



# **The Building Blocks of an Antifragile Law Firm**

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<b>What defines an antifragile law firm?</b>	4
<b>How to become an antifragile law firm</b>	5
<b>Evolve your mindset when it comes to connections</b>	5
Connect to a greater purpose to create focus and cohesion	6
Create meaningful connections to unlock your influence	7
<b>Become agile while creating focus</b>	9
Define what you are ‘not’ to understand what you are	11
<b>Set your firm on the right foundation</b>	12
Implement cloud-based legal technology to ensure resiliency	12
<b>Approach innovation with care</b>	13
Take on manageable risks to create stability	14
Seek feedback regularly to ensure you’re on the right path	16
Be persuasive to get buy-in on your idea	17
<b>Get intentional about being creative</b>	18
Use second-order thinking to build long term plans	19
<b>Balance flexibility with sustainability</b>	21
Diversify to eliminate single points of failure	21
Prioritize yourself to build a sustainable practice	23
<b>Antifragile law firms are client-centered law firms</b>	24



Today's unsettled legal landscape brings new challenges and immense opportunity. Law firms have been stepping up to these challenges and adapting for the last two years, but this fragile environment also saw many firms making difficult decisions and trade-offs.

As the pandemic wanes, lawyers are navigating new complexities and uncharted waters. After years of double-digit revenue growth, the legal industry is bracing for a downturn. In 2022, two consecutive quarters of falling GDP marked the official start of a global recession and plunged many legal firms into uncertainty about their short-term outlook and long-term viability.

What will the impact of a recession be? Will it call into question our established models of delivering legal services and set new trends? How will we overcome the next challenge? And the one after that? When stressors compound, it's easy to focus on decisions right in front of you, operating with a short-term mindset and optimizing for tomorrow.

At the root of it, there will always be some new challenge, stressor, or hurdle to overcome. Inevitably, some firms will thrive and grow stronger while others fail.

In his book, *Antifragile: Things That Gain from Disorder*, Nassim Nicholas Taleb describes those that thrive under stressors as "antifragile," or being in the category of things that not only gain from chaos but need it to survive and flourish.

In an ever-changing legal environment, it's critical for firms to become antifragile.

The antifragile law firm is one that is protected from prediction errors, market volatility, and adverse events. In short, if your law firm is well-positioned to embrace unexpected change, it will not only survive but thrive in times of uncertainty.

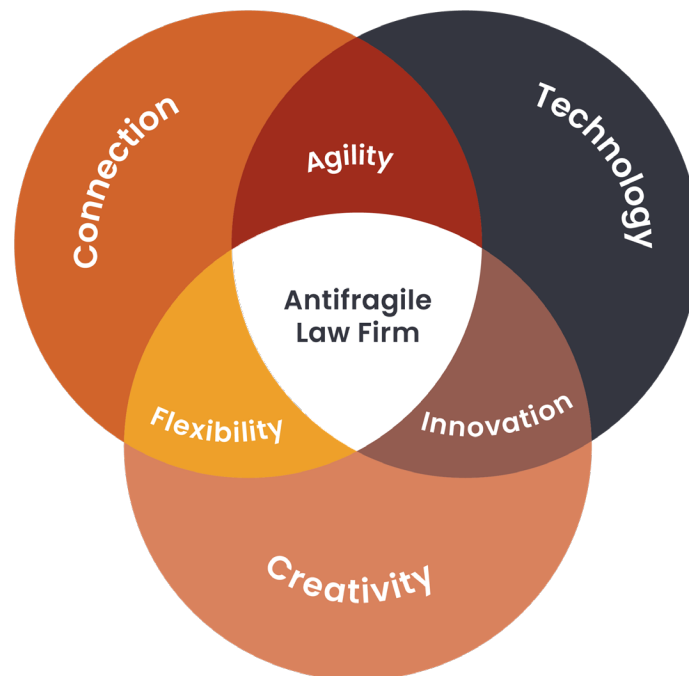


# What defines an antifragile law firm?

Finding success in today's competitive legal industry requires more than knowledge of the law. There are three key areas of focus that can make or break a firm's long-term success: connection, creativity, and technology.

When law firms focus on these areas and apply effective processes, mindsets, and foundations, they can overcome any challenge without disrupting progress towards their long-term goals.

The antifragile lawyer is a proficient adaptor who is flexible enough to make changes, while at the same time playing the long game to win out over the competition.



# How to become an antifragile law firm

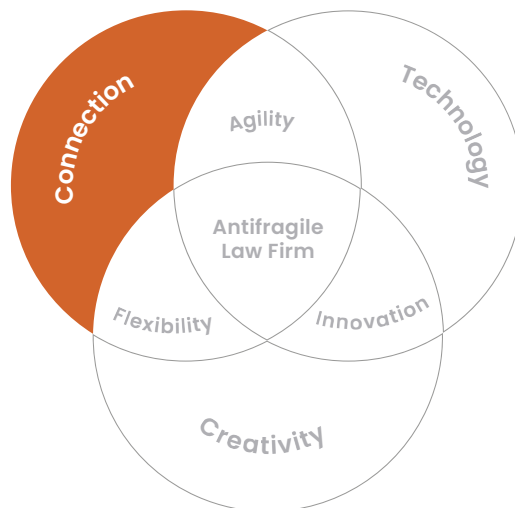
As we cover the building blocks of an antifragile law firm, you'll also see tactics checklists at the end of each section. Use these tactics to guide your path towards becoming an antifragile law firm, creating a more resilient business for an uncertain future.

Don't be afraid to start small—even implementing one or two tactics from this guide is a great start, and may spark inspiration that leads to more positive change for your law firm.

## Evolve your mindset when it comes to connections

There are many ways to think about how we connect with others, what we use to connect, and who we connect with. This can have us weighing what to prioritize and what connections, moments, and tools to place more value in.

For example, when you engage with a client, you are engaging with them throughout their entire legal journey. At every stage, you can encounter stressors and need to be able to respond to them.



At the heart of it, you need to take a client-centered approach. Understand what your clients want by building deep empathy for and knowledge of them—and then, of course, give them what they want. In doing so, however, don't lose sight of the big picture. Client-centered does not mean client-first: Firm productivity must be factored in as well, and this is a key point for antifragile law firms. Developing an understanding of your firm's greater purpose will allow you to naturally create a better client experience by exemplifying the values your firm and clients stand for.

### **CONNECT TO A GREATER PURPOSE TO CREATE FOCUS AND COHESION**

A mark of successful businesses is connecting to a bigger purpose. Great companies identify something larger than transactions or business portfolios to provide purpose and meaning.

Purpose gives coherence to any organization, and the best leaders invest in activities and relationships that make an organization stand for something long after they are gone. Organizational culture cannot be taken passively, nor can it just emerge over time—it must be cultivated through investment in shared activities and relationships that reflect the values of the institution.

This is no different for law firms.

By articulating a purpose that goes beyond making money or serving clients—such as building a better future or doing good in your community—you'll be better positioned to guide effective strategies and actions, open new sources for innovation, and clearly express your law firm's values in your everyday work.

#### **Tactics:**

- Reflect back on why you got into the practice of law and identify areas where you can reintegrate your passion into your everyday life
- Be part of a community
- Spend time with people that inspire you
- Practice gratitude and create space for reflection on the impact you are having
- Consider giving back to the community through volunteer work or charitable donations
- Draw connections between everyday tasks and your greater purpose



## **CREATE MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS TO UNLOCK YOUR INFLUENCE**

Humans are wired to connect. For example, mirror neurons, theorized to be the neural basis for both imitation learning and empathy, are just one of the ways our brains create human connection. Every human being craves close bonds—with family, friends, and colleagues—and finding ways to strengthen those bonds is essential for any individual aiming to reach their full potential.

Unlocking meaningful connections increases your ability to influence the future for the better. You can more easily understand the needs of others, build trust, and find your voice in your community. It can also help solidify your purpose and values.

But in a continuously fragmented and fragile environment, meaningful connections with others can be harder to build.

A key factor in successfully connecting is being flexible. As highlighted, not everyone is the same and in order to deliver a client-centered experience and connect in the ways clients want, you'll need to meet them where they are at and meet their expectations while not overextending yourself. You can determine what's best and avoid wasted efforts by communicating clearly and often, and by asking questions rather than making assumptions. You are the legal expert, but every client is different, and client needs are ever-changing.

Firms may want to consider focusing on a specific client base (for example, providing remote immigration law services to assist clients across the country) or finding ways to offer the option for both virtual and in-person services. Cloud technology can help enable seamless and continuous interactions between both virtual and in-person services, enabling you to design the law firm of the future. The ticket is to create meaningful connections and innovate based on what you are hearing and what you anticipate will be needed in the long term.



**Tactics:**

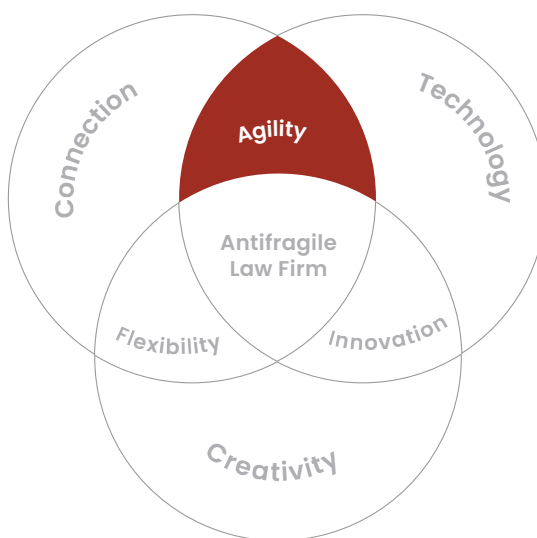
- Keep an open mind and engage in deeper conversations by asking open questions
- Clarify outcomes so both parties are on the same page about the path forward (including deadlines, payment, potential risks, likelihood of success, deficiencies in evidence, and responsibilities)
- Clarify what your clients are looking to achieve, both in the present and down the road (e.g., In our hour together today, what are you looking to walk away with? What is your ideal resolution for this case?)
- Identify preferences at the start of any new relationship, be it with a client or colleague (e.g., How do you prefer to receive information? How do you like to meet? When are you available to meet? How can I best support you?)
- Communicate to clients what they can expect next and walk them through what the entire legal journey will look like for them
- Give your full attention in conversations by muting technology and minimizing other distractions
- Pay attention to your body language, which communicates just as much, if not more, than words
- Use technology to help create flexibility in the ways you connect
- Take note of key personal details clients and colleagues share with you and set up automated reminders (e.g., birthdays, anniversaries, deadlines)
- Do not wait for someone to reach out to you—initiate conversation



# Become agile while creating focus

Today, law firms have to be agile. They have to be able to pivot when their clients change direction or new opportunities present themselves. But agility can't come at the expense of focus.

Firms need to be able to adapt quickly and efficiently, but also with a clear understanding of what their priorities are and where they're headed. The only way that's going to happen is if everyone on staff knows how they fit into the big picture—and if they're working together towards a common goal.



## ADOPT A CHANGE MINDSET TO INCREASE YOUR POTENTIAL

Nicholas Taleb defines antifragility as a “higher adaptive capacity.” The more flexible your law firm is, the better off it will be when you face challenges in the marketplace.

This is similar to having a Growth Mindset—coined by Carol Dweck in her book *Mindset*, and referenced in *The Client-Centered Law Firm*—versus a fixed one. People who have a fixed mindset believe their abilities are static, and they don't have much control over them. People with a growth mindset, on



the other hand, cultivate a passion for learning new things and developing new skills. They see failures as opportunities to learn, and are open to change.

An antifragile law firm makes multiple bets, learns from the results, and changes course quickly. If the external situation changes, the firm is able to shift attention to winning bets.

In fact, the ability to support antifragile capabilities is key to overcoming crises. For example, a law firm that invests in a cloud-based billing software package will be better able to adapt to market conditions because they are using an online platform that allows them to scale their business up or down as needed. They will also have created a frictionless client experience, and are likely better meeting client expectations, by offering multiple methods of payments. By being able to adapt to ever-changing market conditions in this way, you can increase the potential for growth and revenue.

**Tactics:**

- Focus on learning and look for role models, peers, or mentors with whom you feel comfortable having discussions about your challenges
- Look for opportunities to challenge the status quo and challenge your current beliefs
- Identify and document your purpose, vision, and why your unique value and skillset support that (reflect on these each year)
- Set goals that stretch your abilities, adding defined timelines and creating space for reflection on how you performed against them and what you want to achieve next (these reflections should be made quarterly)
- See failures as opportunities and create space to reflect and learn
- Seek input and feedback from your clients to hedge bets about what to change



## DEFINE WHAT YOU ARE NOT TO UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU ARE

Antifragile law firms are ones that strike the right balance between managing the wellness of the firm and the quality of their services, and providing a breadth of offerings. They don't spread themselves too thin in their services or energy, but they also avoid becoming overly specialized. Do this right and you will build expertise and carve out a niche for yourself while also staying agile. You can leverage this expertise to create unique selling points for your firm that attract new clients and increase retention.

In the legal market, a law firm has to be flexible and open to change. It also needs to be able to stand out from the crowd and develop its own identity. Instead of being tempted by every new opportunity that comes your way, define your law firm by a set of things you won't do. This will allow you to identify your product-market fit and focus on building the best legal service offerings and models to meet that.

This is key: A lack of product-market fit in the legal industry has led to immense latent demand in the legal market, and client-centered, agile law firms have a tremendous opportunity to tap into this.

To be successful as a firm, you need to focus on what you can do for your clients. Defining yourself by what you are not does two key things to support this goal—it brings together lawyers who have similar goals and interests, providing structure for them to grow within the firm, while also ensuring you are clear on who your ideal clients are and how you will best meet their needs. It's a way to ground decision-making in the long-term, and over time, your firm will become stronger and more antifragile.

### Tactics:

- Define what you don't want to be known for and document why (e.g., "We don't want to be thought of as too corporate because clients won't feel comfortable approaching us.")
- Once complete, review the "whys," and look to uncover what you do want to be defined by (e.g., "We want to be known as the firm that remembers our clients' birthdays because it shows we care.")
- Define what you are really selling
- Study your client base
- Study the competition
- Understand what influences your decision making process

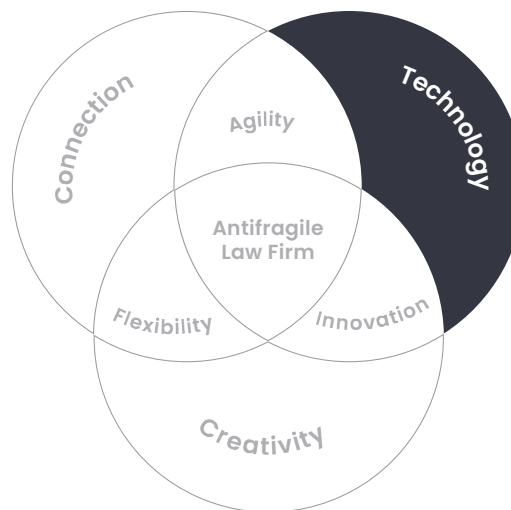


# Set your firm on the right foundation

The impact law firms have is profound, but you've got a lot on your plate and you're doing everything you can to keep up.

It's not about simply doing more—it's about finding solutions that allow you to do more with what you already have.

As legal professionals continue to expand the range of solutions at their firms, lawyers should look to find ways to adapt their existing systems and processes. This is where it's important to be proactively selective about which solutions to invest in.



## IMPLEMENT CLOUD-BASED LEGAL TECHNOLOGY TO ENSURE RESILIENCY

Antifragile law firms operate efficiently—and offer client-centered and tailored experiences for clients—no matter their surroundings. This should not be laborious for the firm, and should not be bound by an address. As we have learned through the pandemic, clients have different aptitudes and appetites when it comes to how they interact with their lawyer and what they expect from their legal journey. This does not always equate to operating



fully remotely, but it does mean you need to ensure that you are continuously able to access the critical work required to succeed and can service clients from anywhere, at any time.

While this may seem obvious, it's equally important to adopt the right technology and maximize the usage of it. It's not enough to simply purchase or implement technology—it's about continuously expanding your knowledge of technology and leveraging it further to extend your abilities and create frictionless client experiences without overextending yourself.

Firms that are leveraging cloud-based legal practice management software that is intuitive to use, centralizes their efforts, and supports all stages of the legal client journey from intake to invoice are the ones reaping the rewards. In fact, firms leveraging this technology are reporting happier employees, happier clients, better efficiencies, and more revenue.

**The right cloud-based legal technology should offer:**

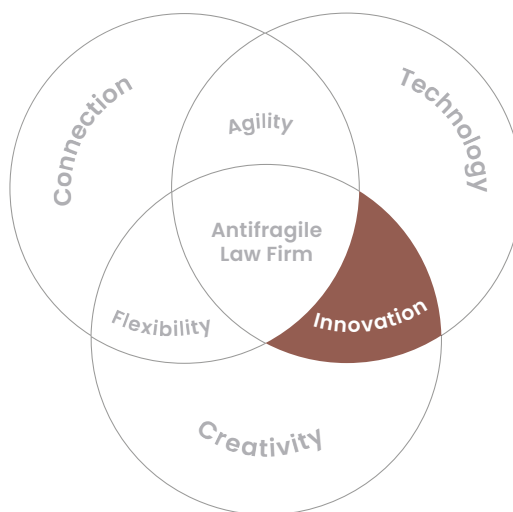
- Remote access on any device
- A 99.9% uptime guarantee
- Best-in-class security standards (e.g., geo-redundancy, encryption, 2FA)
- 24/5 support via phone, email, and live chat
- Built-in payment processing with no hidden fees
- Document management, automation, and unlimited storage
- Trust accounting, HIPAA, GDPR, and PCI compliance
- A mobile client portal and texting capabilities
- Integration with all your essential tools (e.g., Outlook, Gmail, Zoom)



# Approach innovation with care

Innovation is the lever that will make your business profitable and help you grow. Innovation becomes your differentiator, making you unique and marketable in a way that no one else can be.

When you're meeting clients where they are with new solutions to their problems—solutions that are grounded in fulfilling a legal market need—you create a loyal client base who will champion your law firm and come back to you again and again.



## TAKE ON MANAGEABLE RISKS TO CREATE STABILITY

The adage “a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush” has been around for hundreds of years and has found its way into both life guides and everyday language. This can be a dangerous mindset as it limits our abilities to transform the legal experience for all and think beyond tomorrow. When you optimize for short-term success and secure smaller advantages, you risk giving up the possibility of a bigger win.

Not taking risks in itself can be a risk.

You cannot be afraid to innovate, and sometimes, innovation may not yield immediate returns. Developing a healthy tolerance for risk can result in many benefits and opportunities for growth.



However, you can only be truly innovative if you also create stability. Having a stable, consistent revenue stream allows you to take risks and use innovation to grow your business. It lets you do things like invest in technology and develop new ideas without having to worry immediately about how they will affect the bottom line. By focusing on what's popular, you are likely providing a service that is already in demand. This means your initiatives are more likely to succeed.

How do you know what's popular? Look to industry research, such as Clio's [\*Legal Trends Report\*](#).

As the legal industry moves toward an increasingly digital and technology-driven experience for clients, it's important to look backward to appreciate what clients have traditionally valued most. The value of legal services is well established: Clients are willing to pay for help with the complexities of living their lives. For example, branching out and providing more methods of connection and communication with your clients, such as texting or offering a client portal, not only eliminates single points of failure but also constitutes a manageable risk because it's already in demand.

This ties into what client-centered law firms are already doing: These firms intrinsically create stability by focusing on what their clients want, zeroing in on the needs of the client and endlessly innovating towards that. They also leverage the compounding effects of the law firm flywheel. With a more client-centered focus comes more reviews and referrals, more clients, and more revenue to invest in better firm processes, which in turn sets the firm up to provide an even better experience and start the loop all over again.

By focusing the majority of your business on tried, trusted, and true services, you create the stability to implement new or innovative methods of providing legal services.

**Tactics:**

- Create stability by implementing services or offerings that are already in demand
- Leverage existing industry research to identify potential new service offerings or models
- Seek input and feedback on newly implemented offerings and potential future offerings to ensure the risk is manageable
- Create space for innovation and creativity by implementing cloud-based technology and automation



## SEEK FEEDBACK REGULARLY TO ENSURE YOU'RE ON THE RIGHT PATH

Innovation requires experimentation and adjustments. This process is often made up of lots of small, manageable risks. As covered in *The Client-Centered Law Firm*, innovation is a circular process. You'll uncover plenty of unexpected opportunities for improvement as you formulate and test your ideas.

To ensure you are adding value and having impact, it's important to not operate in a silo. Expanding your inputs of information and feedback is a powerful way to counteract the natural tendency for subconscious bias to creep in. Ask for feedback from staff on how new firm processes are working for them. Ask clients about their experiences with new client-facing tools.

This thinking should help you avoid risks that could wipe your business out completely. You'll also confirm you are on the right track in adding value because you're creating connections with key stakeholders via an authentic feedback loop.

Taking informed risks and advocating for change are positive things and are necessary to advance our industry.

### **Tactics:**

- Set a regular cadence for collecting feedback
- Leverage technology like automated feedback forms and emails to gather feedback
- Document feedback to ensure you are able to act on key insights
- Consult with internal and external stakeholders (especially clients) to obtain feedback on existing services and offerings
- Track progress using measurable data to determine whether your services and offerings are adding value to your business



## BE PERSUASIVE TO GET BUY-IN ON YOUR IDEA

Innovation can't happen in a vacuum.

You might have the greatest idea in the world, but you'll need others to believe in your idea and get on board in order to elicit change. Whether that's a partner, your peers and colleagues, clients, an investor, or even just a guinea pig to test your idea out on, you need to lean into your ability to influence others and get that buy-in. Otherwise, things won't change, and your creativity—your idea—will die in a vacuum.

Influence and persuasion are critical in moving innovative ideas forward. However, this doesn't always come naturally—even for lawyers. You can learn how to be more influential by first getting clear on what your values are and then using those values as a guidepost for all of your decisions.

Additionally, solidifying your values can help you connect with other lawyers who have similar goals and interests, creating a flywheel of influence and a supportive network to drive change. Over time, as you lean into your values and practice persuading others to believe in your innovative ideas, your firm will become stronger, more antifragile, and more influential.

### **Tactics:**

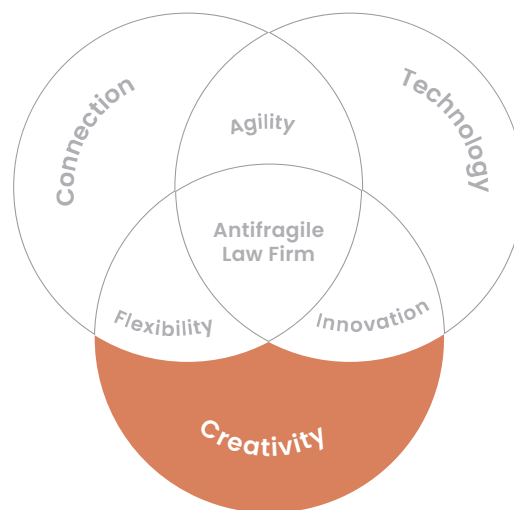
- Listen to ideas from others and create space for engagement
- Use language that invites people into the solution or idea
- Speak about the goals and impact of your idea and the risk of not taking action
- Ask individuals what their ideal outcomes are and connect the dots for them to show how your idea solves for those
- Communicate your idea clearly and build trust by being prepared to answer questions that may come up (e.g., how much does it cost to implement, how long will it take to implement, what are the pros and cons of implementing, were other options assessed)
- Be confident in your delivery
- Remember that “let me get back to you” is an acceptable answer if you don't have the right information yet—it's better to pick up the conversation at a later point and maintain trust rather than provide inaccurate answers



# Get intentional about being creative

In order to be a successful, antifragile law firm, you need to embrace your creative mindset.

This means staying open-minded and being willing to look at established systems to find opportunities to improve. It also means looking to the future and asking “what could be” rather than accepting “what is.” Whether your firm has existed for decades or you’re about to open up a solo practice, it’s never too early—or too late—to question the status quo.



Creativity is about more than just open-mindedness, though. Especially as a lawyer, in a field that often resists change, your creativity needs to come to life not just in the way you think about the work you do, but also in the way you ask questions and engage with others, the way you influence others, and the way you inspire others.

Creativity is also about taking risks. It’s one thing to look around you and say “this needs to change.” It’s another thing to come up with the solution—and yet another to bring it to life. That often means stepping outside of your comfort zone, and even sacrificing short-term wins for long-term gains.

But if you’re not prepared to take risks then you’ll never reach your full potential: Your firm will remain “fragile” as you won’t adapt or improvise when necessary.



## USE SECOND-ORDER THINKING TO BUILD LONG TERM PLANS

To start playing the long game, you need to alter your approach to decision-making.

Howard Marks introduces a framework to help guide these choices in his book *The Most Important Thing* by differentiating between first-order thinking and second-order thinking.

First-order thinking is an instinctive response to a problem. It's an immediate, knee-jerk reaction that may or may not be correct. Second-order thinking takes into account all of the information available before making a decision or taking action, which helps lead to better outcomes.

It's easy to default to first-order thinking, which is fast and easy. But this mindset often fails to consider the longer term consequences of our actions—how well-intentioned but too-hasty interventions impact others and the world around us. When we employ second-order thinking, however, we can avoid these kinds of mistakes. We can make better choices for ourselves and for others.

Second-order thinking encourages us to be more deliberate with our decisions by considering a range of possible options before making them. It discourages individual tendencies toward what seems most obvious at first glance without consideration for what might actually happen should we follow through with those ideas. When we ask ourselves “and then what?” we are looking at interactions between causes and effects over time—realizing that, despite our best intentions, sometimes things don't turn out as expected once we've acted upon them.

Client-centered law firms do something similar when identifying pain points along the client journey. Rather than employing a simple surface-level investigation of how clients feel, they get critical, using methods such as the Five Whys interview technique. This was created by Sakichi Toyoda of the Toyota Motor Corporation, and involves asking “why?” until the interviewer gets past initial symptoms to find the true root cause of the problem clients are facing. Digging deeper allows them to bypass knee-jerk interpretations of the problem and create a solution that actually meets client needs.



Of course, it's impossible to predict all possible outcomes of implementing a new, creative idea. But the exercise of second-order thinking will remove some of the risk and improve your chances of success. By asking questions and imagining the outcomes and consequences of your actions a layer deeper, you can create a more thorough understanding of how changes you make will affect your law firm and your clients. This process will help you focus on creating positive impacts that will lead to long term success.

**Tactics:**

- Ask lots of questions and think of the outcomes and consequences a layer deeper (e.g., If I did x, what would the impact be to my clients? To my business?)
- Think long-term (e.g., If I did x, what would the impact be to my clients? To my business? Now what If I did that consistently? What will the impact look like a week from now? A month from now? A year from now?)
- Involve others in your ideation and decision making process to not only seek feedback but help uncover potential biases, subconscious or otherwise
- Keep practicing to more quickly identify when you may be jumping to decisions too quickly or optimizing for the short term

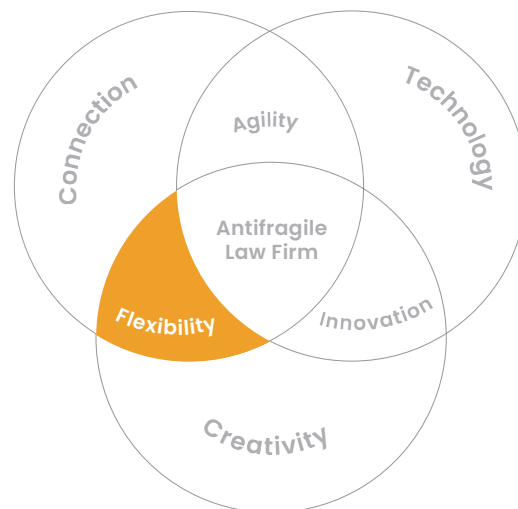


# Balance flexibility with sustainability

It's time to stop thinking of flexibility as a luxury.

In order to be successful, law firms need to be able to adapt and change quickly—and the ones who are able to do that successfully will find themselves in a much better place than their competitors. But there's a difference between flexibility and sustainability.

It's important for firms to find ways to embrace flexibility in ways that are sustainable. If you're too flexible, you may quickly end up with a lot of single points of failure—but if you're too rigid, you won't be able to accommodate the changing needs of your clients or staff. It's also critical for firms to find ways to eliminate single points of failure without overcommitting their resources.



## DIVERSIFY TO ELIMINATE SINGLE POINTS OF FAILURE

What happens to your law firm if a client pulls out? Or if an employee with a lucrative specialization leaves? If your practice areas or service offerings are too concentrated, then your points of failure remain great. You'll need to understand exactly what risks you face so that you can diversify effectively and address them.



Distributing points of failure, or diversifying, is critical to the survival of a law firm. When you are diversifying your firm, you must make sure that each sector has its own risks and benefits. In addition, any given firm should not be reliant on a single aspect of the business—in other words, a single point of failure—as this could cause it to collapse if only one part fails. A great way to assess this and ensure your risk is distributed is with a practice area or client segmentation model.

Your business is diverse when you have a number of similar, but different clients.

For example, your law firm might have diversified by focusing on two tangential practice areas: transactions and employment law. Property legal activity was down due to the shutdown of the residential market during the early pandemic, while employment law was booming due to COVID-19 related layoffs. Law firms servicing both practice areas were more secure as this diversification eliminated a single point of failure.

This example also ties into the need for long term thinking: You cannot learn a new practice area overnight. It takes years.

Your goal should be to minimize singular points of failure. The more you can do this, the more you'll thrive in uncertainty.

**Tactics:**

- Write down your business plan
- Identify your existing practice areas and your existing client base—poke holes, ask where there could be risk, and define what countermeasure could mitigate this risk
- Spread risk across different areas of your law firm (e.g., practice areas, payment plans, and service offerings)
- Within those areas, spread risk across client size, case duration, area of focus, etc.
- Identify your “go-to” business practices, then identify your back-ups if those were not available
- Identify or review your service providers’ terms of service and security protocols
- Review business expenditures and identify highest impact or value line items while reducing and eliminating hidden or unnecessary costs



## PRIORITIZE YOURSELF TO BUILD A SUSTAINABLE PRACTICE

The most valuable asset that law firms have today is their people. The legal industry has changed, and so have clients and expectations. If you want to thrive, you need to change with them and understand that you are crucial in creating the unique value you offer.

This isn't just important for product-market fit: This is important for you and everyone at your firm. If you do not treat yourself like a precious asset, you run the risk of not being able to deliver the services your clients depend on, and you may fall short of the greater purpose you set out to achieve.

Your time and energy are finite resources. Antifragile law firms recognize this and think about their impact and business model long-term. When lawyers are less stressed, working reasonable hours, and happy with their work environment, the quality of the work they do and the connections they form with clients will benefit—both of which benefit the firm's reputation and ability to bring in new clients.

Ensuring that lawyers are empowered to do their best work in an environment that they can thrive in is the first step to being truly client-centered. Designing these client-centered work environments that bring out the best in legal professionals is more important than ever as firms grapple with increased demand and a competitive talent market, all while navigating an uncertain future.

### Tactics:

- Create a schedule that works best for you (if you don't like working nights but know many clients can only meet then, specify certain days of the week when you will see them and adjust your business hours to serve that schedule)
- Identify what's important to you personally, and what you can (or won't) do to ensure that stays a priority
- Consider communicating your boundaries—what you need or what's important to you personally—to your colleagues or clients (building authentic relationships, empathy, and clarity)
- Consider using the same calendar for work and personal activities (knowing you can make events private) so everyone is clear on your availability



# Antifragile law firms are client-centered law firms

In a client-centered model, your client is at the core of what you do. All other aspects of your firm surround them and any decisions being made cycle between the inner and outer layer. You can decide to make changes that are triggered by wanting something to work better at your law firm first—that just means the process should involve cycling back to the center and asking, “How will this decision affect my client’s experience? Am I giving them what they truly need?”

If you don’t take your firm or your personal needs into account, your firm may not run as efficiently as it could, your staff won’t feel cared for, and your clients won’t get the representation they truly need. But if you don’t take your clients into account, you won’t provide the experience they need, which means you won’t provide what they need at all—and you risk going the way of Blockbuster when a new solution that provides a good client experience comes along.

Putting your clients at the center of your thinking, and running a client-centered law firm, empowers you to run a profitable, successful firm in today’s world where the client experience is paramount.

It enables you to influence, for the better, the world around you.

When we look at both principles, we can see overlap in the practices and mindsets of client-centered firms and antifragile ones:



<b>PRINCIPLE</b>	<b>PRACTICES OF CLIENT-CENTERED LAW FIRMS</b>	<b>PRACTICES OF ANTIFRAGILE LAW FIRMS</b>
<b>Connection</b>	<p>Put clients at the center of their thinking, seek feedback, and ask questions of impact on clients</p> <p>Give clients what they're looking for through an approach that will also help handle current realities more efficiently, leading to greater work-life balance</p> <p>Communicate clearly and often</p> <p>Don't make assumptions</p>	<p>Create meaningful connections, seek feedback, and ask second-level questions to think of the long term impact</p> <p>Create a work schedule that works for them and their clients, communicating needs, and ensuring clarity in outcomes, while creating clarity in the legal journey</p> <p>Communicate clearly and often</p> <p>Don't make assumptions</p>
<b>Agility</b>	<p>Adopt a growth mindset and accept small failures on the path to becoming more client-centered</p> <p>Stay focused on meeting client expectations and providing effortless experiences, not on extra bells and whistles</p>	<p>Adopt a change mindset, making multiple bets, learning from the results, and changing course quickly</p> <p>Stay mindful of what the firm won't do in order to define a clear identity and stay focused on how it can make the most impact on process and the client experience</p>



<b>PRINCIPLE</b>	<b>PRACTICES OF CLIENT-CENTERED LAW FIRMS</b>	<b>PRACTICES OF ANTIFRAGILE LAW FIRMS</b>
<b>Technology</b>	<p>Know that the empathy, intuition, and specialized responses that only lawyers can offer, paired with technology, creates a legal product offering ahead of the rest for the 21st century</p> <p>Mindfully use technology to provide the experiences their clients actually want, while creating efficiencies for the firm</p>	<p>Implement the right, cloud-based technology to ensure resiliency</p> <p>Consistently learn how to get the most out of purchased technologies to work smarter, not harder, and improve the client experience</p>
<b>Innovation</b>	<p>Create stability by focusing intently on what the client wants and innovating endlessly towards that</p> <p>Know the risks of being too risk-averse</p> <p>Leverage the compounding returns of the law firm flywheel by mindfully making small, iterative improvements, each building on the last</p>	<p>Create a stable foundation by offering services already in demand, and then placing innovative bets</p> <p>Know that not taking risks in itself can be a risk</p> <p>See the value in taking informed risks as part of a long-term strategy, even if they may not yield immediate results</p>



<b>PRINCIPLE</b>	<b>PRACTICES OF CLIENT-CENTERED LAW FIRMS</b>	<b>PRACTICES OF ANTIFRAGILE LAW FIRMS</b>
<b>Creativity</b>	<p>Dig below the surface when gathering information about the client journey and causes of pain points</p> <p>Adapt preemptively to create a better client experience and serve underserved markets</p>	<p>Use second-order thinking to go beyond the obvious and provide solutions that meet client needs</p> <p>Think long-term rather than short-term, always at least several steps ahead</p>
<b>Flexibility</b>	<p>Consistently collect client feedback and remain open to tweaks in process that provide a better experience and keep the firm ahead of the competition</p> <p>Consider what makes the most sense for the firm and what will create a positive working environment when looking to improve the client experience, and vice-versa, never putting either “first” at all costs</p>	<p>Diversify business offerings and create redundancies for firm processes to eliminate single points of failure</p> <p>Create an environment where everyone at the firm can thrive and do their best work</p>



At the root of it, antifragile firms are client-centered law firms: They are building long term focus by creating balance between the needs of their clients, the industry, and themselves. Their innovation and sustainable mindset makes them resilient to market changes, and provides them with the influence needed to set course for the future.

With the building blocks to becoming an antifragile law firm in mind, the values of a client-centered law firm as a platform, and cloud-based legal technology to support you, your law firm will be positioned not just to thrive, but to join with other forward-thinking legal professionals in transforming the legal experience for all.

## About Clio

Clio, the leader in cloud-based legal technology, empowers lawyers to be both client-centered and firm-focused through a suite of cloud-based solutions, including legal practice management, client intake, and legal CRM software. Clio continues to lead the industry with initiatives like the *Legal Trends Report*, the Clio Cloud Conference, and the Clio Academic Access Program.

