

4 KEY TAKEAWAYS

Leading Through Challenge: Inclusive Strategies for Engaged, High-Performing Teams

Kilpatrick's [Payal Patel](#) recently joined other thought leaders to discuss “**Leading Through Challenge: Inclusive Strategies for Engaged, High-Performing Teams**” at the **Chicago Bar Association’s Leadership Institute Alumni Panel** on September 23. The Leadership Institute is designed to enhance the leadership skills and foster the professional growth of emerging leaders within Chicago’s legal community.

Payal’s key takeaways from the discussion include:

1

Leadership in Practice

Mold yourself, not others. Leadership isn’t about shaping your team into your own vision. It’s about becoming the person each member of your team needs you to be. Invest the time to understand how each team member communicates, takes feedback and instruction and stays motivated. Before every conversation or email, ask yourself *what does this person need from me right now? Direction? Support? Space?*

2

Building Inclusive, High-Performing Teams

High performing teams hold themselves accountable to each other. But only if you set the table. The best teams don’t wait to be told what to do. They are proactive and take initiative because they are genuinely committed to each other and their shared goals. As a leader, it’s your job to create accountability by making expectations clear, following through on a consistent basis and recognizing your team’s wins.

3

Navigating Team Challenges

Live it instead of telling it. Your team will never buy into a vision you’re not modeling yourself. If you want a culture of collaboration, transparency or resilience, you have to demonstrate it first. Especially when things are hard. When the team is in a tough stretch, show them you’re in it with them too.

4

Sustaining Performance

Put the oxygen mask on yourself first. You can’t bring out the best in of your team if you’re running on empty. When leaders are overwhelmed or disorganized, it cascades. Priorities get muddled, communication slips and confidence gets lost. Get organized, set the calendar reminders, and plan things out. The small investment in time will keep you proactive instead of reactive.