

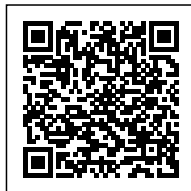
# FIVE KEY BEHAVIORS TO BE AN EFFECTIVE GENERAL COUNSEL

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Today, the role of general counsel is more important than ever. From playing a central part in coordinating Covid-19 response to providing input on strategic plans, a GC who is able to set priorities, clarify actions and balance competing interests is crucial for a company to execute effectively in this uncertain environment. However, most GC don't have the impact or influence they should or desire.

According to a [Gartner Survey](#) – which collects answers from 97 global GC from large and midsize enterprises – less than half believe they play a significant role in identifying and managing emerging issues, providing CEO support or executing corporate initiatives. The aim of the research is indeed to understand the behaviors that drive achievement of personal objectives, executive influence and corporate goals

In particular, making changes to five key behaviors—related to role, risk governance, client need, time management and legal investment—can turn a GC from good to great, having more influence and contributing more to firm outcomes and also wasting less of their time. We have summarize these five actions:

1. **Define your executive role.** Instead of simply being the lead attorney, train the executive team and board on your highest-value role.
2. **Champion enterprise risk governance.** The GC doesn't have only to manage legal risk, but also to reach the consensus on risk appetite and clarify owners of emerging risks.
3. **Set boundaries on client service.** Focusing on client satisfaction is important but in order to be effective, GCs should fill strategic needs rather than just please clients.
4. **Own your priority-time cycle.** take control of your time and prioritize high-value activities. For instance, telling staff when they don't need your approval reinforces your priorities and enables development.

5. **Invest for legal scale.** Clarify where the company is headed and secure investment for future work at low cost. Ask for what you need, whether it is more resources to meet future legal department needs or investments to minimize the company's total legal costs.