

## Spotlight on...Diane Costigan, Winston & Strawn's Director of Coaching

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[Diane Costigan](#), Winston & Strawn's Director of Coaching, shares coaching insights and tips in this Spotlight Q&A.

### **Why Winston? What attracted you to this role and to the firm?**

Once I decided to return to a law firm after ten years on the consulting side, my primary focus was that the firm be totally committed to talent development—not just checking some boxes because they are on an industry survey. I have never seen a firm that cares as much about its people as Winston. I was so excited about this role because it's being built from the ground up, allowing me to leverage my background and build something that will be valuable to so many people. I've been blown away by how excited everyone is to have an internal coaching role and have been met with nothing but support.

### **Can you tell us about the focus for the Talent Department and the mission for the group?**

Our goal is to help everyone at the firm be as successful as possible at all times and at every level. Coaching, in particular, is a tool to bring together all of the other talent systems, like our training programs and development frameworks, and customize them to the individual. By meeting each person where they are and focusing on what they need for their overall talent development, we hope to help everyone elevate their performance. Coaching is never about judgment—it's about helping people reach their goals. For lawyers in particular, many of the skills they need to be successful at a law firm are not taught at law school, so they do not always have a framework to leverage. We all have things that we want to work on and coaching is another tool to help along the way.

### **For those starting their careers—both attorneys and staff—can you offer some tips on how to be successful?**

Hands down I would recommend a meditation practice as my go-to success secret weapon. We use our brains to deliver a professional service, so it is vital to keep our brains healthy and optimized; meditation is an exercise in training your brain to focus. Meditation often involves a focus on the breath, which reduces stress. Getting your stress under control is a critical tool for staying resourceful and resilient. As a practice of observing thoughts without judgment or attachment, meditation enables us to make better, more informed decisions that propel us in the thoughtful direction of our goals (versus hasty reactions that often and unfortunately move us in the opposite direction of where we want to be). With respect to coaching in particular, reaching one's goals usually involves having healthy levels of self-knowledge (e.g., I know I can be short with people when I'm stressed), self-awareness (here is a situation where I am being or am about to be short with someone), and the ability to self-manage (I need to leverage a tool in this moment so that I am not short with someone). With meditation as an anchor tool, any specific

goal, whether business development, skill development, or career-related has a greater chance of success through enhanced awareness and access to more empowered choices.

2 Min Read

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[Diane Costigan](#)

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