

## For better operations results, try chemistry

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Although not a new role, the legal operations professional has only recently become more commonplace. In a handful of years, an increasing number of legal departments have turned their attention to creating and filling a legal operations position.

While the core function of operations may not be significantly different within the legal department than elsewhere in the company, working within the framework of

legal may present some challenges unique to that setting and to the task of managing lawyers. And while operations may seem to an outsider to be a role primarily focused on managing budgets, spreadsheets and logistics, seasoned professionals typically know that managing any of those tasks is often secondary, and in fact, empowered by, the ability to aptly navigate relationships. The ability to build rapport, work seamlessly with a diverse group of others and cultivate

a strong team culture can be imperative to the success of any initiative. Whether you are a legal operations professional that is new to managing lawyers, or one with experience, in a department that is large or small, a focused effort on understanding unique working styles and developing personal relationships can go a long way.

To help leaders better tackle the challenge of effectively managing people, relationships and teams, Deloitte has created a framework called Business Chemistry. Business Chemistry focuses on working styles, more specifically on observable behaviors likely to be seen or demonstrated in the workplace. With a focus on research, analytics and data, Business Chemistry can help professionals not only better understand their own working style, but also easily identify other types in the workplace. Business Chemistry uses an online assessment to match individuals to one—sometimes two—of four types:



### Drivers

value challenge and generate momentum.



### Guardians

value stability and bring order and rigor.



### Integrators

value connection and draw teams together.



### Pioneers

value possibilities and spark creativity.

Each type has distinct likes and dislikes that can be managed and navigated in a work context. It is not a personality test, or a skills assessment, but rather a simple-to-understand and easy-to-apply framework for helping develop better interpersonal work-oriented relationships and building stronger, highly functional diverse teams.

Since the inception of Business Chemistry, Deloitte has surveyed over one quarter of a million professionals globally. Mining this vast pool of data for trends, we have developed some valuable insights. For those, like legal operations professionals, who are tasked with building relationships with others in a professional environment, these insights may help you better navigate your department and maximize outcomes.

## Three tips for leveraging business chemistry in the legal operations role

### 1 Know yourself

In business, each of the four Business Chemistry types are roughly equally represented. Review the four types and their defining characteristics and decide which you might be. It's ok if more than one type feels right, most people have some characteristics of all four, but identify more deeply with only one or two.

**Guardians** are generally reserved, practical and enjoy structure and discipline. They are careful, detail oriented and value loyalty. They don't mind silence or working on their own. They can be counted on to deliver high quality, well thought out work product. They are pragmatic rule followers, turned off by disorder or uncertainty. Guardians prefer to have plenty of time to think through their work and dislike tight deadlines.

When it comes to diplomacy, inclusion, and building consensus, **Integrators** are likely best suited. They are strong empaths, helpful and emotionally in tuned, although not always technically oriented. They have a strong desire to be connected with others, as well as with ideas, and they sometimes value relationship over deadlines, but their ability to bring cohesion to a team can be second-to-none. They dislike inflexibility, since their inclination is to take everyone's opinion into account, and they are turned off by anything divisive, including office politics and conflict.

**Drivers** tend to be technical, quantitative and logical. They are competitive, dominant and quick to act/react. They like to win and have strong opinions. When interfacing with

a Driver, direct is best. Drivers prefer to get right to the point, and appreciate concise communication backed up with evidence. A Driver is likely to challenge others. This isn't an insult; it's how they think, often playing devil's advocate to deepen their own understanding of an issue. Drivers hate inefficiency and indecisiveness.

**Pioneers** are full of energy. They are visionary, exploratory, creative and like to think and move quickly. They embrace risk and are spontaneous and adaptable. They prefer big-picture thinking to details and generally have an anything-is-possible attitude. They are bold, imaginative and creative and dislike rules, limitations and process.

## 2 Know your colleagues.

While the four types are evenly distributed in the workplace generally, when we isolated Business Chemistry results for in-house lawyers, we discovered an interesting trend. Integrators and Guardians are the most prevalent type, each comprising roughly one third, while the remaining third is almost evenly split among Drivers and Pioneers.

When interacting with each of these types, think about the following:

To maximize an **Integrator's** role in your department, or on a team, make projects collaborative, ask open-ended questions and listen, plan to give them enough time that they don't feel rushed, establish ground rules and help ensure that they are respected and be sure to connect their work to the mission or ultimate goal.

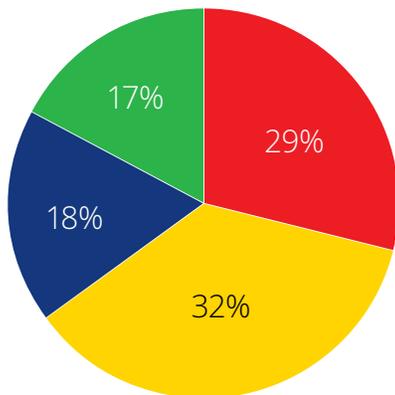
To maximize your interactions with **Guardians**, and their ability to contribute in a team setting, think about providing materials in advance of any meeting, you might also suggest to them when and where you'd like them to contribute so they can prepare their remarks in advance. Stay on track and try not to stray from the

agenda. Keep emotions in check and don't put them on the spot. Value their interest in details and process, but don't get stuck in the weeds.

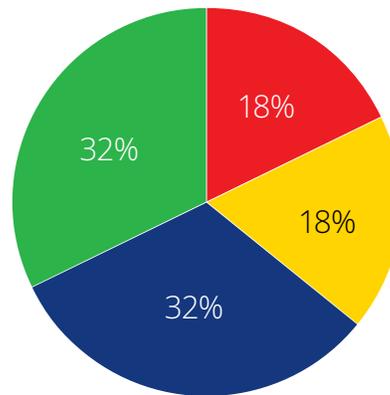
To maximize a **Pioneer's** contribution, give them space and time to think out loud. Try structuring meetings with Pioneers to include time to get out of your chair, move around the room and brainstorm on white boards. Think about playing music before the meeting begins, or walking to a meeting location outside the office. Try not to push details, especially when the Pioneer is in brainstorming mode; if you must engage a Pioneer on details be sure to explain the importance of the details as they relate to the Pioneer's vision.

When working with a **Driver**, be prepared to jump right into the work conversation. For many Drivers, small talk feels like a waste of time, and it's especially difficult for them if they feel there is important work to be done. Try not to let their work-first style make you feel undervalued and don't let them intimidate you. They will enjoy interacting with you if you can stand your ground and defend your opinions, even if they don't agree with you.

### C-Suite



### Legal Executives



#### Legend



### 3 Consider the environment

Understanding your Business Chemistry type and the types of others in your department can help you to better execute on the department's vision and strategy, manage change, navigate negotiations, and deliver value in the form of highly functional teams. It may help you to be more effective at coaching individuals in your department on setting goals, and helping others identify and tend to areas of improvement. You can use Business Chemistry to think about the overall work environment, potentially leading to higher levels of employee engagement and work satisfaction. When thinking about the work environment, here are a few guiding principles we've learned from Business Chemistry.

Not all types engage with stress in the same way. While all four types feel stressed when they make a mistake, Guardians and Integrators are more likely than the other two types to feel stress in situations where there is a challenging workload, in moments of conflict, in urgent situations and during face-to-face engagements (such as giving a presentation). Nearly one third of Guardians

and Integrators report feeling stressed all or nearly all of the time. Additionally, Drivers and Pioneers are more likely than Guardians or Integrators to report that they feel most effective under moderate to high stress. Thinking about how best to structure projects, deadlines and other critical assignments in a workplace with a high number of Guardians and Integrators might allow for better engagement and satisfaction.

When looking at departmental and company leadership, it may be helpful to note that roughly two thirds of C-suite executives are Pioneers or Drivers. If you find yourself bridging the gap between Driver and Pioneer leaders and Guardian and Integrator talent, consider the following techniques:

- **Create harmony from discord.**

Opposite types, Pioneers and Guardians or Drivers and Integrators, have opposite strengths which can present a challenge. But encouraging collaborative teamwork can help them to leverage harmonizing skills set.

- **Spotlight less represented types.**

Less represented types may feel shut out of the conversation where other types outnumber them. But, having fewer voices can create unproductive group think outcomes. Give less represented types dedicated time to speak, lead and ideate in the style that works best for them to inject energy and creativity into the conversation.

The Business Chemistry framework has been purposely designed to be easy to remember, and easy to apply in the workplace. With a little time invested in learning the four types, and observing the behaviors and preferences of your colleagues, you could be able to easily identify the types and leverage the strengths of each, both individually and in teams. Doing so may allow the operations professional to interact more effectively with colleagues in the legal department, design impactful teams, build strong and effective relationships, and manage the working environment to improve morale and drive productivity.

#### Links:

- BC book: <https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/pages/about-deloitte/articles/practical-magic-for-crafting-powerful-work-relationships.html>
- HBR article: <https://hbr.org/2017/03/the-new-science-of-team-chemistry>

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