

Leadership in the Legal Marketing Industry - Foundations for Success with Courtney Lynch (Part 1)



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The fast-paced legal industry requires marketers to be quick-thinking, innovative and determined. In addition to embodying these characteristics, leaders in the industry distinguish themselves by being decisive, meeting and exceeding expectations they also set for others, serving those they lead, and influencing and inspiring others. Ultimately, leadership is about taking responsibility for your actions, your team, and your success. As female Captains in the Marines — a rarity — Courtney Lynch and Angie Morgan learned valuable leadership skills. In their best-selling book, [Leading from the Front](#), they argue that by making changes in their behavior and attitude, people can become leaders and improve their careers, their lives and the lives of others. The National Law Review caught up with [Courtney Lynch](#) in advance of [LMA's Leadership Development Certificate Program](#)¹ for a two part conversation about leadership. This installment discusses how Courtney's philosophies and time in the Corps influenced her leadership skills and career path as a private citizen. Part two will dive into the leadership principles that she and Angie developed and outlined in *Leading from the Front*, and how they have helped many others develop leadership skills through their workshops.

When did you first realize that your time in the Marine Corps

gave you the tools you needed to become a leader in the corporate/law firm world?

My first private sector role after transitioning out of the Marine Corps was working as a sales representative for a software company. After just a couple of months in that role I was promoted to a management position. I was the 2nd youngest person on the team I was managing, and prior to coming on board the company I had zero experience with software development. I knew then that my leadership skills were responsible for my success. During my time in uniform I received thousands of hours of leadership training. Yet, I didn't know how relevant that training was to the private sector until I started earning promotions and increased responsibility because of my ability to lead people. You manage things, you lead people. I used my leadership skills to leverage the outstanding technical abilities others had.

What inspired you and Angie Morgan (co-founder of Lead Star and co-author of Leading from the Front), to found Lead Star?

Angie and I realized that we had had a very unique experience learning to lead as Marines. Today only about 1% of the population serves in the military. Yet, all can benefit from the leadership lessons taught to those who wear the uniform. I believe better leaders mean a better world. We stated Lead Star to help companies, nonprofits, government agencies and academic institutions develop leaders at all levels. Leadership development isn't mysterious, but it does need to be intentional and strategic. Organizations seeking to achieve greater results through people come to Lead Star to discover the pathway to leader development that works best for their unique culture, goals and objectives.

Do you believe people have innate leadership qualities or that they are made?

Being the lawyer that I am, I'll answer both to that question. Today, behavioral science shows us that about 30% of our ability to lead is innate — our intelligence, appearance, personality and charisma are inherent at birth. The majority of our ability to influence and inspire, about 70% of our leadership capability, is learned. The key is we have to be open to developing the behaviors that allow us to lead well. We need to cultivate our credibility, sharpen our ability to be decisive, develop accountability, seek to serve and build our confidence. The challenge is that many believe leadership fluency is developed along with ascending into positions of authority. In reality, leadership is not about power, prestige or status. It's about responsibility. When we commit ourselves to developing as a leader we are able to leverage all of our natural strengths and learned capabilities.

How has your time in law school and as an attorney influenced the development of your leadership principles?

Law school prepares you to think in new ways. Leaders are committed to developing and stretching their thinking. I loved learning the law and I value how the skills I developed in that pursuit have allowed me to build success as a leadership development practitioner. Working in a law firm also allowed me to understand the

value of leadership development. I believe it takes less time to become a leader than it does to become a lawyer. You just have to commit to the pursuit. Legal professionals invest thousands of hours honing their craft. If a professional invests just an ounce of that time in growing as a leader, they'll significantly increase the value of their contribution to an organization, team or family.

[Stay tuned for part two of our interview with Courtney Lynch.](#)

¹ The Legal Marketing Association and Lead Star will be holding the inaugural [LMA Leadership Development Certificate Program](#) November 15-16 in Chicago. Courtney Lynch and Sean Lynch will be coaching participants to help them develop a unique perspective on their own personal leadership styles and tendencies.

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