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LEGAL COACHING



BOUTIQUE LAW FIRM TRANSFORMATION CASE STUDY #1

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Firm Snapshot



AJ Specialist Lawyers (name changed for privacy) was a 10-year-old boutique law firm, envied by peers for its reputation.

Regularly featured in Doyle's Guide, the firm boasted long-standing team members and a growing workforce.

But while revenue had doubled in the past three years, profits (and Partner income) had fallen by 20%.

Internally, cracks were starting to be felt.

The Challenge

Angela and Jessica, the founding partners, had left BigLaw to build a firm where *culture came before profit*. They felt they had achieved that culture, but now pressure was mounting:

- Declining profitability despite revenue and headcount growth
- Opaque individual billings and receipts
- A previous coach had advised "crack the whip or fire them" - which clashed with their values
- and then ... their most senior lawyer resigned, blaming the culture.

Clearly something had to change - without destroying the culture they'd set out to build.

The Como Legal Coaching Approach

Como Legal Coaching began with our **3-month intensive transformation program**, prioritising a commercial AND cultural approach, practical strategy, and measurable outcomes.

Our Approach included:

- **1-on-1 coaching** for both partners, focused on values-based leadership
- **Partner-level board sessions** for strategic alignment and commercial clarity
- **Individual coaching** for lawyers, addressing the *real* blockers behind low billables

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- Team-wide training in non-legal essentials like communication and productivity
- Immediate commercial improvements to revenue, cash flow, and margin
- Culture repair and renewal, from the bottom-up

The Results

One year on, *AJ Specialist Lawyers'* internal results began to once again match their external reputation.

Compared to the prior year:

- Revenue increased by \$750,000
- Payroll costs *reduced* by \$100,000
- Partner salaries rose by \$10,000/month *each*
- Profit lifted by \$500,000
- Team members *voluntarily* returned to the office more frequently

*“Investing in Como was our biggest ever business expense.
It took a panic for us to commit - but now,
we’ve never felt more aligned, profitable, and proud.”*

The Takeaway

When they launched, *AJ Specialist Lawyers* felt they had to choose between profit or culture. With the right support, they created a firm that honours both - and now they’re growing from a place of confidence instead of crisis.

If your firm is struggling to balance commercial and cultural ambition, and provide you and your partners with your personal goals, then now is the time to speak with Como Legal Coaching.

Visit www.ComoLegalCoaching.com/Contact to learn more.



harmony@como.ltd

+61 468 434 323



jacob@jacobaldrige.com

+61 427 151 181

1. THE CHALLENGE

Part 1: Not What it Seems

From the outside, *AJ Specialist Lawyers* already looked like a case study: this is what success is like when female lawyers leave big firms and to create success *their way*.

A team of nearly 20 was growing, their reputation was rock-solid - complete with multiple Doyle's Guide listings - and they were seen by peers as a great place to work. New and ever-more-complex matters were rolling in, and recruiting new team members was a regular, and easy, undertaking.

Unbeknownst to partners Angela and Jessica, however, the business lifecycle was about to deliver some speed bumps and a big brick wall. Their Culture-led approach had proved successful as they scaled-up, but all that growth meant they had moved from a comfy seat on the train ... to being strapped to the front while acceleration went out of control.

Top line measurements kept growing – more revenue, more team members, more recognition. But internally, inefficiencies were ballooning, profit had declined by 20%, and cash flow was begin to bite whenever the team took holidays or missed a billing deadline.

The more the business grew, the more out of control it felt.

Part 2: Commercial and Cultural Collapse

Angela was the Partner with more of the financial responsibilities, and she had developed a regular relationship with the 'Ceiling God' – when you're laying awake at 3am, staring at your ceiling, thinking 'Oh God, I hope the next pay run goes smoothly'. When she and Jessica found five minutes to catch up, they both knew things were going poorly – but they were so busy they just didn't understand why, or how to change things.

The commercial consequences of this disconnect were stark. Although the team felt busy, productivity was dangerously low. Our financial reports later revealed most Lawyers were billing under four hours a day - a level that made sustainability, let alone profitability, nearly impossible. Yet the traditional business coaching advice they had received - push harder, manage stricter, or fire underperformers - felt completely misaligned with the culture Angela and Jessica had worked hard to build. They didn't want to become the kind of firm they had deliberately left behind.

Culturally, the cracks were starting to widen. The firm's values of care, collaboration, and autonomy were becoming distorted in practice. Communication was breaking down, expectations were fuzzy, and high-performers were becoming disengaged because they came to work at 'the happy place' and when they looked around it wasn't there anymore.

This came to a head when their most senior lawyer resigned - publicly attributing their departure to the very culture Angela and Jessica believed they had nurtured. What had once felt like a family now felt fractured. The partners were forced to ask: were their people happy, or just loyal?

Part 3: Taking the Worry Home at Night

Personally, the emotional toll on Angela and Jessica was mounting. They were working harder than ever but feeling increasingly ineffective and unseen. Their financial stress was compounded by guilt - towards their team, their families, and each other. Having built a firm around values they deeply believed in, they were shaken by the idea that they might be failing not just commercially, but culturally.

When the resignation letter landed, it wasn't just the loss of a team member - it was a crisis of identity.

In that moment, the partners shifted from stress to panic. Something had to change, but they weren't willing to compromise their values. They needed a solution that understood the unique intersection of leadership, culture, and commercial performance in a law firm - one that would rebuild their internal reality to match the brand they had worked so hard to project externally.

It was hard to build a law firm that achieved their cultural, commercial, and personal definitions of success. Surely it would be hard to find someone to help?

Part 4: Meeting Harmony and Jacob from Como Legal Coaching

At Como Legal Coaching, we want you to experience freedom and do law, life, and business *your way*.

'Best Practice' and template practice management solutions (or even practice managers) may not be the best thing for your family and your personal happiness.

That's what we expressed to Angela and Jessica when we met with them: we were willing to roll up our sleeves and get involved, as long as they were committed to the change and willing to tell us whenever we were pushing the firm in a direction they didn't like.

What began as a 3 month engagement is now entering its second year, as we continue to support the partners and the team (having paid for ourselves many times over).

2. THE TRANSFORMATION PROGRAM

1-on-1 Partner Coaching

The foundation of the transformation began with 1-on-1 coaching for both partners, tailored to help Angela and Jessica reconnect with their personal vision and values.

At Como Legal Coaching, we believe in leading from the inside out - so we worked closely with each partner to explore their values, fears, and leadership blind spots. Rather than prescribing a rigid management style, we helped them align their daily behaviours and strategic decisions with the kind of leaders - and women - they wanted to be. This work brought renewed clarity and confidence, and helped them shift from reactive problem-solving to proactive, empowered leadership.

Advisory Board / Partner Meetings

The two partners spoke almost every day, yet rarely about what mattered to their firm or themselves.

In parallel with helping them individually, we introduced partner-level board sessions - an essential structure for any high-performing firm.

These monthly strategy meetings combined commercial oversight via our reporting, structured goal-setting, and group coaching. They gave Angela and Jessica the chance to step out of the day-to-day, gain financial clarity, and finally get on the same page about the future of the firm. It also introduced accountability, with both partners making - and keeping - commitments to each other and to the business, week by week.

Commercial Consulting Projects

Deep cultural work was going to be essential, but it was clear that commercial changes were required immediately ... and that designing and implementing these changes was beyond the current skillset of the firm.

Pure business coaching doesn't work. For a law firm like Angela and Jessica's, they needed someone who could roll up their sleeves and deliver project changes for them. In their case, this was a rapid overhaul of individual reporting and team production conversations. Within the culture they desired, we were able to highlight to all team members how they were really (under)performing, but as part of a better communication and support process to help their numbers improve.

Within weeks cash flow began to improve, write-offs reduced, and the firm began lifting its average billable hours per lawyer without anyone feeling punished or micromanaged. By halfway through this Transformation period, weekly billables had increased by 25%.

1-on-1 Coaching for All Professional Staff

Recognising that performance challenges often have personal and cultural roots, we ran individual coaching sessions for every lawyer and the senior support team.

Instead of applying pressure, we used our “Billable Hour Blockers” system and got curious with each unique individual: what was really getting in the way? The answers ranged from unclear expectations and poor time-blocking to perfectionism and fear of failure. By addressing these blockers with compassion and practical tools, team members began making measurable improvements - some immediately, others over time.

Team Training in Non Legal Skills

In addition to 1-on-1s we built momentum with team-wide training in non-legal skills, including communication, productivity, and how to manage their own energy.

Like many professional services teams, the lawyers had received almost no training in how to be effective knowledge workers. We delivered workshops and embedded new rhythms that supported focus, task ownership, and high-performance collaboration - without burnout. These sessions helped establish a shared language and brought the team closer together in ways that surprised even the partners – our “Capacity and Strategic Financials” workshop, for example, meant the team could finally understand how their own receipts were linked to payraises.

Culture Reset

Perhaps most importantly, we supported a full cultural reset, guided by the principle that culture lives in every decision and every conversation. Like most firm owners, the partners viewed culture as organic and uncontrollable. We showed them that was not the case, working from the top down and the bottom up to define the firm’s values and behaviours and reintroduce rituals that reinforced the right culture daily.

We helped the partners role-model psychological safety, celebrate the team’s small wins, and repair the trust that had eroded. Within months, the culture felt safer, more energised, and more aligned - this time, with real commercial outcomes to match.

3. THE 3 KEY OUTCOMES

1. Commercial Outcomes

The commercial turnaround at *AJ Specialist Lawyers* was remarkable.

In the 12 months following their engagement with Como Legal Coaching, the firm:

- increased revenue by \$750,000 (exceeding \$4 million for the first time)
- reduced payroll costs by \$100,000
- lifted net profit by a staggering \$500,000, and
- grew cash reserves by more than \$250,000.

These weren't abstract accounting wins - they represented a real shift in how the business operated. Lawyers were billing more consistently, client workflows were more efficient (we took on more matters without needing to replace the departing lawyer), and an overdue boost to hourly rates meant pricing better reflected the value the firm delivered.

Perhaps most tellingly, the partners were finally able to pay themselves what they deserved. With each receiving an additional \$10,000 per month, Angela and Jessica could see tangible proof that their firm was back on track.

Money is Energy, for a business and as individuals. The business became more resilient, with better cash flow forecasting, reduced write-offs, and greater control over growth. Importantly, these results were achieved without burnout or brute force – all that extra energy through the firm meant the team were achieving more while feeling less busy.

AJ Specialist Lawyers became proof that commercial success doesn't have to come at the expense of people.

2. Cultural Outcomes

Underneath the financial uplift was a deeper transformation: a cultural revival that reignited purpose, connection, and trust across the team.

The biggest indicator of this shift was behavioural. Without pressure or policy changes, team members began voluntarily returning to the office more frequently. This wasn't about

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presenteeism - it was a sign that people felt psychologically safe, valued, and reconnected to a workplace they wanted to be part of. After a period of disconnection, the office began to feel like a collaborative hub once more.

The team training and individual coaching had a ripple effect. Staff who once felt directionless now had tools to manage their time and communicate better. The atmosphere shifted from quiet tension to open dialogue. Mistakes became learning opportunities.

The departure of the senior lawyer - once a painful event - became a catalyst for a stronger, more united culture. The firm rediscovered its heartbeat, and the partners could finally see that culture and commerciality weren't competing forces - they were two sides of the same see-saw, moving in rhythm not seeking perfect balance.

3. Personal Outcomes

Ultimately, there's no point owning a law firm if you hate your life.

For Angela and Jessica, the personal transformation was even more profound than the numbers in our monthly financial reports.

When they reached out they were exhausted and overwhelmed - financially squeezed, emotionally drained, and questioning their capacity to lead. Like many firm owners, they had poured themselves into their business for a decade, only to feel like they were losing control. Watching their most senior lawyer walk out the door had felt like a gut punch. They were scared, and for the first time, they weren't sure if they could fix it.

Even just within this first three-month program with Como Legal Coaching, those feelings had shifted dramatically. The partners felt confident, energised, and genuinely proud of what they had built for their families and their team.

“Are You Breaking Up With Us?”

Some law firms only want us to help fix what's broken – they take their medicine, cure their headache, and we part as friends.

Others – like *AJ Specialist Lawyers* – want a partner for the long-term to help them build systems that ensure nothing like that ever happens again.

As our Transformation Program concluded, we gave Angela and Jessica the choice to continue working with us. They said yes! And today are one of the 4 core clients that Como Legal Coaching chooses to work with each year.

Would you like to join them?

4. TIME FOR YOU TO SPEAK WITH COMO?

It Wasn't Meant to Feel Like This

Running your own law firm is meant to bring freedom. But for many female founders, the dream of autonomy has been replaced by exhaustion. You might be proud of your team, your reputation, and the work you're doing - but behind the scenes, you're carrying more than you ever expected.

The to-do list never ends, your profit doesn't reflect your effort, and some days you wonder if the whole thing is sustainable. If that sounds familiar, you're not alone - and you don't have to figure it out alone, either.

At Como Legal Coaching, we work exclusively with female lawyers and female-led law firms because we understand the nuances of your journey. You're not just building a business - you're crafting a career that aligns with your values, your lifestyle, and the legacy you want to leave.

Whether you're struggling with leadership confidence, team performance, profit margins, or simply feeling stretched too thin, there is a way through. And it starts with a conversation.

This is not a "Free Coaching Session"



We're a serious, fixed-fee professional services firm transforming female-led law firms with our proven approach to create more money, time, freedom and impact.

We don't offer gimmicky "free coaching sessions" anymore than you offer "free legal advice".

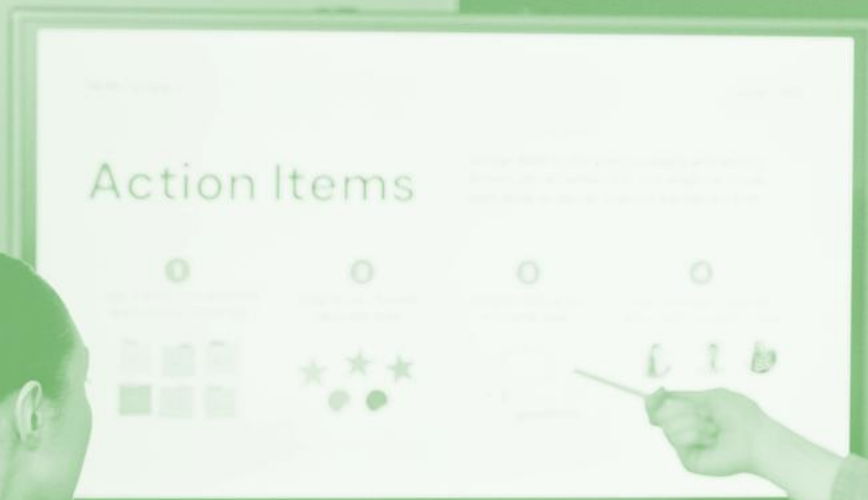
If you're serious about wanting to change - and you don't have to be sick to get better - then we would love to meet you. What we offer is a thoughtful, no-obligation chat to understand where you're at and what might be possible with the right support.

Founded by recovering lawyer Harmony Aldridge and experienced business coach Jacob Aldridge, Como Legal Coaching helps you lead with authenticity, do law and life your way, and create a business that truly serves you - not the other way around.

Want to learn more? Visit [ComoLegalCoaching.com](https://www.ComoLegalCoaching.com) or WhatsApp Harmony +61 468 434 323.

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