

Whatever consultants say about processes designed for legal *departments*, ultimately it all comes down to interacting with other people. With tongue firmly in cheek, this might be the first assessment of technologies and outside counsel management techniques specifically for the *people* in legal departments.

Legal Stars

BY RONALD F. POL

Aries—the Ram

21 March–20 April

With lots of physical energy and competitiveness, Arians are impatient with details, so don't expect them to worry much about fiddly matter-management systems. Quick to think and act, Arians are often intelligent and have little patience with fools, so will naturally select only the best outside counsel.

Their faults are those of impatience, impetuosity, and a hot temper. They can pick a row with a supposed adversary, tear them to pieces, then walk away five minutes later, forgetting all about it.

Arian cheerfulness, spontaneous generosity, and kindness make them the greatest colleagues you will ever have.

Taurus—the Bull

21 April–21 May

Taureans are easy to understand. What you see is what you get. They also like to own everything, so give them an important project or two.

These people are practical and persevering, solid and reliable, and stubborn as mules. Perfect to push through the hardest projects, Taureans are much brighter than anyone gives them credit

for, and they usually know what they're talking about. They don't, however, like being rushed or hassled. So if the job's not too urgent, but needs to be done right—like a system to better align outside counsel efforts with value or results—a Taurean can make it happen.

Gemini—the Twins

22 May–21 June

Geminis have amazing brains. They store data like you wouldn't believe. No one can crash-test a new matter management system like a Gemini, blazing a trail of nit-picking detail.

Lots of people think Geminis talk garbage, but this is because their minds move faster than their mouth. If you have international affiliates, Geminis would be suited to travelling far and wide, putting the world to rights.

Geminis like to be busy with plenty of variety and the opportunity to communicate with others; they'll work happily with your communications and media-relations team, shamelessly helping pinch ideas and improve on them.

Cancer—the Crab

22 June–23 July

Cancers collect things. Other people call this garbage, but to them it's gold—you'd never find a Cancerian far from the precedent system.

Cancerians look for security on the one hand and adventure and novelty on the other. This is sometimes difficult to match, but they're popular because they actually listen to what others say, and so are great at ferreting out the most worthy advice memoranda and checklists that people have been hoarding for years.

Cancers are also naturals at presenting staff training seminars, and at explaining to senior management the important role of the legal department.

Leo—the Lion

24 July–23 August

Leos are larger than life—or so they think. Everything is “me first,” and if they don't win, watch out. Leos have high standards and become irritable when things go wrong. Sometimes impatient, with a tendency to overdramatize problems, Leos live in the fast lane, working and playing hard. Born litigators, really. They love people and you'll rarely see Leos by themselves; the bigger the claim and the team around them, the happier they are.

Leos won't stand for contempt or ridicule, but are very aware of other people's dignity, so are rarely offensive or hurtful. This combination makes them good for dealing with overseas counsel and different cultures.

Virgo—the Virgin

24 August - 23 September

Virgos are one of the most misunderstood signs of the zodiac. People think they're fussy, critical, bad-tempered, and picky but that's only because they want everything perfect.

They're extremely inquisitive and have a dreadful time trying to relax, so ask them to monitor the department's budget against costs per matter, and they'll go on to calculate legal spend per lawyer, per employee, and as a percentage of revenue. Effective billing rates per firm and per transaction are a cinch. Want metrics? This star sign's for you.

Next time: The rest of the chart. With thanks and apologies to www.kellystarsigns.com for core descriptions shamelessly borrowed and bent. ☒

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