INSIGHTS FOR IN-HOUSE COUNSEL

Five Ways to Make Your Life Easier as In-House Counsel

Practical tips to save time, manage costs and get more value from your legal resources.

*Insights from **Aaron Bains**, Partner, Aird & Berlis LLP*

Your Legal Team, Extended.

At **Aird & Berlis**, we understand that effective legal advice must work in the real world. Our goal is to help in-house counsel manage competing priorities, navigate complex legal issues and achieve their business objectives efficiently.

> *In-house counsel are constantly being asked to do more with less. In my practice, I see how much value comes from identifying issues early, simplifying recurring legal work and making sure external advisors understand the commercial objectives behind the legal questions. These five tips are meant to make that balancing act a little easier.*
>
> — **Aaron Bains**
> Partner, Aird & Berlis LLP

FIVE TIPS FROM AARON BAINS

Work smarter, not harder.

01 **Build your playbook**

02 **Control external spend**

03 **Use counsel strategically**

04 **Prevent fire drills**

05 **Automate the routine**

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Build Your Legal Playbook 01

Set preferred language, fallback positions and escalation thresholds for your five most negotiated provisions, so routine issues get resolved faster.

TRY THIS TOMORROW
Develop pre-approved fallback language for three provisions that consistently delay negotiations.

HOW WE CAN HELP

Contract templates, negotiation playbooks and practical approaches to recurring commercial issues.

Take Control of Your External Legal Spend 02

Agree on scope, deliverables, budget and timing up front. Ask for phased budgets, early notice of overruns and fixed or alternative fees for predictable work.

TRY THIS TOMORROW
Request a scoped work plan, estimated fees and reporting milestones on your next mandate.

HOW WE CAN HELP

Efficient scoping, the right resources and fee arrangements aligned with your objectives.

Use External Counsel as a Strategic Resource 03

Brief your external lawyers on upcoming transactions, financing and emerging risks before an issue arises. Early involvement avoids costly last-minute complications.

TRY THIS TOMORROW
Schedule a 20-minute quarterly call with your key external advisors.

HOW WE CAN HELP

A trusted sounding board on M&A, corporate finance and strategic transactions, plus access to specialists across the firm.

Aaron will often meet with decision-makers on a regular basis for short catch-up meetings to understand both business and legal issues. This has often resulted in material cost savings when executing on decisions as effective and efficient structures are discussed and put in place in advance of action.

Prevent Legal Fire Drills 04

Pinpoint the recurring issues that create the most urgent demands, set clear internal procedures and train business teams to know when to involve legal.

TRY THIS TOMORROW
Review the past six months of avoidable emergencies and build a simple escalation checklist.

HOW WE CAN HELP

Legal health checks, corporate governance guidance and tailored training for business teams.

Let Technology Handle the Routine 05

Streamline first-pass reviews, document organization and routine drafting with technology or AI. Start with a controlled pilot, clear safeguards and human oversight.

TRY THIS TOMORROW
Run a 30-day pilot on one repetitive task and measure time saved and output quality.

HOW WE CAN HELP

Technology, privacy and commercial law support on AI governance and technology risk.

Safely introducing AI into the workplace by identifying risks and other issues that need to be considered before using AI in your business.

BONUS

Make Legal Advice More Accessible to the Business

Help colleagues spot legal issues early. Build relationships with key departments, offer short training sessions and set clear escalation protocols. The earlier legal is involved, the easier it is to manage risk and avoid unnecessary costs.

HOW WE CAN HELP
Tailored training, practical legal updates and workshops for your business teams, including newsletters and programs such as the Aird & Berlis Workplace Law Summit.

MEET AARON

Let's talk about how we can support your team.

With an international background and hands-on business experience, Aaron provides practical, strategic advice to domestic and international businesses and investors. He practises corporate law with an emphasis on debt and equity financing and domestic and international M&A. Aaron acts for a number of emerging and later-stage companies as their strategic business counsel. He also acts as external in-house counsel to a number of tech companies. Aaron is a first point of contact for many of his clients and helps manage matters which touch across various legal areas and issues.



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