**Ten Priorities for the General Counsel**

1. Understanding the organization

* How are things done around here?
* Who are the decision-makers and influencers?
* What are the cultural hotspots and redlines?
* What is the organizations strategy and financial health?

1. Understanding the organization’s context

* What are the organizations court competencies and product differentiators?
* What are the market, regulatory, customer, and stakeholder issues?
* What issues and risks could threaten the organization?
* How will it and you cope with the pace of social media?

1. Scanning the horizon - and beyond

* What legislation, regulator, or practice changes are on the horizon?
* Are there operational, political, legal, or moral challenges?
* What issues have affected others even in a different context or market that could affect the organization?
* What processes and systems are in place to ensure early warning of issues?

1. Providing a seamless, scalable resource

* Design for the future not just the present
* Create self-service solutions through technology, training, and systems
* Create a mixed economy: in-house, law firm, alternative providers
* Understand and use technological solutions

1. Developing the team

* Recruit, develop, and retain the right people
* Create an environment in which they will thrive
* Understand there are new sources of human legal capital: e.g. trainees, secondees, contract lawyers
* Ensure the right non-legal skills are available to the team, perhaps including operational management, know-how specialists, project management, costing, and procurement

1. Building influence

* Maintain a relationship map of key internal and external relationships and stakeholders Identify what is needed to understand each one
* Prepare a relationship plan for the team
* Learn the skills of persuasion and influence

1. Creating the learning organization

* Understand the knowledge management position and priorities of the organization Understand that the general counsel can and should influence how the organization works - through process, training, culture, and behaviour
* Put in place the right resource to prevent legal issues arising
* Help the organization to learn from its mistakes

1. Setting the ethical tone

* Own the ethical agenda
* Understand the implications of ethical failure - and ensure the organization does too
* Treat ethics as integral to the organization – manage, monitor, audit, and process accordingly
* Give ethics the profile it needs in the organization

1. Personal development

* Do not overlook your personal development
* Use the resources available – education, coaching, mentoring
* Develop adjacent skills too, not just deeper legal education
* Understand and plan for the next role

1. Defining the future

* Understand the effects - positive and negative - of legal issues on the organization
* Ensure the organization buys-in to the right resources to deal with them
* Put in place the right interventions – training, systems, processes, audit
* Scan the horizon - and beyond

Richard Tapp (General Editor) *The Future of the In-house Lawyer: The General Counsel Revolution*. Law Society Publishing. UK: 2016. p. 100-101.