

At Reed Smith, we know that to maintain our reputation for exceptional lawyering and client service, we must provide our people with first-rate opportunities for continuing learning and development. Doing so is part of our strategy to attract and retain top talent, and is part of our culture.

We are committed to preparing our people for success, whether their career goals include progression at Reed Smith, a role at one of our clients, or something completely different. As a result, our Learning & Development (L&D) and Human Resources teams collaborate with firm partners, professional staff subject matter experts, and leading external presenters to provide our people with a broad range of training and development opportunities and resources across the legal and professional skills spectrum.

Careers competency, feedback and mentoring programs

Our global, competency-based career development program, Careers, is designed to provide our lawyers, paraprofessionals and professional staff with the transparency, professional growth opportunities, and support they need to advance their careers and provide exceptional client service.

Our lawyer competency model

Reed Smith's Careers competency model outlines the skills, knowledge and behaviors we believe our people need to provide exceptional client service and be successful at each stage of their careers. Our nine core competencies, divided into four categories, are listed below. We believe that clearly articulating what we expect from our lawyers at each career stage is key to growing a globally-connected and inclusive firm community.

Legal skills

- Legal skills and knowledge
- Research and analysis
- Written and oral communication

Citizenship

- Developing self and others
- Teamwork and collaboration

Business skills

- Matter and financial management
- Leadership

Clients

- Client relationships
- Business development



Real-time feedback and annual evaluations

Our competency model provides our associates with transparency into what is expected at their current level, and what it will take to progress to the next level. Our associates use our real-time feedback tool to request and receive competency-based feedback throughout the year from the senior lawyers with whom they work.

In addition to real-time feedback, each associate receives a formal annual performance evaluation. In these evaluations, associates have a holistic discussion with a senior lawyer “evaluator” covering feedback the associate has received that year, the associate’s goals for the coming year, and how the associate will achieve them. Both our real-time feedback and annual evaluation processes are designed to help associates keep doing what they already do well and identify and address areas for development.

Careers Advisors mentoring program

Our Careers Advisors mentoring program ensures that all of our associates have at least one senior lawyer at Reed Smith to turn to for career development advice and guidance on how to provide exceptional client service. Associates are paired with a Careers Advisor throughout their time at the firm. Our L&D and HR professionals help both parties to the mentoring relationship make the most of it. Since it is unlikely that one person can meet all of an associate’s mentoring needs, the firm offers other formal mentoring programs, including through our business inclusion groups, and of course encourages lawyers to form and cultivate informal mentoring relationships.

Learning and development

Formal learning and development programs

In addition to learning their craft by working with, and receiving feedback from, senior lawyers, our associates build their skills, knowledge and relationships through our formal learning and development programs. Each of our L&D programs is designed to develop one or more of our nine competencies. Highlights of our L&D programs include:

- **Reed Smith Associate Advantage.** Our three-year Associate Advantage program is designed to help first- through third-year associates hit the ground running as Reed Smith lawyers. Beginning just after new associates join the firm (in the United States) or qualify (in the UK, Hong Kong, and other jurisdictions), Associate Advantage covers topics including the firm’s values and capabilities, client service essentials, writing and presentation skills, leadership skills, technology skills, and financial acumen. Importantly, it emphasizes the crucial role of personal connections and professional relationships in career satisfaction and success, and it helps associates form connections with one another and with firm leaders, including through first- and third-year in-person retreats. The Associate Advantage program regularly includes firm clients and alumni as faculty, along with Reed Smith people and leading external presenters.
- **Transactional, litigation, and practice/industry-specific essentials.** These ongoing curricula comprised of programming on crucial legal skills, knowledge and expertise, are taught by Reed Smith partners and leading external experts. They cover both general transactional and litigation topics, and the specific skills, knowledge and know-how required to practice effectively in a particular practice area or industry focus.
- **Brief writing and agreement drafting boot camps.** These learn-by-doing programs give associates opportunities to practice and get feedback from Reed Smith partners on mock writing assignments relevant to their practice areas.
- **Trial training and deal clinic.** These advanced-level, learn-by-doing programs allow more senior associates to practice the skills they will need as they begin to participate in and ultimately lead high-stakes litigation or complex global business and financial transactions.
- **Senior associate leadership and client development programs.** These multi-part programs, taught by external experts on leadership and client development alongside Reed Smith partners, help senior associates master critical professional skills that transcend practice area and geography.