

MansfieldTM Rule

Boosting Diversity
In Leadership

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Mansfield Rule Pilot 2017-2018 Mid-Point Progress Report



Goals & Progress Update

The diversity imbalance in law firms took decades to solidify as barriers to advancement such as unequal access to opportunities and unconscious biases were baked into talent practices and the overall work environment. Even the most thoughtful and effective efforts to dissolve biases and remove obstacles will take time. That said, there are indicators and small wins that provide insight (and optimism) that particular activities and initiatives will eventually move the needle in a positive direction.

Based on the 44 participating law firms' progress thus far, the Mansfield Rule is likely one of those initiatives.

The overall long-term goal of the Mansfield Rule is to boost the representation of diverse lawyers at the leadership levels of a law firm. But as a starting point, the Rule's "consideration nudges" are designed to increase a firm management's awareness of and actions to diversify the pipeline of candidates for governance roles, lateral hiring openings, and equity partner promotions.

As anticipated, based on research and lessons learned from the Rooney Rule, six months into the pilot program we have observed short-term and early "wins" (detailed on the next page) that suggest change is happening.

While six months is certainly not enough time to uproot old processes and bring new outcomes to fruition, the mid-year data collection and check-ins with the 44 participating firms highlighted several structural and cultural changes that have already taken root. And, as with any pilot, there are also challenges and bumps in the road that will require modifications and improvements as we iterate the Mansfield Rule over time.

A brief overview of the progress, including small wins, challenges, and suggested modifications follows.

Overall Goal of Mansfield Rule -- Version 1.0

The goal of the Mansfield Rule is to increase the representation of diverse lawyers in leadership by broadening the pool of women lawyers and attorneys of color who are considered for significant governance roles, lateral openings, and promotions.

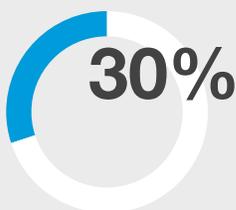
Shorter Term Goals, Measured at Six-Month Mark

Aggregated data across 44 participating firms

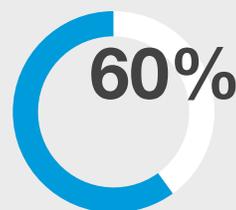
1. Track and Document the Pipeline of Candidates (You can't measure how far you've journeyed unless you know where you started.)



Participating firms formally tracking the diversity of candidates for senior level hiring prior to the Mansfield Rule.

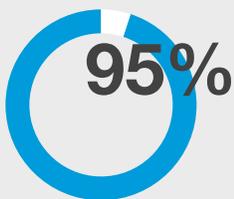


Participating firms formally tracking the diversity of candidates for leadership role appointments/elections prior to the Mansfield Rule.

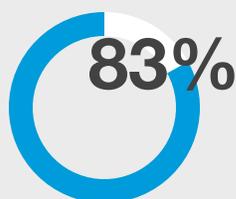


Participating firms formally tracking the diversity of equity partner promotions prior to the Mansfield Rule.

2. Increase Management's Awareness of the Candidate Population and Diversify the Pipeline at the Leadership Level



Participating firms that have experienced an increase in formal discussions among firm leaders regarding broadening the pool of diverse candidates for appointments to leadership positions and lateral hiring.

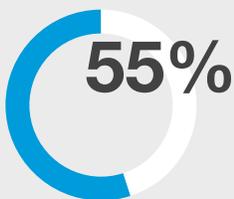


Participating firms that have reported an increase in formal discussions regarding broadening the pool for partnership promotions.



Many participating firms added these discussions as a regular Management Committee agenda item.

3. Boost Transparency of Governance Processes, Procedures, and Qualifications



Participating firms that have adopted Leadership Job Descriptions. (27.5% already had them; the other half are not adopting them yet.)

Longer-Term Goals, Measured at One Year Mark and Beyond

Increase the number of women and minorities in leadership ranks, TBA after first year.

Representative Feedback From Participating Firms



- *The underlying intent of the Rule actually works in that it forces people ... onto the radar screen who would never have [been considered before] or who would have been [only] perfunctorily considered.*
- *The Mansfield Rule has been one of the best ways to demonstrate the need for conscious efforts to build diversity. Adopting the rule has helped us identify new candidates.*
- *The partners and firm leadership are more cognizant of hiring practices and the composition of the applicant pool.*
- *Having committed to follow the Mansfield Rule has enabled senior firm management to "punctuate" our commitment and to articulate it in a metrics-oriented way.*
- *[The biggest benefit has been] getting the firm and everyone to understand the need to accurately track [the pipeline] so we can hold ourselves accountable.*
- *It has been helpful to have an external lever to drive change; the Mansfield Rule has helped us drive forward at a different velocity.*
- *The "Knowledge Sharing" calls were really helpful and one of the best things about the program.*
- *Though we had been talking about improving diversity, the Mansfield Rule gave [us] more structure for some of those conversations, and [those conversations are] much more directed now.*
- *"Natural selection" hasn't worked. The Mansfield Rule is providing the mechanism we need to improve diversity in leadership at the firm.*
- *We now have three women partners elected to the firmwide Management Committee (25%) -- more than [our firm] has ever had in the past -- including the first black women ever elected to the Committee.*



Pilot Program Challenges

The most frequently mentioned challenges included:

- Lateral partner hiring: Achieving a unified, consistent process with timely communication that aligns with the Mansfield Rule framework. (Also, most lateral partner hiring is opportunistic.)
- Initial stages of implementation: Educating stakeholders and establishing new processes and systems.
- Attempting to add a degree of formality and structure to previous ad hoc ways of decision-making, e.g., *“All of the leadership appointment considerations happen in my managing partner’s head!”*

Feedback/Suggestions for Improvements and Changes

Note: All of the suggestions have been included in the 2.0 version, which will launch July 2018.

The most frequently shared suggestions for improvements and changes:

- Add LGBTQ+ to the certification categories.
- Provide more detailed information before the certification period begins regarding definitions and expectations.
- Provide more resources, such as tracking/documentation templates and additional communications templates, to help firms with rollout and ongoing operations.
- Improve surveys to not ask binary questions and to enable responders to save draft answers in the system.

Media and Press Mentions

In its inaugural year, the Mansfield Rule has been featured in numerous publications, including [Fortune](#), the [American Lawyer](#), the [ABA Journal](#), and [Bloomberg Big Law Business](#).

