

Thursday 9 July 2026



InterLaw
Diversity Forum

BUSINESS SERVICES SUMMIT

Hosted by

Weil

Our approach

Entirely anonymous

Free-text and Likert-scale

Trend analysis: role, seniority, firm type, diversity demographics

Feelings around respect at work

Career progression & access to opportunity

Fulfilling potential and adding value

Leadership attitudes to Business Services

Psychological safety

Business Services / lawyer dynamics

Heat Maps explained

	All respondents	HR	Marketing & BD	Risk & Compliance	Finance	Facilities	Knowledge Technology & Innovation	Resource Management	Secretarial	IT Support
Colleagues in my immediate team generally treat me with respect	4.4	4.4	4.6	4.4	4.2	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.4	4.5
Business services colleagues in other teams generally treat me with respect	4.3	4.2	4.3	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.3	4.2	4.2
In my organisation, there is no Business Services / Lawyer divide	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.5	2.7	2.7	2.3	2.3	2.4	2.7

*The heat map charts the average response across each question, by different variables.
This makes it easy to spot strengths and concerns.*

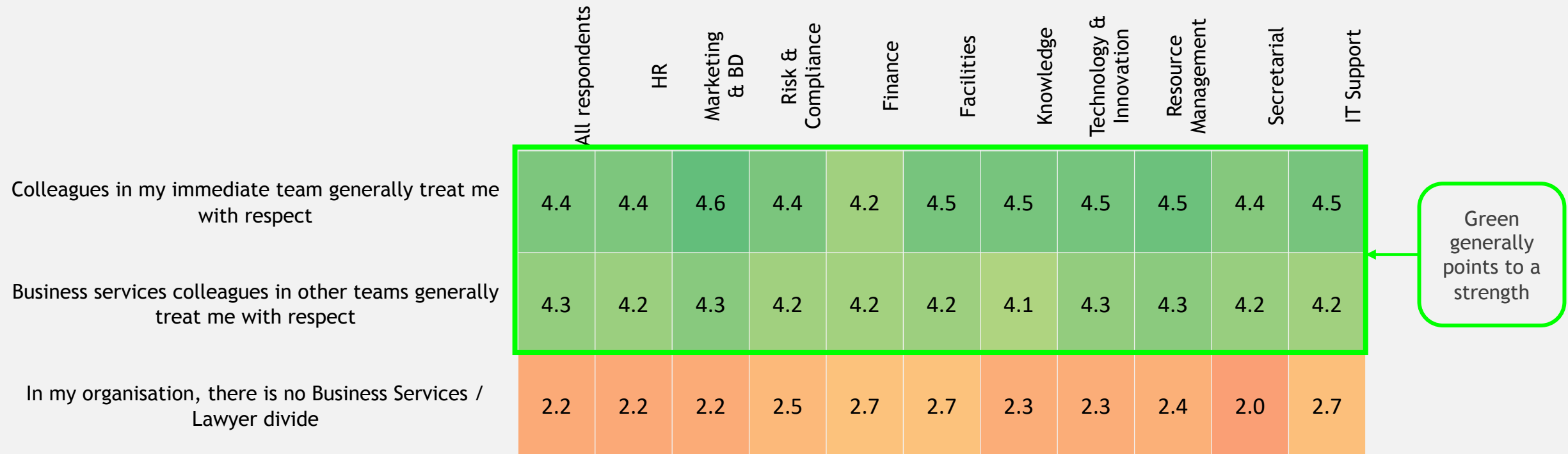


5: Strongly agree



1: Strongly disagree

Heat Maps explained



The heat map charts the average response across each question, by different variables. This makes it easy to spot strengths and concerns.



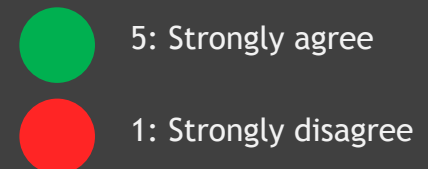
5: Strongly agree

1: Strongly disagree

Heat Maps explained



*The heat map charts the average response across each question, by different variables.
This makes it easy to spot strengths and concerns.*



Feelings of Respect, by department

	<i>All respondents</i>	<i>HR</i>	<i>Marketing & BD</i>	<i>Risk & Compliance</i>	<i>Finance</i>	<i>Facilities</i>	<i>Knowledge</i>	<i>Technology & Innovation</i>	<i>Resource Management</i>	<i>Secretarial</i>	<i>IT Support</i>
<i>Colleagues in my immediate team generally treat me with respect</i>	4.4	4.4	4.6	4.4	4.2	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.4	4.5
<i>Business services colleagues in other teams generally treat me with respect</i>	4.3	4.2	4.3	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.2
<i>Lawyers in my organisation generally treat me with respect</i>	3.9	3.9	4.2	4.2	3.9	3.9	4.0	4.0	3.9	4.0	4.1
<i>Within my organisation, colleagues are treated with respect, regardless of their role</i>	3.7	3.6	3.8	3.9	3.8	4.0	3.7	3.6	3.9	3.8	3.9
<i>Exclusionary or disrespectful behaviour is not tolerated in my organisation</i>	3.9	3.8	3.9	4.4	4.3	4.4	4.1	4.0	4.0	3.8	4.3

Feelings of Respect, by firm type



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	<i>Magic Circle firm</i>	<i>Silver Circle firm</i>	<i>Other large UK firm</i>	<i>Other mid- sized UK firm</i>	<i>Regional firm</i>	<i>International firm</i>	<i>US firm</i>	<i>Boutique firm</i>
<i>Colleagues in my immediate team generally treat me with respect</i>	4.1	4.4	4.4	4.5	4.3	4.6	4.1	4.8
<i>Business services colleagues in other teams generally treat me with respect</i>	4.2	4.3	4.3	4.1	4.1	4.3	4.2	4.7
<i>Lawyers in my organisation generally treat me with respect</i>	3.2	3.9	4.1	3.9	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.8
<i>Within my organisation, colleagues are treated with respect, regardless of their role</i>	3.0	3.5	3.9	3.7	3.7	3.5	3.5	4.0
<i>Exclusionary or disrespectful behaviour is not tolerated in my organisation</i>	3.4	3.8	4.1	4.0	4.1	3.9	3.4	4.3

Feelings of Respect, diversity

	Female	Male	No disability	Disability	Not neurodivergent	Neurodivergent	Asian / Asian British	Black / Black British	Mixed / Multiple ethnic group	Other ethnic group	White	Prefer not to say	Heterosexual	Gay / Lesbian	Bi
<i>Colleagues in my immediate team generally treat me with respect</i>	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.1	4.5	4.2	4.3	4.0	4.4	4.1	4.5	4.2	4.4	4.5	4.5
<i>Business services colleagues in other teams generally treat me with respect</i>	4.2	4.4	4.3	4.0	4.3	4.0	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.0	4.3	4.4	4.3	4.4	3.8
<i>Lawyers in my organisation generally treat me with respect</i>	3.9	3.9	4.0	3.7	4.0	3.7	4.2	4.0	3.7	3.9	3.9	3.9	4.0	4.0	3.3
<i>Within my organisation, colleagues are treated with respect, regardless of their role</i>	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.4	3.8	3.2	4.0	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.7	3.5	3.7	3.7	3.2
<i>Exclusionary or disrespectful behaviour is not tolerated in my organisation</i>	3.8	4.3	4.0	3.7	4.0	3.6	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.1	4.0	3.9	4.0	3.8	3.3

Respect at Work



84%

of participants agreed that they are treated with respect by their immediate colleagues.



71%

of participants felt that they are treated with respect by lawyers in their firm.

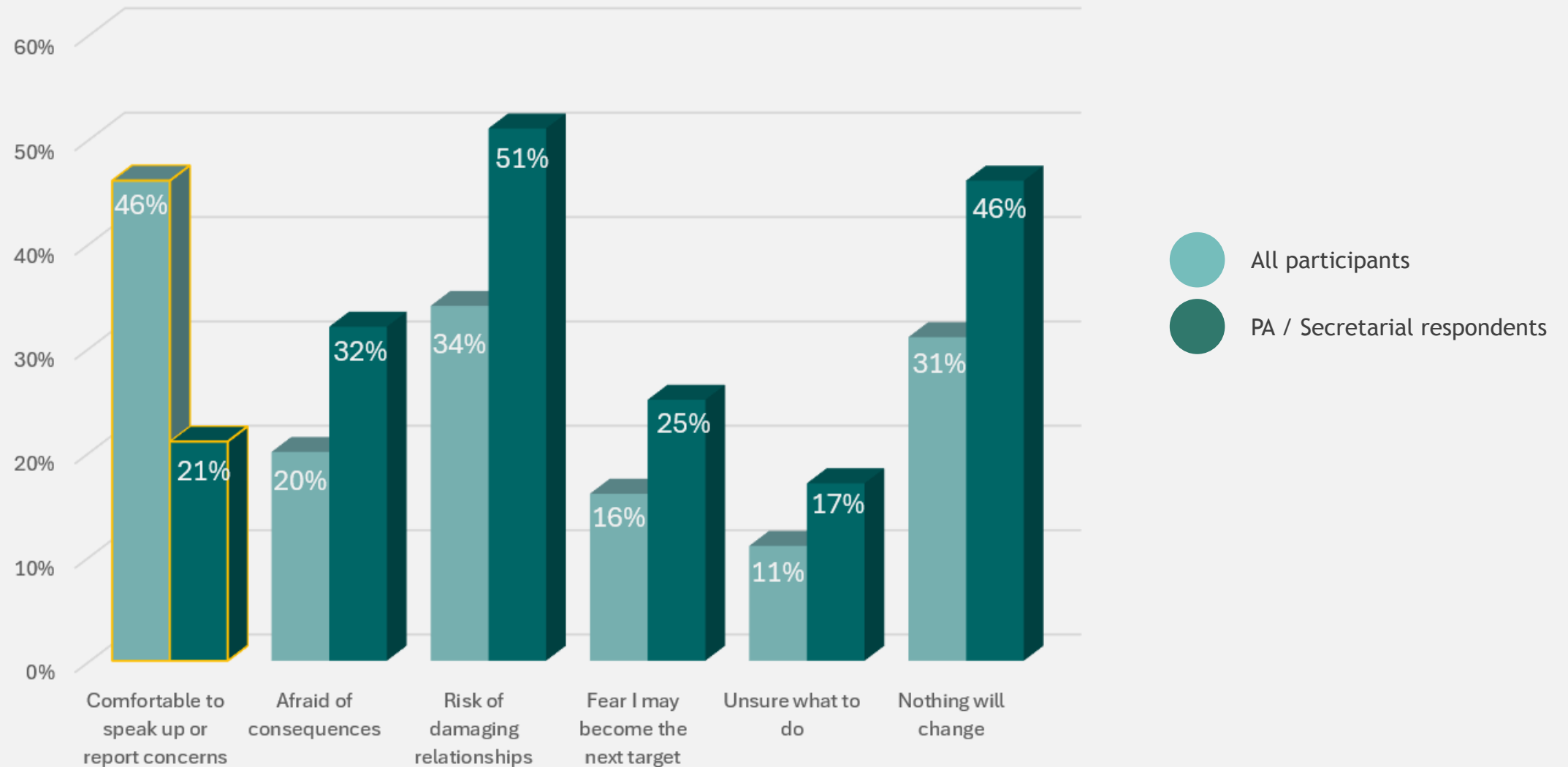


20%

But 1 in 5 participants indicated that exclusionary or disrespectful behaviour is tolerated in their firm.

“I have worked in various law firms (all business support) and each firm had different characteristics in terms of how business services are viewed. My current firm is by far the best in this respect. Support roles are seen as integral to the running of the firm, and everyone is treated with respect. This culture is genuinely driven by senior managers and results in a truly people-centered workplace.”

Addressing disrespectful behaviour



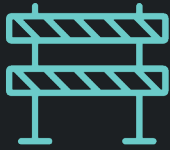
Enhancers & detractors

Top 5 Enhancers and Detractors of Respect

(based on analysis of free-text comments)

Enhancers	Detractors
Valuing opinions or expertise	Communicating in a rude or dismissive manner
Being consulted on decisions that affect my role	Assuming (consciously or not) that lawyers are superior or more intelligent
Recognising my contributions	Exclusionary language ("non lawyer" / "fee-burner")
Being acknowledged or greeted casually	Ignoring emails or cancelling meetings at short notice
Being included in meetings or social activity	Bypassing processes or controls, or "pulling rank"

Us & Them?



62%

of participants agreed that an 'Us & Them' divide existed between lawyers and Business Services within their firm. (33% strongly agreed)



52%

of participants indicated that 'non-lawyer,' 'non-fee-earner,' or 'staff' are used to describe Business Services professionals in their firm.



Participants who **do not** feel that 'Us & Them' dynamics exist in their firm are more likely to feel that they are adding value and fulfilling their potential.

" I still hear reference to 'fee earners and fee burners' made about Business Services; there is still some way to go to create a sense of value and recognition for our Business Services professionals in law. "

Business Services Head, US firm

" Business services are made to feel inferior to fee earners. It's not intentional, it's revealed in how people interact with each other. This comes across in day-to-day interactions and when strategic decisions are made. "

Business Services Chief, Silver Circle firm

Us & Them?

	<i>All respondents</i>	<i>HR</i>	<i>Marketing & BD</i>	<i>Risk & Compliance</i>	<i>Finance</i>	<i>Facilities</i>	<i>Knowledge</i>	<i>Technology & Innovation</i>	<i>Resource Management</i>	<i>Secretarial</i>	<i>IT Support</i>
<i>In my organisation, there is no Business Services / Lawyer divide</i>	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.5	2.7	2.7	2.3	2.3	2.4	2.0	2.7
	<i>C-suite / Board</i>	<i>Head of / Director</i>	<i>Manager / Senior Manager</i>	<i>Officer / Executive / Analyst</i>	<i>Assistant / Administrator</i>	<i>PA / Secretarial</i>					
<i>In my organisation, there is no Business Services / Lawyer divide</i>	2.3	1.9	2.2	2.7	1.9	2.1					

Value & Opportunity



62%

of participants felt they could add more value within their firm, if only given the opportunity.



39%

of participants felt they have fair access to career enhancing opportunities when compared to their peers.



24%

of participants felt that career pathways for Business Services colleagues are clear and transparent.

“

Business Services professionals are no longer overheads to be managed. They are experts who are driving growth, profitability, client experience, innovation, risk management and digital transformation. Firms that involve them earlier, value their expertise equally, and give them a genuine voice in decision-making will outperform those that do not. ”

– Business Services Chief

Value & Opportunity

	<i>All respondents</i>	<i>HR</i>	<i>Marketing & BD</i>	<i>Risk & Compliance</i>	<i>Finance</i>	<i>Facilities</i>	<i>Knowledge</i>	<i>Technology & Innovation</i>	<i>Resource Management</i>	<i>Secretarial</i>	<i>IT Support</i>
<i>I feel that career progression pathways for Business Services roles are clear and transparent</i>	2.7	2.6	2.9	2.6	3.0	2.7	2.6	2.4	2.9	2.7	2.9
<i>I have fair access to career-enhancing opportunities compared with my peers</i>	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.3	3.1	2.8	3.0	3.1	2.9	3.3
<i>I feel that I could add more value to my organisation, if only given the opportunity</i>	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.5	3.3	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.6	4.1	3.4
<i>Leaders in my organisation actively recognise and promote the value of Business Services professionals</i>	3.3	3.3	3.5	3.3	3.5	3.3	3.3	3.4	3.6	2.5	3.4

Leadership Attitudes



Our findings pointed to a strong correlation between leadership attitudes towards Business Services colleagues, and the extent to which participants felt able to contribute meaningfully to firm success.

14% of participants strongly agreed with the statement *"Leaders in my organisation actively recognise and promote the value of Business Services colleagues"*. When compared with those who disagreed with this statement, those in this group were:

2x more likely to report that they are treated respectfully by lawyers in their firm

3x more likely to feel they are adding value within their organisation

6x more likely to feel able to realise their full potential

"Business Services Professionals often have deep commercial, operational, and client insights that are under-utilised when they are brought in too late or viewed primarily as support functions. Earlier involvement in decision-making would unlock significantly more value for clients and the firm."

– Business Services Chief

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