



Be Bold – my year as a Legal Technologist



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It's been a year since I first set foot at DLA Piper Sweden and began my role as a Legal Technologist. Since then it's been a crazy rollercoaster of personal development, discovering the role and my place in the organization but also a year in which DLA Piper moved to a new office, welcomed a lot of new people, and established other new roles. There is a lot to be grateful for, and even more lessons learned. Reflecting upon this year it hits me time and time again how crazy it really was that I got hired for a position that didn't previously exist at the firm, with a title people have a difficult time grasping, during remote work and a pandemic. The fact that I'm still in law school, was unexperienced for the role and not qualified beyond "I think this is super interesting" makes it even more unbelievable. Considering the reactions, I usually get from the industry, I bet my position can seem a little crazy to outsiders too. But it's not crazy, it's bold.

Being bold is one of DLA Pipers values, together with *be supportive* and *be collaborative*. I like to think values are lanterns we follow when we are at crossroads and do not know what to do and which path to follow. Last summer when my internship was coming to an end, with a mountain of work still left but an escalating pandemic situation DLA Piper looked to their values and decided to be bold and give me a shot at the Legal Technologist role without being sure about the outcome or how it would all pan out. If I'm being honest, I think I was influenced to be a bit bold too and ask for the role so I could stay on.

During this year we've accomplished a lot of small and big steps towards a more efficient and digital firm. As a Legal Technologist I've had the privilege to go out in our firm, talk to people, get their pain points and frustrations down, hear their ideas and thoughts about the current systems and been able to bounce those ideas around together with them. I've also been on countless demo calls with legal tech and other Saas vendors around the globe – discussing everything from Legal Tech tools, to adoption hurdles, and legal culture. I've been able to participate and even speak at events like Legal Tech Glögit in Helsinki, Legal Operations Summit in Berlin and of course at many podcasts and webinars. All this from my home office through my laptop with a schedule I chose myself. The freedom to explore the role as well as the whole DLA Piper firm, together with

space and time for ideation and innovation has been a great joy and very productive in times when productivity generally has been low.

My boss and I have worked with a very productive mindset to enable all of this: responsible freedom. My responsibilities have always been clear, but how they should be executed has been up to me. The mentality has allowed us to work together even if my boss is an extremely busy partner at the firm, and even with me only showing my face at the office a handful of times the past year. I'm tremendously grateful for this way of working as it shows trust and belief in me and my capabilities. It also showcases the bold value: who let's their law school student employees run freely with a project to see how far they can get? I'm willing to bet not many, even if more definitely should.

I want to challenge all employers out there, to place more bets on all your junior and new employees and be bolder in the way you work and encourage development for these newbies. I know we could not have gotten nearly as far in the project as we have if I would have had to ask permission or write offs at each turn. Especially now when the topic of returning to the office is a hot one, I hope that examples like my own can show that you can build trust and productive relationships even remotely and that a little faith in your juniors may just generate a lot of value for the firm.

Freedom and responsibility, with a dash of boldness – that's a legal industry I want to work in.

Finally, some *bold* things I did this year:

- I was involved in the process of recruiting and hiring our new Knowledge Manager
- I was, and I am, the project lead of an internal project where everyone is a higher rank than me
- I organized a document automation workshop together with a vendor, and invited our CMP, who participated

I'm looking forward to doing more *collaborative, supportive, and bold* things at DLA Piper.