



Professional Development and Rewards Program for Associate Attorneys

Michael Best has an integrated approach to our professional development and rewards program. The program rewards an Associate Attorney's (Associate) contributions to the firm as measured by billable hours and working receipts, as well as investment time in areas such as client-related events, pro bono work, and civic involvement. At Michael Best, we understand Associates are diverse individuals who will progress at different rates and will have varying priorities during the different stages of their professional and personal lives. With this in mind, our approach is rooted in respect for each Associate's decisions to balance their career development and life preferences, empowering the individual with the flexibility to better control how she/he is rewarded for their contributions.

Tier Structure

At Michael Best, we have a "tier" structure where Associates are evaluated based on skills and experiences unique to their particular practice area. While an Associate is likely to advance one tier per year, it is also possible to advance more than one tier in a given year based on successfully demonstrating advanced skills. The goal of the tier structure is to ensure we provide clear direction, training & development, and client interaction opportunities at each stage of an Associate's career development.

Non-Partnership or Alternative Career Paths

At Michael Best, we offer non-partnership paths should an Associate reach the conclusion that he/she has priorities and interests different from becoming a Partner, or life events that influence that timing. Those paths, such as choosing to become a Senior Counsel, can be long term roles in the firm or can be part of a "lattice-approach" where the choice to pursue partnership in the firm can be executed at a later time.

Compensation and Bonus Program

Our Compensation and Bonus Program follows the same philosophy as the tier-structure; namely, the performance metrics change as an Associate progresses toward partnership. Our compensation program is comprised of multiple elements intended to allow an Associate the flexibility and choices in earning options based on the level of production. For example, we have additive production bonuses based on contributions at three incremental levels. Beyond billable hours, Associates can earn discretionary bonuses in areas such as client-related events, pro bono work and civic involvement, as we know this time spent is important to an Associate's personal and professional growth. All combined, this can provide Associates the opportunity to earn an additional 25% to 40% of their annual base salary (depending on tier, practice, and location).

We believe these choices and options enable an individual to choose his/her path to a balanced life, as well as illustrate the methods to meet or exceed the performance threshold requirements. We are committed to providing opportunities and respecting the choices an individual will make.