

Patrick J. McKenna

Professional Profile



An internationally recognized authority on professional service firm management, Patrick McKenna has, since 1983, worked with the top leaders of premier law firms around the globe to discuss, challenge and escalate their thinking on how to manage and compete effectively. He currently serves as co-Chair of the Managing Partner Leadership Advisory Board (the LAB), a forum for new firm leaders to pose questions about their burning issues.

The *Financial Post* labels McKenna “a professional firm management and marketing guru, with a client base stretching from Britain to the United States.” Jim Kouzes, Chairman Emeritus, Tompeters! company described him as “a highly seasoned and extraordinarily credible professional.” And *GlobalLawReview.com* identified him as one of twenty International Visionaries in the legal profession for “their vision, sheer hard work, professional eminence, and humanity.”

Patrick is the author of a pioneering text on law firm marketing, *Practice Development: Creating a Marketing Mindset* (Butterworths, 1989), recognized by an international journal as being “among the top ten books that any professional services marketer should have.” His subsequent works include *Herding Cats: A Handbook for Managing Partners and Practice Leaders* (IBMP, 1995); and *Beyond Knowing: 16 Cage-Rattling Questions To Jump-Start Your Practice Team* (IBMP, 2000).

One of the profession's foremost experts on firm leadership, his book (co-authored with David Maister), *First Among Equals: How to Manage a Group of Professionals*, (The Free Press, 2002) topped business bestseller lists in the United States, Canada and Australia; has been translated into nine languages; is currently in its sixth printing; and received an award for being one of the best business books of 2002. Leaders across various professions like Kenneth LeStrange, Chairman of Aon Risk Services; Douglas McCracken, CEO of Deloitte Consulting; Claudio Fernandez Araoz, Executive with Egon Zehnder and Partners; and Allan Koltin, President of the Practice Development Institute have described the book as ‘the essential guide to practice leadership.’

In 2006, McKenna’s e-book *First 100 Days: Transitioning A New Managing Partner* (NXTBook) earned glowing reviews and has been read by leaders in 63 countries. This publication culminated in Patrick being asked to conduct a one-day master class for new managing partners, currently held at the University

of Chicago. Thus far over 50 new firm leaders from legal, accounting and consulting firms have graduated from the program.

According to Richard Nix, a new managing partner at McAfee & Taft a full year following his attending this master class: “Your sessions really did help me to prioritize my goals and objectives for the first 100 days. As I look back, I really didn’t know what I didn’t know leading up to taking on this new responsibility as the Managing Partner. The guidance and suggestions I took away from the seminar (and reading materials) were extremely helpful. I had a much better understanding of what to expect. I really do appreciate all of your help.”

In 2005 the book *Management Skills* (John Wiley) named McKenna among the “leading thinkers in the field“ together with Peter Drucker and Warren Bennis; and in 2008, the book *In The Company of Leaders* included his work amongst other notable luminaries like Dr. Marshall Goldsmith and Brian Tracy.

His published articles have appeared in over 50 leading professional journals, newsletters, and online sources; and his work has been featured in *Fast Company*, *Business Week*, *The Globe and Mail*, *The Economist*, *Investor’s Business Daily* and *The Financial Times*.

He is an active member of the ABA, former chair of the Membership Services Committees for the Law Practice Management Section, served on the Advisory Board for Sheffield Business School’s MBA program on Professional Services Firm Management [UK], is a member of the Strategic Leadership Forum, and currently serves on the faculty of the Managing Partner Forum.

McKenna has lectured on professional service management and marketing for the Canadian, American and International Bar Associations; the Canadian Tax Foundation, the International Union of Lawyers, the Institute For Law Firm Management, The Institute For International Research, the Society for Marketing Professional Services, Centaur Conferences Europe and the Financial Times Of London. He is a frequently requested speaker, having appeared in London, Geneva, Vienna, Munich, Marrakech, Istanbul, Singapore, Hong Kong, New York, Boston, Chicago, San Francisco, and Toronto for professional conferences and symposiums during the past five years.

McKenna did his MBA graduate work at the Canadian School of Management and is among the first alumni from Harvard’s Leadership in Professional Service Firms.

He has served at least one of the top ten largest law firms in each of over a dozen different countries. His work with North American law firms has evidenced him serving at least 62 of the largest NLJ 250 firms. His consulting expertise was acknowledged in 2008 when he was identified through independent research compiled and published by Lawdragon as “one of the most trusted names in legal consulting” and his three decades of experience in consulting led to his being the subject of a Harvard Law School Case Study entitled: *Innovations In Legal Consulting* (2011).

McKenna is most often brought in to work with firms on issues associated with strategic planning and differentiation, initiating change, client service excellence, and effective firm management.

www.patrickmckenna.com