recover damages from the procedure. Successful lawsuits will compensate circumcised boys and men for their losses and help speed the demise of the practice, Adler says.

THE 6:20 MAN
DAVID BALDACCI '86
GRAND CENTRAL PUBLISHING

Every day without fail, Travis Devine puts on a cheap suit, grabs his faux-leather briefcase, and boards the 6:20 commuter train to Manhattan, where he works as an entry-level analyst at the city's most prestigious investment firm. In the mornings, he gazes out the train window at the lavish homes of the uberwealthy, dreaming about joining their ranks. Then one morning, Devine's tedious routine is shattered by an anonymous email. Sara Ewes, Devine's co-worker and former girlfriend, has been found hanging in a storage room of his office building—presumably a suicide, at least for now—prompting the NYPD to come calling on him. Before the day is out, Devine receives another ominous visit, a confrontation that threatens to dredge up grim secrets from his Army past unless he participates in a clandestine investigation into his firm. This treacherous role will take him into the impossibly glittering lives he once saw only through a train window and to the darkest corners of the country’s economic halls of power — where something rotten lurks. And apart from this high-stakes conspiracy, there’s a killer out there with an agenda—and Devine is the bull’s eye.

TIME FLIES
PJ HARRIS ’16
ILLUSTRATED BY DYLAN FANT
STAR & ROSE PUBLISHING

This children’s book seeks to instill the lesson that throughout life’s journey, we must endeavor to treasure our precious moments while we are in them. This book was written to encourage readers to live in the present with purpose and gratitude.

THE JURY HAS A VERDICT!
THAD G. LONG
SELF-PUBLISHED

The third in a trilogy of legal courtroom dramas/thrillers featuring fictitious attorney Ted Born, “The Jury Has a Verdict!” is a prequel to the first two. All three books narrate the struggles of an ethical lawyer trying to achieve justice for his clients, often against heavy odds. This book focuses on Born’s interactions with judges and juries, with competing views of the facts and jury verdicts in high-stakes litigation, leaving readers pondering the question, “What is justice?”

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