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Miami Office Managing Partner Enrique Martin Discusses Associate Retention at the International Bar Association Conference

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Winston & Strawn Miami Office Managing Partner Enrique Martin spoke on an International Bar Association panel featuring global law firm leaders who discussed how to achieve long term retention of young lawyers.

As remote work has become more common, surveys have showed that a large percentage of associates are willing to leave a firm that does not provide for flexible work-from-home schedules. Enrique and the other panelists agreed that working from home can cost young professionals opportunities for valuable mentorship experience and skill development, and potentially negatively impact their mental health due to isolation and the blurred lines between work and personal life. Enrique went on to mention that younger lawyers are statistically more diverse in race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation. Getting this wrong can lead to the unintended consequence of diverse lawyers disproportionately leaving a firm.

He also stated that retention requires communication with younger associates and partners about how to help young employees reach their goals. The presence of associates and partners alike is important, as many associates join firms hoping to interact with the firm's leadership. In terms of mental health, Enrique said, having discussions with employees about the constant connectivity can help address potential issues. He recalled that when he entered the legal profession, the absence of certain modern technologies meant that there was more separation between work and one's personal life.

"Nowadays ... my cellphone's in my hand. I go home. Lines are blurred," he said.

Enrique emphasized the importance of leaders having discussions with younger associates about the pitfalls of working from home too often. Working from home more often increases the extent to which your work life get incorporated into your home life.

Read additional coverage of the panel in the Daily Business Review article.

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Enrique J. Martin