

NON-COGNITIVE TRAITS THAT IMPACT FEMALE SUCCESS IN BIGLAW

Milana Lauren Hogan

A DISSERTATION

in

Work-Based Learning Leadership

Presented to the Faculties of the University of Pennsylvania
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Education

2013

Supervisor of Dissertation:

Robert Moore, Lecturer

Dean, Graduate School of Education:

Andrew C. Porter, Dean and Professor

Dissertation Committee:

Robert Moore, Lecturer

Michael J. Nakkula, Practice Professor of Education

Jonathan A. Supovitz, Associate Professor of Education

NON-COGNITIVE TRAITS THAT IMPACT FEMALE SUCCESS IN BIGLAW

COPYRIGHT

2013

Milana Lauren Hogan

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 License.

To view a copy of this license, visit:

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.0/>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There is no way that any of this would have been possible without tremendous contributions from my family and friends. As much as I struggled to fit this work into a very full, rich life, they struggled equally and made great sacrifices (sometimes sitting alone for hours in hotel rooms on the Penn campus with an inconsolable, 3 week-old baby) to make this happen. I am especially grateful for and indebted to:

- The Team: Phil Hogan, my husband and partner in all things, Holly Hogan, my lovely and delightful daughter, and Casey Hogan, the newest addition to our family and the sweetest little baby you could imagine,
- Deborah McKay, my endlessly supportive mother (and occasional roommate at Penn),
- Brennan Gilbane, Elena Eagleton, and Robyn Shepherd, the best cheerleading squad ever, who regularly called me things like “super mom” and “wonder woman” when I really needed it,
- My entire cohort, but most especially Regis Chasse, Dave DeFilippo, and Sumathi Pearl, who commiserated with me when the going got tough, and who endlessly encouraged and inspired me with their passion, enthusiasm, and good humor over the past three years, and last but certainly not least
- Sullivan & Cromwell LLP, for giving me the support I needed to pursue this research and for always recognizing the value of continuous learning—both in and out of the office.

ABSTRACT

NON-COGNITIVE TRAITS THAT IMPACT FEMALE SUCCESS IN BIGLAW

Milana Lauren Hogan

Robert Moore

In spite of the fact that women account for nearly half of the lawyers entering BigLaw, there are significantly fewer women occupying the most prestigious, powerful, and best-paid positions within today's law firms. This paper focuses on the non-cognitive traits known as grit—defined as perseverance and passion for long-term goals—and a growth mindset—defined as the view that one's most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work—and argues that these traits are not only traits that many highly successful women lawyers have in common, often as a direct result of having overcome challenging obstacles along the path to leadership positions, but that they are also valuable predictors of the future success of individual women lawyers in BigLaw. A review of the literature on grit and mindset is presented and the concepts are defined and explored, with a focus on the implications for female law firm leaders. Ultimately, this study suggests that there is reason to believe that grit and a growth mindset may well be among the secrets to success for women lawyers. Although further research is needed, these findings provide employers with one way to help reduce the gender gap at the leadership level. Recruiting for grittiness and growth mindsets, and implementing programs designed to develop and enhance these traits among female lawyers, provide an appealing approach for employers who are committed to finding a strategy to change the current landscape and increase the number of women in top management roles.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----------|
| CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION..... | 1 |
| CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE..... | 5 |
| Grit | 5 |
| Perseverance | 6 |
| Passion | 7 |
| Deliberate Practice | 9 |
| How grit differs from similar character traits | 11 |
| Achievement Orientation | 11 |
| Dependability | 12 |
| Need for Achievement | 12 |
| Self-Discipline | 13 |
| Grit and success | 14 |
| The Grit Scale | 15 |
| Mindset | 20 |
| The Mindset Quiz | 21 |
| Mindset and success..... | 21 |
| Changing Your Mindset..... | 24 |
| Women, grit, and mindset..... | 25 |
| Career Commitment..... | 25 |
| Power | 27 |
| Core Competencies | 29 |
| Performance Evaluations | 30 |
| Law School Performance..... | 32 |
| Grit, mindset, and the glass ceiling..... | 37 |
| Are successful women lawyers gritty and do they actually have growth mindsets?..... | 39 |
| A word on other non-cognitive traits that impact success | 42 |
| CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY..... | 43 |
| Conceptual Framework..... | 43 |
| Research Questions..... | 46 |
| Research Design | 47 |
| Data Collection | 48 |
| Participants..... | 49 |
| Sampling Strategy for the Quantitative Analysis..... | 50 |
| Sampling Strategy for the Qualitative Analysis..... | 52 |
| Interview Protocol..... | 52 |
| CHAPTER 4: RESULTS | 54 |
| Part I: Results of the Online Survey | 55 |

| | |
|---|------------|
| Characteristics of the Sample..... | 55 |
| Correlations..... | 62 |
| Grit, Mindset, and Success..... | 67 |
| Grit & Performance..... | 68 |
| Grit & Hours..... | 72 |
| Grit & Quality of Work..... | 77 |
| Grit & Compensation..... | 81 |
| Grit & Partnership Prospects..... | 84 |
| Mindset & Performance..... | 87 |
| Mindset & Hours..... | 90 |
| Mindset & Quality of Work..... | 93 |
| Mindset & Compensation..... | 96 |
| Mindset & Partnership Prospects..... | 98 |
| Part II: Interview Results..... | 100 |
| Grit and Success..... | 101 |
| Mindset and Success..... | 105 |
| Are Grit and Mindset More or Less Important to Success When We Account for Other Factors?..... | 110 |
| Are Grit and Mindset Outcomes or Precursors to Success?..... | 114 |
| CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION..... | 117 |
| <i>Finding #1</i> | 117 |
| <i>Finding #2</i> | 121 |
| <i>Finding #3</i> | 123 |
| <i>Finding #4</i> | 125 |
| <i>Finding #5</i> | 126 |
| CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS..... | 129 |
| Limitations of the Data..... | 129 |
| Implications & Future Research..... | 131 |
| APPENDIX A..... | 133 |
| APPENDIX B..... | 135 |
| APPENDIX C..... | 153 |
| REFERENCES..... | 155 |

LIST OF TABLES

| | |
|---|----|
| Table 1. Individual Relationships Between Grit, Mindset, and Success Measures | 46 |
| Table 2. Breakdown of the Sample by Title | 58 |
| Table 3. Grit & Mindset Distributions | 59 |
| Table 4. Grade & Tier Distributions | 60 |
| Table 5. Family History Variables | 60 |
| Table 6. Mother’s Education | 61 |
| Table 7. Aspiration Variables | 61 |
| Table 8. Partners vs. Non-Partners | 62 |
| Table 9. Offer Percentage | 62 |
| Table 10. Correlations Between the variables | 66 |
| Table 11. Success Model Structure | 68 |
| Table 12. Performance Ratings | 69 |
| Table 13. Success Measure Descriptives | 69 |
| Table 14. Grit and Performance | 71 |
| Table 15. Hours Distributions | 73 |
| Table 16. Grit and Hours | 76 |
| Table 17. Quality of the Work | 77 |
| Table 18. Grit and Quality | 80 |
| Table 19. Partner Compensation Frequencies | 81 |
| Table 20. Grit and Compensation | 83 |
| Table 21. Grit and Partnership Prospects | 86 |
| Table 22. Mindset and Performance | 89 |
| Table 23. Mindset and Hours | 92 |
| Table 24. Mindset and Quality | 95 |
| Table 25. Mindset and Compensation | 97 |
| Table 26. Mindset and Partnership Prospects | 99 |

LIST OF FIGURES

| | |
|--|-----|
| Figure 1. The Impact of Grit and a Growth Mindset on Success in BigLaw | 44 |
| Figure 2. Hours per Year as a Percentage of Total | 72 |
| Figure 3. Grit and Mindset Characteristics of Interviewees | 101 |

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In the past three decades, men and women have entered law firms as first year associates in roughly equal numbers. As of 2012, roughly 45% of incoming associates were female (National Association of Women Lawyers “NAWL”, 2012). There is, however, a gradual erosion in the number of women that increases with seniority, and by the time women arrive at the most senior leadership levels—of counsel, non-equity, and equity partners (i.e. those lawyers who hold an ownership interest in their firms and occupy the most prestigious, powerful, and best-paid positions)—they represent only 35%, 26%, and 15%, respectively (NAWL, 2012). These somewhat grim statistics have remained static for close to thirty years, so it is clear that the significant number of women entering the profession has not translated into parity at the top of the organizational chart. Instead, as lawyers ascend the leadership ranks, there is a steady decline in the number of women occupying positions of authority. It is also worth noting that women tend to be over-represented among staff attorneys (i.e. lawyers who are not on partnership track, have lower billing rates than even the most junior associates, and tend to handle the routine, non-critical work of the firm, such as document review and basic due diligence), accounting for roughly 70% of these positions (NAWL, 2012).

The sad truth is that one does not even have to be familiar with the NAWL statistics to know that something is amiss in the world of BigLaw. Although it has been prone to some variance in usage, the most commonly accepted definition of BigLaw—and the one I will rely on herein—is a group of large law firms (the minimum would be

101 attorneys or more) that pay attorneys the market rate (the current starting salary for a first year, entry-level associate is \$160,000 a year), demand long hours (typically an average of fifty or more billable hours per week), and tend to represent large corporations rather than individuals. It is also common for BigLaw firms to have multiple offices in the United States or internationally, although this is not necessarily a strict requirement. Some argue that BigLaw status should be delineated not by firm size or market salaries, but rather by a firm's inclusion in certain well-known law firm rankings, such as the *New York Law Journal* 250 or the *American Lawyer* 200 (“AmLaw 200”), and although they do not significantly impact the list of firms included in this classification, I have nevertheless chosen to rely on the AmLaw 200 list for purposes of this study (Top Law Firms, 2012).

I have been working in BigLaw for the better part of twelve years, and the lack of women in leadership positions has been painfully obvious in each of the three firms where I have worked. This is not—in any way—a reflection on any of these fine firms, all of which have been wonderful places to work, and all of whom were appropriately concerned about this issue. I should also point out that each of these three firms has its own, distinct culture and, other than being a part of BigLaw, has nothing in common with the other two from a practice perspective—one has a strong class action practice, the second handles primarily insurance and energy matters, and the third has a healthy mix of both transactional and non-transactional work. The fact that these firms cannot easily be grouped together speaks to the fact that the lack of women in leadership positions is a widespread issue in BigLaw that does not seem to be linked to the kinds of law practiced

within each individual firm. In any one of these firms I could (and did) walk into a room with the senior-most decision makers and find that there was only one woman seated at the table. Such a stark state of affairs is not only visually jarring, but it is also discouraging for employers who recognize the significant benefits—financial and otherwise—associated with having women lawyers in leadership positions (Cohen & Kornfeld, 2006). The dismal representation of women in BigLaw leadership has led members of the academy to study the progression of women’s careers in an attempt to determine why they seem to evolve so differently than the careers of their male counterparts. Some of these studies focus on the obstacles or barriers that prevent women from reaching the most senior positions (Loscocco & Robinson, 1991; Ragins, 1989, Melamed, 1995; Berg & Ferber, 1983; among others). Other studies attempt to identify the root causes of this year-over-year failure to reduce the gender gap at the leadership level (Dreher, 2005; Blau & Ferber, 1992; Markham, 1987; Henning & Jardim, 1977; Becker, 1964; among others). Finally, there is a body of literature that looks at women who have achieved a high level of success and seeks to ascertain common characteristics that these successful women share. The present analysis will focus on the latter collection of research and in particular on the non-cognitive traits known as grit—defined as “perseverance and passion for long-term goals” (Duckworth & Peterson, 2007, p. 1087)—and a growth mindset—defined as the view that one’s most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work—and consider whether they are, or are not, characteristics common to, and predictive of, successful women lawyers. Ultimately, I will suggest that grit and a growth mindset are not only

traits that many highly successful women lawyers possess, perhaps as a direct result of having overcome challenging obstacles along the path to leadership positions, but that they may also be valuable predictors of the future success of individual women working in BigLaw. Furthermore, legal employers who recognize the value of grit and a growth mindset in their female lawyers may well have an edge over those who do not recruit for or seek to nurture these traits as having women in such leadership positions may very well impact the bottom line (Cohen & Kornfeld, 2006).

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

It is common knowledge outside of academic journals that non-cognitive traits such as motivation, tenacity, and perseverance are essential traits for success in life (Heckman & Rubinstein, 2001). Indeed, this concept appears regularly in traditional children's literature including the classics "The Little Engine That Could" and "The Tortoise and the Hare". In both of these stories, the protagonists are able to succeed only by demonstrating true grit and a profound belief in their own abilities, which allow them to overcome significant obstacles, thereby earning the respect and admiration not only of their formidable opponents and competitors, but also of their communities. Given the prevalence of these kinds of stories in the American cultural narrative, it is surprising that so much of the literature on success focuses on cognitive abilities, such as memory, attention, and other measures of intelligence, and tends to overlook the importance of non-cognitive skills (Heckman & Rubinstein, 2001). In this section, I will focus on what we know about the non-cognitive traits grit and mindset, and discuss the potential implications of both for women in BigLaw.

Grit

The dictionary defines grit as "firmness of character; indomitable spirit; pluck" (Merriam-Webster, 2011). A gritty person is characterized as having "unyielding courage in the face of hardship or danger" (Merriam-Webster, 2011). This definition provides us with a basic understanding of grit and begins to show us how we might

recognize gritty behavior. Of particular importance is the notion that a gritty individual is unlikely to be subdued or overcome since he/she possesses a strong will and an unrelenting desire to accomplish his/her personal goals. Duckworth and Peterson (2007) build on this definition of grit by describing this trait as a lasting and unwavering dedication to a specific objective and refine the concept further by suggesting that grit also includes a certain degree of passion, zeal, or fervor. They define grit as “perseverance and passion for long-term goals” (Duckworth & Peterson, 2007, p. 1087). Duckworth and Peterson (2007) suggest that grit entails “working strenuously toward challenges, maintaining effort and interest over years despite failure, adversity, and plateaus in progress” (p. 1088). For the gritty individual, success is a marathon and requires great endurance and stamina. Whereas some individuals may change trajectories or abandon their goals at the first sign of boredom or disappointment, the gritty individual will persevere and stay the course (Duckworth & Peterson, 2007). For purposes of this study, I will rely primarily on Duckworth and Peterson’s definition of grit, but I will also introduce and identify key elements of grit—namely perseverance, passion, and deliberate practice—that appear throughout the literature and help to shed light on some of the nuances of the trait.

Perseverance

The single most common element—and the most commonly used synonym—of grit is perseverance. While much of the literature on perseverance has focused on the persistence of beliefs, thoughts, and attitudes (Clark, 1935) there has been a recent focus

on behavioral persistence, such as action or work performance (Eisenberger, 1992; Eisenberger & Leonard, 1980). This subset of the literature, which focuses primarily on how perseverance plays out in the workplace, is most relevant to the present analysis given the intent to explore how grit and perseverance may be used as a predictor of workplace success. Eisenberger and Leonard (1992) define perseverance as one's tendency to persist and endure in the face of adversity. They suggest that perseverance influences individuals' courses of action, the level of effort that they exhibit, and the endurance and resilience exhibited towards setbacks and failures that they may encounter along the way (Eisenberger & Leonard, 1992). Similarly, Stolz (1997) defines perseverance as the perceived ability to overcome adverse circumstances, and suggests that success is determined by the extent to which individuals persevere despite potentially insurmountable obstacles or adversities. In order to persevere, an individual cannot be easily subdued or overcome and must relentlessly pursue his/her desired objectives.

Passion

Passion is one of the key elements of grit. Indeed, the definition of grit includes not only a tenacious pursuit of goals, but also a passionate pursuit. While passion is not the only element of grit, it has been referred to as "the lynchpin of grit" (Doskoch, 2005). Johnson and Indvik (1999) point out that as organizations have shifted from hierarchical structures to more team-based configurations they are looking for employees who will bring both commitment and passion to the job. Unlike in decades past in which employees were encouraged to leave their passions and emotions at home, there has been

increasing attention paid to employees' emotions or emotional intelligence (Barsade & Gibson, 2007). Emotional intelligence is defined as "the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions" (Salovey & Mayer, 1990, p. 189). Indeed, an employee's emotional intelligence can have a greater impact on individual and group performance than traditional measures like IQ. There are countless examples of high-IQ individuals who failed to achieve success in life because they lacked self-discipline, and individuals with low-IQs who achieved great success by virtue of sheer persistence (Heckman & Rubinstein, 2001). While the study of emotional intelligence is still a relatively nascent field, overall there is positive support for the validity of the emotional intelligence construct and its relationship to a variety of life outcomes, including those at work (Barsade & Gibson, 2007). While further exploration of emotional intelligence is outside the scope of the current analysis, the construct warrants mention because it underscores the fact that certain elements of grit, such as passion, have much to offer our understanding of organizational life and organizational success (Barsade & Gibson, 2007).

Truly gritty individuals demonstrate not only a rare single-mindedness in pursuit of their goals, but also a distinct passion for the goals they choose to pursue. As Doskoch (2005) points out, it is this fervor that might just be the "cornerstone" of grit (p. 5). Indeed, in certain circumstances, it may even be the case that passion fuels perseverance. However, it is important to note that while passion and perseverance are often intimately connected, it is not always the case that passion precedes grit. In some cases, passion for

a particular subject can develop over time, as a result of persistent dedication to the subject matter. Often the most intriguing and beguiling aspects of a complex discipline, such as chess or engineering, become apparent only after deep immersion (Doskoch, 2005). In other cases, a passion for challenges or a desire to test one's limits may fuel an individual's perseverance and encourage him to doggedly pursue a long-term objective, in spite of the difficulty of the task. Endurance athletes provide a good example of this as some of them spend months or even years training for a marathon or a triathlon, not so much because they love the act of running, swimming, and biking long distances but rather because they want the personal satisfaction and sense of accomplishment that accompany such undertakings (Doskoch, 2005).

Deliberate Practice

Hard work alone does not always lead to success. Indeed, while hard work is likely a key ingredient for success, there must be other ingredients at play beyond just the sum of time that one devotes to the pursuit of a singular objective. Ericsson and Charness (1994) suggest that it is not only how hard you work, but also the way in which you work that ultimately impacts your ability to excel. Specifically, they suggest that deliberate practice—defined as “those training activities that were most closely associated with consistent improvements in performance”—is what sets expert performers apart from their less proficient peers (Ericsson, 2004, p. S72). Importantly, the amount of time an individual must spend engaging in deliberate practice in order to achieve professional expertise requires, in most cases, roughly ten years. As Ericsson

points out, “this ten-year rule of required engagement in domain-related activities is the most compelling evidence for the necessity of experience to attain high levels of performance” (Ericsson, 2004, p. S72). Indeed, how much time a protégé engaged in deliberate practice was a more reliable predictor of world-class performance than innate talent or inborn ability (Ericsson, 2004). Ericsson (2004) goes on to explain that deliberate efforts to increase one’s performance beyond its current level involve problem solving and finding better methods of performing the task at hand. Engaging in practice activities with the explicit goal of improving some aspect of the performance is an essential part of deliberate practice. Along these same lines, Ericsson notes that “more plausible loci of individual differences are factors that predispose individuals towards engaging in deliberate practice and enable them to sustain high levels of practice for many years” (Ericsson & Charness, 1994, p. 744).

Duckworth (2010) connects deliberate practice to grit by suggesting that grittier individuals are more likely to engage in deliberate practice. Indeed, it seems to be the case that having high levels of grit is one of the things that enables individuals to actively engage in deliberate practice (Duckworth, 2010). Whereas individuals who are only moderately gritty may choose to engage in easier, more immediately rewarding forms of practice—such as those that warrant regular, positive reinforcement—a gritty individual tends to persevere in spite of the fact that deliberate practice is rated as more effortful and less pleasing than other, less effective kinds of preparation. When gritty individuals engage in deliberate practice, they reap the myriad benefits associated with it, and tend to be more successful as a result.

How grit differs from similar character traits

It is important to understand how grit differs, in some cases quite subtly, from other, similar character traits, including achievement orientation, dependability, the need for achievement, and self-discipline. In this section, all four of these character traits will be compared and contrasted with grit and examined in further detail.

Achievement Orientation

While there is some overlap between grit and achievement-orientation, ultimately, the two concepts diverge. Achievement-orientation is one of three related facets of conscientiousness (the other two are dependability and orderliness). Conscientiousness is the single Big Five construct most closely related to performance across jobs (Judge, Higgins, Thoresen & Barrick, 1999). The Big Five refers to a five-factor model of personality that categorizes virtually all personality measures into one of five dimensions: neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness (Judge, Higgins, Thoresen & Barrick, 1999). An achievement-oriented individual is one who works hard, tries to do a good job, and completes the task at hand (Hough, 1992). Thus, achievement-oriented individuals are both persistent and hardworking (Judge, Higgins, Thoresen & Barrick, 1999). While this definition appears to be very similar to the definition of grit, and measurements of achievement orientation have been found to predict job proficiency and educational success, grit differs from achievement orientation “in its emphasis on long-term stamina rather than short term intensity” (Duckworth & Peterson, 2007, p. 1089). A gritty individual will not only complete immediate tasks but

will also pursue goals over extended periods of time. In many cases, a gritty individual will devote several years to the completion of a single task, such as mastering the game of chess, whereas an achievement-oriented individual might well lose interest in the task at a far earlier stage of the process.

Dependability

Grit also differs from the dependability facet of conscientiousness. A dependable individual, who is characterized as being both responsible and careful, may be very good at demonstrating self-control, but may not share the gritty individual's consistent dedication to his/her goals and interests. As Duckworth and Peterson (2007) point out, a highly dependable individual "may resist the urge to surf the Internet at work—yet switch careers annually" (p. 1089). As is the case with achievement orientation, the difference between dependability and grit underscores the fact that long-term commitment is imperative to the construct of grit. A gritty individual doesn't just show up; he/she shows up with enthusiasm and brings passion to the task at hand.

Need for Achievement

Additionally, grit differs from the need for achievement. McClelland (1961) defined the need for achievement as a drive to complete manageable goals that will result in immediate feedback on performance. Individuals who have a need to achieve tend to pursue goals that are neither too hard nor too easy—for these individuals the emphasis is on getting regular, real-time feedback as often as possible. It is the need for feedback and validation that drives them forward and motivates them. In contrast, gritty individuals

will set long-term goals for themselves and will persistently pursue those goals, regardless of whether or not there is regular feedback and positive reinforcement (Duckworth & Peterson, 2007). McClelland, Koestner and Weinberger (1992) also point out that because the need for achievement is a non-conscious drive for implicitly rewarding activities, it is impossible to measure using self-report methods. As discussed in further detail below, grit can entail dedication to implicitly or explicitly rewarding goals and can be measured using a self-report questionnaire as gritty individuals tend to be motivated by a conscious drive (Duckworth & Quinn, 2009). Thus, the difference between grit and the need for achievement has to do with both the need for feedback and the individual's conscious awareness of this need.

Self-Discipline

Finally, grit differs from self-discipline. Self-discipline is defined as the ability to suppress prepotent responses in the service of a higher goal—a choice which is not automatic but rather requires conscious effort (Duckworth & Seligman, 2006). Examples of self-discipline include paying attention to your boss rather than daydreaming, saving money so that it can accumulate interest in the bank rather than spending it on something you would like to have right away, and persisting on long-term assignments despite boredom and frustration. While self-discipline is very similar to grit, and gritty people tend to be self-disciplined (Duckworth, et al., in press) there are important distinctions between the two concepts. First of all, self-discipline implies the ability to refrain from doing something—to stop eating desserts or stop staying up so late (Doskoch, 2005). In

contrast, grit requires the ability to keep doing something, such as engaging in deliberate practice over a significant period of time, in spite of obstacles or challenging setbacks along the way. Secondly, self-discipline does not require the ambition and gusto needed to undertake a challenging task or pursue a long-term goal (Duckworth, 2005). In other words, while one must be at least somewhat self-disciplined in order to be truly gritty, there are self-disciplined individuals who are not necessarily gritty. As Duckworth points out, “self-discipline is probably necessary for grit but it’s not sufficient” (Duckworth, 2005, citing Duckworth).

Grit and success

In response to the surprising lack of attention paid to the importance of non-cognitive skills, there have been several attempts to identify universal traits that are essential to success regardless of the domain (Duckworth, 2006; Heckman & Rubinstein, 2001). Indeed, much of the recent literature that addresses grit is primarily concerned, in the first instance, with identifying non-cognitive traits that contribute to an individual’s success. Howe (1999) studied the biographies of many prominent, reputable leaders and thinkers, including Mozart, Darwin, Einstein and Newton, and found that “perseverance is at least as crucial as intelligence” to lasting success (p. 15). The Newton story in particular provides a great example of the disconnect between the sudden epiphany narrative and the reality of how major discoveries are made. In what has been referred to as the single most famous story of scientific discovery, Newton was walking in his garden when an apple suddenly fell from a tree, prompting him to devise the concept of

universal gravitation (Lehrer, 2009). While this story has a certain romantic appeal to it as it implies that genius can strike at any moment, it nevertheless ignores the fact that while Newton was unquestionably brilliant, he also “had an astonishing ability to persist in the face of obstacles [and] to stick with the same stubborn mystery [] until he found the answer” (Lehrer, 2009, p. 1). Howe’s (1999) study, and similar work by Simonton (1999), highlight the fact that many well-known geniuses were relatively ordinary children who happened to be extremely passionate about pursuing certain goals—even to the point of obsession—and who ended up making enormous contributions mostly as a result of their passion, persistence, and grit (Howe, 1999; Simonton, 1999; Dweck, 2002). These findings are supported by a growing body of evidence that suggests that an individual’s grit may be a good predictor of his/her ultimate success. The most explicit evidence that an individual’s grit can be used as a predictor of his or her success comes from the work of Angela Duckworth.

The Grit Scale

In building the case for grit as a legitimate, distinct construct, Duckworth and colleagues developed a self-report questionnaire called the Grit Scale, designed to be a stand-alone measure of grit. When Duckworth first introduced the construct in 2006, she argued that “grit differs from existing constructs in its emphasis on both sustained effort and focused interest over time” (p. 71). In order to be able to measure grit, and to fully explore its impact, she sought a measurement that met four basic criteria: “evidence of psychometric soundness, face validity for adolescents and adults pursuing goals in a

variety of domains (e.g., not just work or school), low likelihood of ceiling effects in high-achieving populations, and most importantly, a precise fit with the construct of grit” (Duckworth & Peterson, 2007, p. 1089).

Once they had developed and validated the Grit Scale, Duckworth and her colleagues used it in a series of studies designed to test the hypothesis that grit may be as essential to high achievement as IQ, and furthermore that it might be more important than similar traits, like self-control and conscientiousness, in setting exceptional individuals apart from their less exceptional peers (Duckworth & Peterson, 2007). The results of these studies suggest that the presence of grit does indeed predict a variety of success measurements over and beyond IQ and conscientiousness. Duckworth and Peterson (2007) argue that “collectively, these findings suggest that the achievement of difficult goals entails not only talent but also the sustained and focused application of talent over time” (p. 1087). This view is shared by others and has been the focus of several recent studies (Kyllonen, 2005).

The first of these studies collected data on more than 1,500 adult participants aged twenty-five or older. Participants were asked to indicate both how old they were and what level of education they had achieved: some high school, high school graduate, some college, Associate’s degree, Bachelor’s degree, or post college graduate degree (Duckworth & Peterson, 2007). These data points were then compared to participants’ individual grit scores, and, as predicted, the more highly educated adults were grittier than their less educated peers (of equal age). In this study, then, success is defined as the level of education that individuals were able to achieve. It is important to note, however,

that while high levels of education are often associated with a general, broad definition of success, there are other, more specific measures of success, such as salary or position in the workplace hierarchy, that are not necessarily linked to the level of education that one obtains. Thus, while it may be the case that highly educated individuals are more successful than their less educated peers, it is by no means a certainty. Nevertheless, this study does provide evidence that gritty individuals tend to achieve more in the academic domain than those who are not gritty, and, as will be discussed in greater detail later, achievement in the academic domain is critical to one's ability to secure a position in BigLaw.

Along those same lines, a second study considered the association between grit and cumulative GPA while controlling for general mental ability or intelligence—as measured by SAT scores—at an elite undergraduate university. The results of this study demonstrated that gritty students outperformed their less gritty peers (Duckworth & Peterson, 2007). In this study success was defined as cumulative GPA, which is a clear measure of success in the academic domain that may or may not translate to success in the workplace, but does seem to be generally predictive of workplace success, or, at the very least, of securing upwardly mobile positions in BigLaw.

It is not surprising given the results of these two studies that many institutions of higher education are beginning to rely more heavily on non-cognitive measures when making admissions decisions (Sedlacek, 2012). Sedlacek (2012) points out that this is partly a recognition that assessments such as the LSAT provide only limited measurements of intelligence, and partly a recognition that we need a fresh approach that

reflects the fact that our student bodies are quite diverse and include women, gays, people of color, and international students, to name just a few of the groups which are now more heavily represented. Sedlacek (in press) argues that in order to accurately determine the true potential of students from such diverse backgrounds, particularly nontraditional students (i.e. white males) admissions officers should incorporate new, non-cognitive measurements, such as demonstrations of determination, when evaluating and selecting desirable applicants. Similarly, organizations like the Educational Testing Service (ETS), which is known for its work on tests like the SAT and the GRE, among others, are beginning to explore the case for non-cognitive assessments, such as dependability and persistence (and even grit), because of their apparent importance to employers in industry (Kyllonen, 2005). Thus, there is growing interest, if not yet a full blown trend, towards using non-cognitive skills as predictors of success in the academic domain.

A third study expanded the scope beyond pure academic achievement by considering whether grit was predictive of cadet retention and GPA at West Point, the United States Military Academy. More than 1,200 freshman cadets completed the Grit Scale upon arrival at West Point in 2004 (Duckworth & Peterson, 2007). This data was compared to other data maintained by West Point, such as Whole Candidate Score (a weighted average of SAT scores, class rank, demonstrated leadership ability, and physical aptitude) which is used in their rigorous admissions process (Duckworth & Peterson, 2007). The results of the study revealed that grit predicted whether a candidate would survive his/her first summer as a cadet better than any other known predictor. Additionally, grit was predictive of both a cadet's first year GPA and his or her Military

Performance Score, a combined measure of performance ratings and grades (Duckworth & Peterson, 2007). Importantly, the results of this study demonstrate that grit is predictive not only of success in a traditional academic environment, but also of success in a challenging environment in which success is defined not only in terms of pure academic performance but also in terms of physical ability, endurance, and leadership—all of which are critically important to success in the BigLaw environment.

A fourth study looked at success outside of the academic environment by looking at grit as a predictor of success at the Scripps National Spelling Bee (Duckworth, Kirby, Tsukayama, Bernstein & Ericsson, in press). In this study success was defined as how many rounds each competitor was able to complete in the competition. The results demonstrated that grittier spellers were more likely to engage in deliberate practice prior to the competition, which in turn made them more likely to reach later rounds in the bee (Duckworth, Kirby, Tsukayama, Bernstein & Ericsson, in press). The results of this study have significant implications for workplace success as it has been shown—and discussed in earlier sections of this analysis—that deliberate practice often leads to expert performance and that expert performance is difficult to accomplish without deliberate practice to pave the way (Ericsson, 2004). Thus, if grit can predict, even to some extent, an individual's willingness to engage in deliberate practice, it seems likely that it can also predict those who are likely to excel in other domains, including the workplace.

While these four studies demonstrate the predictive nature of grit, there are relatively few studies of this kind. Although increasing attention is being paid to the effects of non-cognitive skills like grit on earnings and schooling outcomes, the

importance of such skills in predicting workplace success remains largely unexplored. That being said, when considered collectively, the results of these studies seem to suggest that, at a minimum, it is possible that grit could be a predictor of success in the legal environment just as it is being used as a predictor of success in academia and elsewhere. Certainly, further exploration of this issue within organizations is warranted.

Mindset

Like grit, having a growth mindset has been shown to be predictive of success, often above and beyond other seemingly critical measures such as IQ and GPA. The Oxford American Dictionary defines mindset as "an established set of attitudes held by someone" (2012). The concept of mindset comes from Carol Dweck (2006), who suggests that individuals can be categorized according to their implicit beliefs regarding the origin of ability. Individuals who believe that ability is innate are said to have what Dweck refers to as a "fixed" mindset or an entity theory of intelligence. Dweck (2002) argues that these individuals are "stubbornly wedded to the idea that accomplishment, especially outstanding accomplishment, is about endowment. [They] ignore the fact that Mozart, Darwin, Michael Jordan, and Tiger Woods all practiced feverishly and single-mindedly for years, and instead believe that they were born with one-in-a-million ability" (p. 39). Collectively, individuals with a fixed mindset have a tendency to overlook the years of commitment and training that led to such achievements.

Conversely, individuals who believe that ability is developed and enhanced through hard work and learning are said to have a "growth" mindset or an incremental

theory of intelligence. Individuals may not necessarily fall neatly into one of these categories, and indeed, many people have different mindsets in different domains of their lives. For example, an individual may have a fixed mindset when it comes to academics, but a growth mindset when it comes to athletic achievements. Such an individual may believe that her ability to succeed in math is dependent on her genetic disposition whereas her ability to successfully run a marathon is a direct result of how much effort she is willing to put into her training.

The Mindset Quiz

Dweck (2002) argues that while individuals may not be consciously aware of their own mindset, it can be easily discerned based on their behavior. In order to determine an individual's dominant mindset, Dweck has developed a 16-question mindset quiz in which participants use a traditional likert scale to agree or disagree with a series of pre-determined fixed and growth mindset statements. An individual's dominant theory of intelligence can be determined based on the extent and number of fixed or growth mindset statements he/she agrees with.

Mindset and success

Like the literature on grit, most of the literature that addresses mindset is primarily concerned with its potential contributions to an individual's success. A large subset of this literature focuses on student's academic achievements. Dweck and others argue that students' beliefs about their own abilities can and do significantly impact their

academic achievement (Ahmavaara & Houston, 2007; Mangels, Butterfield, Lamb, Good, & Dweck, 2006; Murayama & Elliot, 2009; Perkun et al., 2009). Specifically, Dweck (2006) argues that students with a fixed mindset respond much differently to failure than those who have a growth mindset. Those who have a growth mindset tend to be less afraid of—and therefore less deterred by—failure because they recognize that failure presents an opportunity for learning and improvement. Students with a growth mindset believe that intelligence is “malleable” and thus they view setbacks and failures as an inevitable result of learning new things rather than an indication that they may be personally deficient. In this way, students with a growth mindset are resilient and tend to rebound from failure relatively quickly.

In contrast, students with a fixed mindset often believe that failure reflects negatively on them and on their personal abilities and capacity to be successful. Those students with a fixed mindset place great emphasis on performance metrics (such as test results) which establish and document their intelligence and abilities in a measurable way. In many ways, they view these metrics as proof of their intelligence and value them immensely because they provide a measure of validation. These students tend to be less interested in setting learning goals and extremely concerned with setting performance goals. For example, a student with a growth mindset might set a goal to master the pythagorean theorem whereas a student with a fixed mindset would set a goal to get a 95 on an upcoming math quiz.

Furthermore, Mangels et al. (2006) found that there is a significant difference in the way that fixed and growth mindset students respond to performance feedback.

Specifically, he found that following the delivery of negative feedback, students with a fixed mindset demonstrated less sustained memory-related activity to corrective information, which suggests reduced effort in conceptual encoding of the material. They also appeared less likely to engage in sustained semantic processing of learning-relevant feedback (Butterfield & Mangels, 2003; Mangels, Picton, & Craik, 2001; Nessler, Johnson, Bersick, & Friedman, 2006). Due to the importance of attention in successful encoding of information for later recall and recognition tests (Craik, Govoni, Naveh-Benjamin, & Anderson, 1996), the differences in the level of sustained semantic processing of learning-relevant information between those with a fixed mindset and those with a growth mindset may help to explain why those with a growth mindset are better able to rebound after suffering academic failures. This is an important finding because it supports that those who have a growth mindset are more likely to continue to put forth effort and work hard despite setbacks, and it underscores the link between mindset and grit.

Dweck (2006) also found important differences in how the attribution of success ultimately affects behavior. Students who attributed their success to their own innate talents and abilities (those with a fixed mindset) tended to exhibit what Dweck refers to as the “low effort syndrome” when faced with a challenge that threatened their identities as the “smart” students. Rather than confront the fact that they might not be good at something, these students would stop putting forth effort, largely as a protective measure (Dweck & Leggett, 1988). Conversely, students with a growth mindset, who attributed their success to hard work and persistence rather than innate ability, were far more likely

to embrace challenging tasks that require effort and progressive skill acquisition (Dweck & Leggett, 1988). In other words, students with a growth mindset will try much harder because they believe in the direct link between effort and success.

To summarize the findings on mindset and success, those with a growth mindset have been shown to focus on learning goals rather than performance goals (Dweck & Leggett, 1988), believe in the effectiveness of effort and persistence (Hong, Chiu, Dweck, Lin, & Wan, 1999), and generally demonstrate behavior that is likely to lead to increased learning and advanced mastery of skills. All else being equal, the research suggests that students with growth mindsets are more likely to outperform those with fixed mindsets.

Changing Your Mindset

Dweck (2006) argues that an individual's mindset can be influenced in a number of ways, including through environmental cues such as receiving certain kinds of directed praise from her parents (Dweck, 2006). For example, children who are praised for their hard work are far more likely to develop the growth mindset than those who are praised for their intelligence. Thus, it is possible to encourage students to persist in the face of failure by encouraging them to think about learning in a certain way (Dweck, 2006). These findings are supported by Blackwell et al. (2007), who suggest that a student's mindset can be changed relatively easily if she is presented with alternative ways of thinking about intelligence, such as likening the brain to a muscle and explaining that the more you exercise this muscle the more powerful it becomes. This finding represents

encouraging news for other non-cognitive traits that contribute to an individual's success, including grit, since grit can also be taught and used not only to improve an individual's academic performance but also her likelihood of having a successful and rewarding life.

Women, grit, and mindset

Grit and a growth mindset are powerful traits that have been shown to have important implications for individuals of both genders. While the universal importance of these traits to career success is certainly worth exploring further, I want to focus on the implications for women lawyers in particular, and to suggest that demonstrations of grit and a growth mindset may ultimately be more important for the career success of women lawyers than it is for their male counterparts. Because there has been very little scientific work done to date that focuses exclusively on lawyers and their paths to success (which is one of the reasons I have chosen to undertake the present analysis), I will rely on several studies that explore the career dynamics of highly successful women—in comparably challenging professions—in order to explore this issue further. In particular, I will consider how these two traits relate to and impact other factors known to contribute to a woman's career success—namely career commitment, power, core competencies, performance evaluations, and law school performance.

Career Commitment

White (1995) argues that a true understanding of the career psychology of women requires an acknowledgement that women encounter fundamentally different issues than

men do along the path to powerful leadership positions. To that end, she derives a stage model of career development over a typical woman's life span. White (1995) studies women managers and entrepreneurs in commerce and industry and senior members of high status professions—such as law and accountancy—who have already achieved career success. Success, in White's study, is peer defined and thus determined by the woman's peers in her national business networks. The results of White's (1995) study suggest that regardless of the nature of their occupation, successful women have passed through four broad life stages: early career development, early thirties transition, settling down—late thirties transition, and finally, achievement and maintenance. It can generally be said that the successful women in the study experienced periods of career satisfaction and commitment followed by periods of instability and questioning of career and family choices—which often led to significant change (either with respect to the woman's employer or her personal life).

One of White's (1995) key findings was that successful women tend to be firmly committed to their careers. Indeed, the women in the study can aptly be described as gritty. In order to investigate the dynamics of their grit and career commitment—explicitly defined as the motivation to work in a career role instead of a series of unrelated jobs—White draws on the work of Farmer (1985). Farmer suggests that career commitment and the motivation to achieve career success can be explained by relying on three components: mastery, aspirations, and career centrality. Mastery is defined as the “tendency to choose difficult tasks and to persevere in the face of problems,” aspirations as the level of education or the position to which an individual ultimately aspires, and

career centrality as the extent to which an individual sees involvement in her career as central to her life (White, 1995, p. 6). The sum of these three components closely approximates the definition of grit and seems to lend support to Duckworth and Peterson's (2007) idea that "the achievement of difficult goals entails not only talent but also the sustained and focused application of talent over time" (p. 1087). Thus, in order to be successful, a woman must also be committed, and this kind of sustained commitment is second nature to gritty individuals who have incremental theories of intelligence (growth mindsets).

Power

Impatient with the speed at which women are reaching the highest levels of management, many companies have invested in strategies designed to ensure that high-potential women are sponsored for the most-senior posts. One such strategy, Ibarra, Carter and Silva (2010) suggest, is that women learn to exercise their power. For many women, this is a daunting prospect, as "the behavioral styles that are most valued in traditionally masculine cultures—and most used as indicators of "potential"—are often unappealing or unnatural for high-potential women, whose sense of authenticity can feel violated by the tacit leadership requirements" (Ibarra, Carter & Silva, 2010, p. 84). For women who are uncomfortable with demonstrations of power, the exercise of power may also require the ability to make peace with power, if for no other reason than the fact that power has been shown to be a very effective management tool. Indeed, empirical research indicates that seeking power pays off (Ibarra, Carter & Silva, 2010).

Ibarra, Carter and Silva (2010) developed a list of things that powerful people do to advance their agendas in the workplace. Among the items on this list, which is designed to provide women with the leverage they need in order to advance to high-level positions, are the ability to advance on multiple fronts, co-opt antagonists, remove rivals (nicely if possible), and, as is most relevant to the current analysis, to persist in the face of adversity. Importantly, Ibarra, Carter and Silva (2010) see persistence—or grit—as a key factor in women’s ability to exercise power in the workplace, citing numerous powerful women who attribute their success to dogged persistence over time. Ultimately, they suggest that persistence is a useful tool because it wears the opposition down (Ibarra, Carter & Silva, 2010). Thus, gritty women who have the ability to persist over time are more likely to outlast their competition. Similarly, women must also believe in their own ability to exercise power in appropriate and effective ways, even if this is not something that comes naturally to them, and in this respect a growth mindset also contributes significantly to a woman’s capacity to demonstrate power in the workplace.

Along those same lines, Chanow and Rikleem (2012) argue that women must get, use, and maintain power in order to accelerate their advancement in the legal profession. In order to accomplish this, women lawyers must master both the language and the dynamics of power. Chanow and Rikleem (2012) offer seven strategies for accomplishing this, including “don’t give up or surrender or cede the field to others”, which is essentially an argument for demonstrating grit (p. 20). Similarly, Pfeffer (2010) argues that persistence and resilience are the most important qualities for getting and keeping power. As Pfeffer (2010) points out, “[t]he way you become masterful at something is

that you persist, you do not give up. You don't die in the face of failure" (p. 21). Both Pfeffer (2010) and Chanow and Rikleen (2012) highlight the importance of power to success in BigLaw, and their work suggests that grit and a growth mindset can help women lawyers both demonstrate and sustain it.

Core Competencies

In a study for the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL), Leslie (2009) attempts to identify the leadership competencies that are needed in order to address the leadership gap. The leadership gap is defined as the gap between the crucial leadership skills needed by organizations and the leadership skills their high-potential employees currently possess (Leslie, 2009). Leslie surveyed executive leaders at 15 companies and asked them to identify the competencies most critical for success. This exercise produced a list of seven competencies: leading people, strategic planning, managing change, inspiring commitment, resourcefulness, being a quick learner, and doing whatever it takes (Leslie, 2009). The final competency—doing whatever it takes—is defined as “persevering under adverse conditions” (Leslie, 2009, p. 4). The results of Leslie’s study lend further support to the notion that perseverance, or grit, is an important contributor to success in the workplace.

Leslie went on to explore the projected importance of these seven competencies to career success over the course of the next five years. The results of this subset of the study reveal that grit, or doing whatever it takes, had a relative importance of 64% in 2009 but is projected to have a relative importance of 77% in five year’s time (Leslie,

2009). This is a significant finding as it seems to suggest that grit will be an increasingly vital tool in female lawyer's arsenals. Leaders who are already effective in this area, then, have a strength that is needed and will continue to be needed in BigLaw. Conversely, leaders who are not gritty will have much learning to do in order to remain as relevant and effective as their peers (Leslie, 2009).

The relative future importance of grit, or of any competency, is, at best, difficult to predict as it depends in part upon a number of variables, including an uncertain political and economic landscape. Nevertheless, Leslie suggests that even if the current working environment were to remain unchanged, today's leaders are not as skilled as they need to be in order to effectively manage their current challenges (Leslie, 2009). For example, when it comes to grit, she finds a current skill level of only 28% while a skill level of 54% is needed. Leslie's findings not only underscore the fact that grit will be an increasingly vital tool for women lawyers, but grit may also help to explain why women who do not have the requisite level of grittiness are not advancing to the highest levels of leadership.

Performance Evaluations

Biernat, Tocci and Williams (2012) analyzed the performance evaluations of male and female junior attorneys in a Wall Street law firm (a BigLaw firm). They found that male supervisors judged male attorneys more favorably than female attorneys on numerical ratings but provided narrative comments that showed either no gender preference or greater favorability toward women (Biernat, Tocci & Williams, 2012).

Additionally, the performance evaluations of the male attorneys were more consistent than they were for female attorneys. Finally, narrative ratings of technical competence mattered more for men than women, and narrative ratings of interpersonal warmth mattered more for women than men (Biernat, Tocci & Williams, 2012). Importantly, open-ended use of positive performance words did not necessarily translate into positive numerical ratings for women. In other words, a woman might receive a review with a glowing narrative, and yet still receive numeric ratings below those of her male counterparts, even if their narratives were far less enthusiastic. Biernat, Tocci and Williams' data suggest subtle patterns of gender bias, in which "women were harmed by not meeting gendered expectations of interpersonal warmth but were less benefited than men by meeting masculine standards of high technical competence" (2012, p. 186). Because job performance evaluations play such a prominent role in determining employees' advancement prospects, and many advancement decisions are made as a direct result of an employee's perceived abilities and efforts, any bias in the performance appraisal process will inevitably lead to bias in promotion decisions over time (Igbaria & Shayo, 1997).

The presence of evaluation bias in the performance review process suggests that women are more likely to need to rely on traits like grit and a growth mindset to provide them with the determination, perseverance, and belief required to overcome such biases. A woman who lacks grit, or believes that whatever talents she possesses are fixed and immutable, may be more likely to become frustrated and to disengage when faced with biased reviews. If she does disengage, she will be less likely to ascend the corporate

ladder and reach the partnership ranks. Conversely, a man who lacks grit will generally have less of a problem since the performance evaluation bias tends to work in his favor—at least on paper, he will have the higher ratings. These findings highlight, at a minimum, the fact that the female career path tends to be more treacherous than the typical male career path, thereby making grit and a growth mindset more critical tools for women than for men.

Law School Performance

In general, girls tend to outperform boys when it comes to grades. Duckworth and Seligman (2006) argue that this is the case because girls are both more self-disciplined than boys and better at delaying gratification. These characteristics manifest themselves in the amount of time that girls typically devote to homework (almost twice as much time as boys) and help girls to earn better grades resulting in higher GPAs (Duckworth & Seligman, 2006). Interestingly, while a young woman's ability to exercise self-discipline and log in hours of hard work often enables her to outperform young men on the GPA scale at both the secondary and undergraduate levels, this does not seem to translate into better grades in law school. Indeed, several studies have shown that while women may enter law school with higher GPAs than their male counterparts, they are more likely to underperform in this environment (Bowers, 2000). A study at the University of Pennsylvania Law School found that men were three times more likely than women to fall in the top 10% of the class as measured by their overall GPAs (Guinier, 1994). Similarly, a longitudinal study at the University of Texas Law School found that

female students' grades were lower than male's, particularly in the first year of law school, which had a strong effect on the female students' ability to secure a law review membership, a prestigious BigLaw job, and/or a judicial clerkship after graduation (Bowers, 2000). Furthermore, in a statistical analysis of all ABA-accredited law schools, Neumann (2000) found the same pattern of higher undergraduate grades for women followed by lower law school grades.

The fact that women tend to receive lower grades at most law schools has far reaching implications for the BigLaw hiring process. On the one hand, because law review membership is determined at least in part by grades at most elite law schools, this tends to result in fewer female students on law review. For example, in the early 1990s, female students at the University of Pennsylvania represented 43% of the student body eligible for law review membership, but occupied only 30% of the law review editors positions (Guinier, 1997). Similarly, at the University of Texas, the percentage of female law review members was only 71% of what their overall numbers in the general student body would predict (Bowers, 2000). These data points were echoed in a larger analysis of more than fifty law schools over a period of ten years in which it was found that the average female student population was 47% of the student body, but only made up 39 to 43% of law review members.

The disparity in law school performance (both in grades and in law review representation) is an important finding because it is common knowledge within the legal industry, and particularly within BigLaw, that nothing matters more in the hiring process than where one went to law school and how well one performed relative to his/her peers

(Henderson, 2012). Indeed, the industry’s devotion to elite educational credentials has been a cornerstone of the hiring process for attorneys entering BigLaw since the early days of the profession (Henderson, 2012). Henderson (2012) and others have even referred to this tendency to place extreme weight on such academic credentials as “the pedigree problem”. Given the heavy reliance of the legal profession on grades—and the fact that in many cases, men tend to outperform women in this area—it is clear that men may be better positioned, at least at the outset, for a successful legal career.

Importantly, the disparity in law school performance is not the only thing that negatively impacts women’s experience in the law school environment. As Purvis (2012) points out, women also experience higher levels of stress and depression in law school. Indeed, at one ivy league university, women were significantly more likely to report eating disorders, sleeping difficulties, frequent crying, and symptoms of anxiety (Guinier, 1997). The emotional state of female students is a critical factor in their ability to succeed in law school. As Iijima (1998) points out, there “is an intimate relationship between students’ psychological state and academic performance. . . . [H]igh levels of hope, optimism, perseverance, and motivation may be stronger predictors of academic achievement than SAT scores or previous grades” (p. 526). Thus, it may be the case that having grit and a growth mindset may well be among the keys to success for women in law school. Those women who lack these traits, and the dispositions associated with them, may find themselves overwhelmed by the pressures of law school and at an early disadvantage when beginning their careers in BigLaw.

Like Iijima (1998), Purvis (2012) argues that there is reason to believe that having a positive outlook (and generally displaying qualities associated with grit and a growth mindset) may help to explain the differences between the women who excel in law school and those who struggle. To explore this issue further, Purvis (2012) looks at the small subset of women who manage to thrive in the law school environment—in spite of the somewhat bleak state of affairs for women in law school, there is “a distinct cohort of successful female students” who manage to stand out (p. 15). Although their numbers are small, the success of this subset is impressive—not only do they earn higher grades in law school than their male counterparts but they also hold prestigious roles on the law review, including, a recent study at Yale Law School found, the same number of Editor-in-Chief positions as their male counterparts (Bashi & Iskander, 2006).

What do these exceptional women have in common? For one thing, they do not have a tendency to give themselves poor self-assessments or judge themselves unfavorably, which is something that many female law school students do with alarming frequency. For example, Neufeld (2005) found that 33% of male students believed themselves to be in the top 20% of their class in terms of their legal reasoning skills compared to only 15% of women. Similarly, 40% of men believed themselves to be in the top 20% in terms of their quantitative skills compared to only 11% of women. Such discrepancies were still present when controlling for grades, meaning that female students who were actually performing at the same level as their male counterparts still gave themselves lower self-assessments (Neufeld, 2005).

In contrast to the majority of female law school students, the highly successful female students tended to view themselves as intelligent and capable. Indeed, they had full confidence in their own abilities to achieve long term success, both in law school and in the legal profession. In essence, they were demonstrating a growth mindset and a commitment and passion that can aptly be described as gritty. Rather than let challenging experiences lead to feelings of frustration and low self-esteem, these women channeled their energy into pursuing opportunities that advanced their academic and professional success. Conversely, the less successful women tended to self-select out of such opportunities, including applying for clerkships, resubmitting notes for publication in law reviews following a “revise and resubmit” letter, and signing up for classes known to be taught by well-known professors whose mentorship, support, and letters of recommendation would benefit them greatly down the line (Purvis, 2012).

Purvis (2012) suggests that those women who demonstrated what is known in positive psychology as optimistic attribution, or a positive way of explaining and understanding things about the world, not only had more faith in their capabilities, but were more likely to be happier. As Dweck (2006) suggests, pessimistic statements that demonstrate seemingly permanent, personal deficiencies suggest a fixed mindset whereas an individual with an optimistic attribution style, or a growth mindset, will frame negative experiences as temporary and specific to the situation rather than indicative of larger shortcomings. As a result, the latter group will be more likely to overcome temporary setbacks and to excel in law school.

Grit, mindset, and the glass ceiling

It would be difficult to fully study the career trajectory of women in BigLaw without addressing the current state of thinking about the glass ceiling. While many have suggested that the glass ceiling no longer exists, there is still sufficient evidence to suggest that men and women continue to progress along different career trajectories. Simpson and Altman (2000) have demonstrated that younger women seem to have a significant advantage over their male counterparts as 48% of those they studied occupied senior roles compared to only 25% of men in comparable positions. Interestingly, while the survey data suggests that women have been promoted into more senior roles at an earlier age, the number of women over 35 who hold senior management positions does not increase much and rather seems to hover around 50%. Thus, while women under 35 are making remarkable career advancements, this does not appear to be the case for older women (Simpson & Altman, 2000). These findings echo the recent NAWL (2012) findings discussed earlier and underscore the fact that there has been a steady decline in the number of women occupying advanced positions of authority and leadership in BigLaw. This troubling trend suggests that demonstrations of grit and an incremental theory of intelligence may ultimately be more important to the career success of women since the path to leadership for women is more treacherous. Indeed, men still do not seem to experience the same drop-out levels or noticeable decreases in promotions at the leadership level (Catalyst, 2010).

Along those same lines, Simpson and Altman (2000) found that while men tend to be promoted within their existing organizations, women are much more likely to make lateral moves and accept positions outside of their organizations. In other words, they are often so committed to the advancement of their careers that they are willing to make a life-altering change, even if that change may have significant and far-reaching implications. In effect, these kinds of sacrifices are measures of an individual's grit.

Nevertheless, while young women are able to override "lesser barriers" further down the hierarchy, by the time they reach the upper levels of senior management and beyond, they encounter more "intractable barriers" (Simpson & Altman, 2000, p. 195). Simpson and Altman (2000) argue that there is a need for a new way of conceptualizing the career trajectories and experiences of women, and, to that end, they offer three alternative ways of thinking about this progression. The first alternative assumes that the "glass ceiling" has been demolished, and that the rapid career progression of young women provides evidence to support this. The second alternative suggests that the glass ceiling is generally intact, but has been "punctured" such that some women (particularly young women who are seen as having high potential and grit) are able to pass through (p. 195). According to the latter view, the glass ceiling is likely to acutely affect older women. The third and final alternative is that the glass ceiling has been shifted upwards and deferred in time so that the barriers intensify as women move up the hierarchy. Ultimately, Simpson and Altman (2000) conclude that the glass ceiling is time-bounded, which is to say that it occurs at a later stage of a woman's career, closer to the time when

she approaches the top levels of management, and that this final alternative provides the best explanation for understanding female managers' career progress over time.

Importantly, Simpson and Altman (2000) examine the careers of successful women as opposed to studying the careers of women who enjoy only average success. Thus, there is an implicit focus on the strategies and experiences that have led to significant career achievements. It is clear that grit and a growth mindset may help to demystify why some women hold senior leadership positions within today's organizations while others never progress beyond the middle management level.

Are successful women lawyers gritty and do they actually have growth mindsets?

In the prior section I argued that grit may ultimately be more important for the career success of women in BigLaw than it is for their male counterparts. Not only are grit and an incremental theory of intelligence important non-cognitive traits for women, but there is substantial anecdotal evidence that grit is a trait many highly successful women lawyers possess, often as a direct result of having overcome challenging obstacles along the path to leadership positions. As Heckman & Rubinstein (2001) point out, grit and perseverance may be as much a consequence as a cause of success. In other words, successful women lawyers may be gritty precisely because it is difficult to achieve success in BigLaw.

Hand and Savas (2010) interviewed forty successful women from different ethnic backgrounds and geographies, all of whom have been referred to as pioneers who helped

to pave the way for younger generations of women. The women interviewed came from a variety of industries and included a State Supreme Court justice. Almost all of the women interviewed for the project referred to grit or a synonym of grit as an essential contributor to their overall success. Interestingly, while many of the woman clearly had grit to begin with, others suggested that it was necessary for them to develop and nurture this trait over time in order achieve their goals. Importantly, the female subjects of this study came from an earlier generation of women who likely faced a path that was far more perilous than the path faced by women executives in today's workplace environment. These women were trying to define new territory and, in many cases, had to battle strongly held beliefs that presented continual challenges to their very presence. For these women, the road to success and especially to leadership positions, was fraught with challenges that required an ability to persevere and to resist the temptation to abandon the pursuit of success in these fraught environments. On this treacherous road, these women needed grit as their constant companion.

In spite of the fact that the path to leadership is probably less precarious for women today than it was for earlier generations, it is clear from current interviews with powerful women lawyers that grit is still an important factor in a woman's ability to achieve high-levels of success. For example, a recent series of interviews with successful women (including lawyers) in New Mexico highlights the importance of this vital trait. These twenty-five women were asked what they felt was needed in order to achieve success, and not surprisingly their responses included: "iron-willed perseverance", "fire in the belly and determination", "persistence", "drive and determination", and "total

tenacity” (New Mexico Woman, 2000, p. 16). Similarly, a 1997 survey of successful female leaders asked women for recommendations for future generations, and they offered several variations on the following piece of advice: “don’t give up. Do everything you can to achieve your goals” (Kelly, 1997, p. 19). All of the women in these studies agreed that grit and a growth mindset had been the key to their success.

Along those same lines, Forbes (2010) examines the careers of successful women and suggests that high-performing women possess the grit and determination to make visionary career leaps or game-changing business decisions in order to get ahead. These powerful women “display the sheer willpower and resolve to achieve success on their own terms and in their own way” (Forbes, 2010, p. 3). Success, Forbes (2010) suggests, is driven by the way in which women are able to conquer moments of profound adversity by ultimately choosing to take risks that lead to fractured egos and yet still managing “to dust themselves off and aim for even higher goals in the future” (p. 2).

The anecdotal evidence discussed above helps to establish that there is a widely held belief among females that grit and mindset are critical to success. Indeed, as Hornett and Finn (2006) point out, the repetition in these female narratives becomes a source of reassurance as career women all seem to have similar stories and perspectives on the nature of success. Furthermore, while such interviews are hardly scientific, Keller (2001) notes that “because material of this kind is almost nonexistent, these first-person reports are an important contribution to the literature” (p. 29). Nevertheless, there is no real empirical evidence to support the claim that successful women lawyers are gritty. Rather, it is a belief that many women seem to share, but one which has not been

appropriately tested. The intent of this study is to do just that—test the connections between grit, mindset, and success for women in BigLaw.

A word on other non-cognitive traits that impact success

While the primary focus of this study will be on grit and mindset, it is worth noting that these traits are, by no means, the only non-cognitive traits that impact success. The most obvious of these traits is ambition—the extent to which the female lawyer actually wants to climb the law firm ladder. A second is her aspirations—the strength of her desire to become partner. The results of a study about female success in BigLaw would be incomplete without considering whether the goal is one which the subjects of the study were actually pursuing. For that reason, I have included measures of ambition and desire to become partner in this study and have controlled for them in order to test what happens to the strength of the relationship between grit, mindset, and success when they are introduced.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This section will focus on the conceptual framework, the research questions, and the research design—including the methods used to collect the data, select participants for both phases of the research, and interview the subjects.

Conceptual Framework

I have developed a conceptual framework (Figure 1) which is based on my review of the literature and illustrates how grit and a growth mindset may impact success in BigLaw. The first two elements of the framework are the traits themselves, which may (or may not) be related. The third element of the framework—the outcome—is success in BigLaw, and is further broken down to include five separate indicators of success.

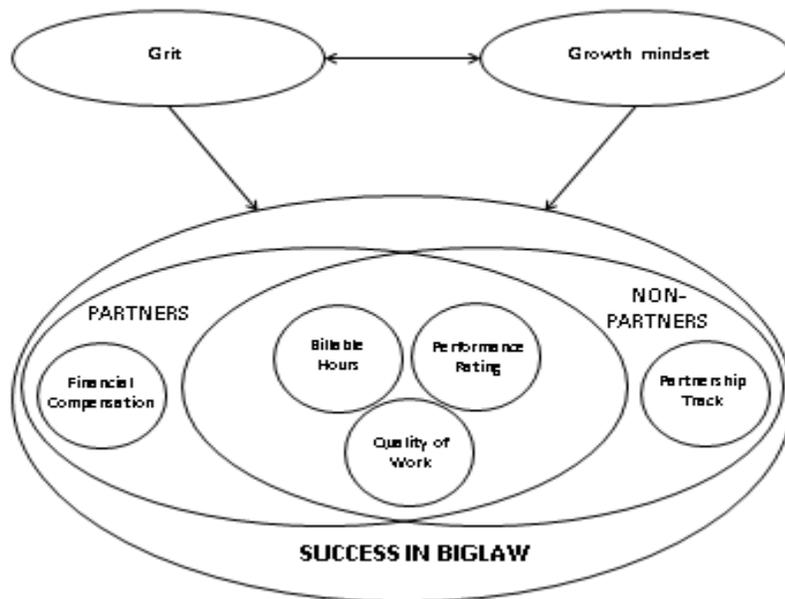


Figure 1. The Impact of Grit and a Growth Mindset on Success in BigLaw

Of these five indicators, three apply to both partners and non-partners: (1) the lawyer’s average yearly billable hours, (2) the message the lawyer received at her most recent performance review, and (3) the lawyer’s opinion of the quality of her work (not with respect to personal performance, but rather with respect to whether or not the work itself represents the most high profile and complex matters at the firm—matters which the firm would likely staff only with its most competent attorneys, and only in very rare instances with underperformers). The fourth indicator, financial compensation, applies only to partners (as most associates working in BigLaw are paid lockstep salaries according to class year, and therefore base salary alone is not an indicator of performance or perceived

ability). The fifth indicator, whether or not a lawyer is on a partnership track, applies only to non-partners, for obvious reasons.

Collectively, then, there are four measurable indicators of success for partners and four for non-partners. This study attempts to explain the nature and strength of these individual relationships (see Table 1) when controlling for other factors that have been known to contribute to success in BigLaw (i.e. grades, law school ranking, family history, work history, aspirations, etc.). This study also considers whether gritty, successful women lawyers have always possessed these traits or whether they possess them as a result of having worked in the BigLaw environment—in other words, whether grit is an outcome or a precursor to success.

| | Relationship | Group |
|-----|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. | Grit & Performance | Partners and non-partners |
| 2. | Grit & Hours | Partners and non-partners |
| 3. | Grit & Quality of Work | Partners and non-partners |
| 4. | Grit & Compensation | Partners only |
| 5. | Grit & Partnership Prospects | Non-partners only |
| 6.. | Mindset & Performance | Partners and non-partners |
| 7. | Mindset & Hours | Partners and non-partners |
| 8. | Mindset & Quality of Work | Partners and non-partners |
| 9. | Mindset & Compensation | Partners only |
| 10. | Mindset & Partnership Prospects | Non-partners only |

Table 1. Individual Relationships Between Grit, Mindset, and Success Measures

Research Questions

This dissertation explores the connection between grit, a growth mindset, and success in BigLaw by addressing the following research questions:

1. What is the nature of the relationship between grit and success, and mindset and success, for women lawyers currently practicing in BigLaw?
2. Are successful women lawyers more likely than less successful women lawyers to have grit and growth mindsets? If so, how important are these traits/how much do they tell us about a lawyer's future prospects?
3. Are grit and mindset more or less important to success when we account for other important factors (i.e. whether or not a woman has children, how educated her mother is, her law school GPA, etc.)?

4. Are women lawyers gritty and do they have growth mindsets as a result of having worked in this environment, or is their grit/growth mindsets what made it possible for them to succeed? In other words, are grit and growth mindset outcomes of—or precursors to—success?

Research Design

In order to explore the connection between grit, a growth mindset, and success in BigLaw, and to further refine the conceptual framework outlined above, this study uses a mixed methods approach, drawing on both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis. As Creswell (2008) points out, “to include only quantitative or qualitative methods falls short of the major approaches being used today in the social and human sciences” (p.4). Because this study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the nature of these relationships it will use a holistic approach.

Part one of this study is quantitative and tests the hypothesis that both grit and a growth mindset contribute to success in BigLaw. Because quantitative research is deductive (Creswell, 2008), this is an appropriate method to use since it allows for an exploration of the nature of the relationship—the cause and effect—between the variables. Furthermore, the results are statistical and allow for the researcher to make generalizations about women in the BigLaw population.

The second part of this study employs a qualitative approach in order to provide a more nuanced understanding of how women lawyers are thinking about and experiencing

their roles in BigLaw. The qualitative results are used to draw out consistent patterns and themes, and focus on the personal experiences of a subset of the women in the study. As Hyde (2000) points out, a qualitative approach allows the researcher to study issues in depth, and can produce a “wealth of detailed data” on a limited group of people (citing Patton, 1991). This approach is both deductive and inductive, and, as Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest, is particularly helpful for refining, testing, and validating emerging theories and hypotheses.

There are two compelling reasons to use a mixed method approach in this analysis. First, a mixed methods approach allows for stronger conclusions as the strengths of the qualitative approach will compensate, at least in part, for some of the weaknesses of the quantitative approach (Johnson & Onweugbuzie, 2004). Second, a mixed method approach allows for a more comprehensive, nuanced understanding of the interplay between the variables. As Maxwell (2005) points out, a mixed methods approach allows the researcher to consider both regularities that are assessed through empirical observation as well as the mechanisms or complex processes that are identified through qualitative analysis.

Data Collection

The data needed to answer my research questions was drawn from two sources. First, I asked each lawyer participating in the study to complete a confidential survey online (please see Appendix B for the complete survey). The survey ascertained demographic and descriptive characteristics, including size of firm and length of

employment, the individual lawyer's grit and mindset scores, and several measures of BigLaw success, including average yearly hours, performance ratings, and annual compensation.

In addition to the data collected from the survey, I also conducted interviews with select participants. I created a set of standard interview questions for this exercise, which I use to guide the semi-structured interviews (please see Appendix C for a complete list of the interview questions). All of the interviews were recorded and transcribed by third party vendors.

Participants

The participants in this study were women lawyers currently working in BigLaw—a population estimated to be roughly 42,000 (American Lawyer 200 Report, 2012). I relied on the AmLaw 200 report in order to identify firms who are part of this group. In general, firms in this group have the following characteristics in common: (1) they are large firms (the minimum would be 101 attorneys), (2) they pay attorneys the market rate (the current starting salary for a first year, entry-level associate in New York is \$160,000 a year), (3) they demand long hours (typically an average of fifty or more billable hours per week), and (4) they tend to represent large corporations rather than individuals. It is also common for BigLaw firms to have multiple offices in the United States or internationally, although this is not necessarily a strict requirement.

The units of analysis are the individual women lawyers, who have been categorized into eight groups, as follows: (1) junior associates, defined as associates who

graduated law school in 2011 or 2012; (2) mid-level associates, defined as associates who graduated law school in 2010, 2009 or 2008; (3) senior-associates, defined as associates who graduated law school in 2007, 2006 or 2005; (4) staff attorneys, defined as non-partnership track lawyers at all levels who have low billing rates and tend to handle routine, non-specialized work; (5) specialists or special counsel, defined as lawyers who are no longer associates but are not yet partners and graduated in 2004 or earlier; (6) non-equity partners, defined as partners of the firm who do not make a capital contribution or buy-in and are not eligible for seats on the executive or management committees of the firm; (7) equity partners, defined as partners of the firm who do make capital contributions and buy-in, and who share in the annual profits of the firm (Denney, 2007); and, finally, (8) equity partners who also serve or have served on the firm's management or executive committees. For purposes of this study, lawyers who fall into the first five categories are considered non-partners; lawyers who fall into the final three categories are considered partners.

Sampling Strategy for the Quantitative Analysis

Participants were recruited through an email invitation (see Appendix D) containing a link to the confidential, online survey. The email was distributed during the months of November and December, 2012. In order to generate an appropriately representative sample, I identified a subset of the AmLaw 200 firms using a systematic sampling method (a random number generator) in order to identify ten firms. Once those firms had been identified, I collected the email addresses of all of the female lawyers

working at those firms (this information is publically available on the websites of each respective firm) and sent each lawyer a personalized email inviting her to participate (see Appendix A for the full text of the invitation).

In addition to the email invitation, I contacted representatives at each firm to let them know about the study and ask them to encourage participation internally to the extent that they were willing to do so. Most firms were willing to do this in exchange for access to the results of the study once it had been completed. This dual approach allowed me to put more effort into maximizing the responses from those surveyed through more detailed follow-up, which helped to offset sampling error by decreasing the overall non-response rate (Fricker, 2006). It also allowed me to reduce coverage error by employing a sampling strategy in which all of the targeted population had an equal chance of being sampled (Fricker, 2006; Groves, 1989).

One drawback of this approach is the potential for sensitivity bias and measurement error, as respondents may not have answered some of the more sensitive questions honestly (such as law school GPA), or they may not have put forth the necessary effort to obtain the correct answer (such as the overall number of lawyers employed by their respective firms). I tried to mitigate the potential for measurement error and sensitivity bias by providing ranges rather than fixed responses—particularly for the more difficult questions—as well as trying to word each question clearly so as to avoid misinterpretation (Groves, 1989).

Sampling Strategy for the Qualitative Analysis

The qualitative portion of this analysis was performed after I had a chance to do a preliminary assessment of the quantitative findings. The primary function of the qualitative portion of this research was to provide a more nuanced understanding of the topic and to help refine, test, and validate my emerging theories and hypotheses (Miles & Huberman, 1994). To that end, I used a purposeful sampling technique in order to select participants who were in the best position to answer the research questions, and who represented the opinions of lawyers at all levels of seniority and with varying degrees of grit, mindset, and success.

I used a theoretical sampling technique in order to examine and elaborate on the emerging data and theories (Marshall, 1996). I solicited volunteers in the initial survey and then made a judgment about who should be contacted based their individual survey responses, my personal knowledge of the domain, and the emerging data (Marshall, 1996). I conducted nine interviews in total, which provided me with the range I needed to fully explore the patterns that were emerging from the quantitative data.

Interview Protocol

Each interview followed the same, semi-structured interview protocol, although the specific questions differed depending on the lawyer's individual position and the nature of the conversation (i.e., partners were asked a slightly different set of questions than non-partners, although there was a great deal of overlap between the two). Each question

was designed to focus on the three key elements of the conceptual framework: grit, mindset, and success, and to encourage the interviewee to focus on the nuances of the relationships between these three elements. Each interview lasted roughly the same amount of time (generally between thirty minutes and one hour), and each interviewee was given the same introductory speech, which was designed to provide them with key information about the confidential nature of the study (please see Appendix C for a complete interview guide).

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

The objective of this dissertation is to measure the impact of grit and mindset on various measures of success—including a lawyer’s partnership prospects, the quality of the work she receives, and the message she received at her last performance review.

Specifically, this research seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the nature of the relationship between grit and success, and mindset and success, for women lawyers currently practicing in BigLaw?
2. Are successful women lawyers more likely than less successful women lawyers to have grit and growth mindsets? If so, how important are these traits/how much do they tell us about a lawyer’s future prospects?
3. Are grit and mindset more or less important to success when we account for other important factors (i.e. whether or not a woman has children, how educated her mother is, her law school GPA, etc.)?
4. Are women lawyers gritty and do they have growth mindsets as a result of having worked in this environment, or is their grit/growth mindsets what made it possible for them to succeed? In other words, are grit and growth mindset outcomes of—or precursors to—success?

This results section is divided into two main parts. Part one is a detailed explanation of the quantitative results of the online survey, and provides some answers to

the first three research questions. Part two focuses on the qualitative results of the one-on-one interviews, and seeks to provide additional answers to all four research questions.

Part I: Results of the Online Survey

This section will focus on the quantitative results of the online survey and will be subdivided into three sections, as follows: (1) an overview of the characteristics of the sample, including descriptive tables, (2) a look at the correlations between the individual variables, and (3) a detailed overview of ten distinct models which show the relationship between grit, mindset, and each measure of success in BigLaw.

Characteristics of the Sample

The online survey was sent to 1914 female lawyers currently practicing in BigLaw—as described in the previous section—and 477 people responded, resulting in a response rate of roughly 25% (24.9%). While this response rate is lower than one might typically like to see in a study that seeks to draw representative conclusions about the participants, this number is in line with the response rates generated by comparable, online surveys targeted at BigLaw lawyers (*e.g.*, American Lawyer Associates Survey 2010, American Lawyer Associates Survey 2011, and American Lawyer Associates Survey 2012). While the response rate is similar to the response rate typically generated by such surveys—a median response rate of roughly 35% (American Lawyer Associates Survey 2010) it is also worth noting that the *American Lawyer Magazine* surveys tend to get a higher response rate because the magazine is extremely well known throughout

BigLaw and thus carries with it significant name-recognition, which can and does go a long way towards legitimizing the request to participate. In contrast, my survey was a one-time survey—rather than an annual survey—sent to a subset of a population by an individual person (this researcher) who was not known by the members of that population (and therefore there was no name-recognition). While I attempted to compensate for the lack of name recognition (and to combat the potential squeamishness of participants—many later admitted to having been skeptical when they received the initial invitation to participate) by contacting representatives ahead of time at each firm to let them know about the study and ask them to encourage participation to the extent that they were willing to do so (as discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3) there was no way to achieve anywhere close to the name recognition of *American Lawyer Magazine*, and thus the lower response rate is not terribly surprising.

In addition, it is also worth noting that as a group, lawyers tend to be extremely skeptical. As Richard (2013) points out, there are a number of traits on which lawyers tend to score much higher (or in some cases, much lower) than the general public and the most extreme of all these outlier traits—the one on which lawyers consistently score higher (i.e., above the mean) than all the others—is skepticism (Richard, 2013). Importantly, people with very high skepticism scores tend to be suspicious, assume the worst, and rarely give others the benefit of the doubt. Furthermore, they are always wondering what another person’s “real” motive might be, they question any assertion made by another person, and they tend to be much slower to trust others (Richard, 2013). I observed the classic lawyer skepticism first hand when I sent out the survey—several of

the women I reached out to wrote back asking for additional details and verification of my identity, some admitted to “googling” me to find out if I was who I said I was, and many called the University’s Institutional Review Board for confirmation that the study was, in fact, legitimate (one of the representatives at the Institutional Review Board later told me that it was extremely rare to receive such a high volume of calls). In any case, it seems clear that many of the lawyers I asked to participate were initially quite skeptical, and I imagine that this contributed heavily to a lower response rate (indeed, I was pleasantly surprised that the response rate was as high as it was).

Finally, a review of the literature on online survey response rates suggests that the rate is not too far off from what is typically expected from a group of (presumably) far less skeptical participants. A meta analysis of online surveys found that the mean response rate for a total of 56 surveys reported in 39 studies was 34.6%, with a standard deviation of 15.7% (Cook et al, 2000).

Returning to the statistics, of those who responded, 456 (or 95.6%) completed the survey in its entirety. Just shy of 300 respondents (or 65%) were non-partners, and 160 (or 35%) were partners (see Table 2 for a complete breakdown of the sample by title).

| Which of the following best describes your current position? | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|---|------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Junior Associate (class of 2010, 2011, or 2012) | 56 | 12.3 | 12.3 |
| Mid-level Associate (class of 2007, 2008, or 2009) | 103 | 22.6 | 22.6 |
| Senior Associate (class of 2004, 2005, or 2006) | 82 | 18 | 18 |
| Staff Attorney (all class years) | 10 | 2.2 | 2.2 |
| Specialist or Special Counsel (Class of 2003+) | 44 | 9.6 | 9.7 |
| Non-Partner Total | 295 | 64.7 | 64.8 |
| Non-Equity Partner | 48 | 10.5 | 10.5 |
| Equity Partner | 88 | 19.3 | 19.3 |
| Equity Partner & Management Committee Role | 24 | 5.3 | 5.3 |
| Partner Total | 160 | 35.1 | 35.1 |
| Total | 455 | 99.8 | 100 |
| Missing | 1 | 0.2 | |
| Grand Total | 456 | 100 | |

Table 2. Breakdown of the Sample by Title

All 456 participants had a grit score between 3 and 5, with a mean of 3.94 and standard deviation of .477. This is an important finding because it suggests that very few women lawyers practicing in BigLaw have low grit scores. Indeed, it is remarkable that not one female lawyer in the sample received a score lower than 3—this finding will be discussed further in the analysis section.

When it comes to mindset scores, there was quite a bit more variation—the mindset scores ranged from 1 to 5, with a much lower mean of 2.75 and a much larger standard deviation of .868 (see Table 3 for a complete description of the grit and mindset distributions).

| Variable | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| Grit Score | 3 | 5 | 3.94 | .477 |
| Mindset Score | 1 | 5 | 2.75 | .868 |
| Valid N | 456 | | | |

Table 3. Grit & Mindset Distributions

The next set of variables, grades and academic tier, are summarized in Table 4.

All three sets of grade point averages (“GPAs”), from law school, undergraduate institution, and high school, fell between 2.0 and 4.0. Law school GPA showed less of a range, with the lowest GPA recorded at 2.5. The vast majority of GPAs fell between 3.5 and 4.0, with the highest overall average in high school, an impressive 3.84, and the lowest in law school, a (still impressive) 3.56. There was not much variation in GPA for any of the three measures—the standard deviation for all fell comfortably below .30.

With respect to the prestige of the academic institutions where lawyers in the sample were educated, there was quite a bit more variation (roughly .70 for both law school and undergraduate institution). Lawyers attended law schools in each of the four tiers, with the majority of the lawyers in the first or second tier. The same is true for their undergraduate institutions, although the undergraduate institutions tended to be a bit more highly ranked. That said, it should be noted that there are far more undergraduate institutions than law schools, and it is understood to be quite a bit more difficult to gain admittance to law school than college, so not too much should be made of this difference.

| | Variable | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|--------|--------------------|----------|----------------|----------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| Grades | Law school GPA | 423 | 2.50 | 4.00 | 3.56 | 0.27 |
| | Undergraduate GPA | 425 | 2.15 | 4.00 | 3.66 | 0.29 |
| | High school GPA | 405 | 2.15 | 4.00 | 3.84 | 0.24 |
| Tier | Law school tier | 407 | 1 | 4 | 1.61 | 0.71 |
| | Undergraduate tier | 327 | 1 | 4 | 1.48 | 0.70 |

Table 4. Grade & Tier Distributions

Most of the sample was married (69.1%) and about half of the sample had children (48.5%). Of those who had children, nearly all of them had their children while they were practicing (93.6%). See Table 5 for a complete breakdown of these numbers. Most of the women in the sample came from families where the mother had taken at least some college courses (78.5%) and roughly 10% came from families where the mother had a doctoral degree (Ph.D., J.D., or M.D.). See Table 6 for a complete listing by level of education.

| Variable | N | Yes (%) | No (%) |
|--------------------|----------|----------------|---------------|
| Married? | 454 | 315 (69.1) | 139 (30.5) |
| Kids? | 455 | 221 (48.5) | 234 (51.3) |
| Kids while lawyer? | 445 | 207 (93.6) | 14 (6.4) |

Table 5. Family History Variables

| Mother's Education | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|-----------------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Less than high school | 14 | 3.1 | 3.1 |
| High school/GED | 82 | 18 | 18.1 |
| Some college | 53 | 11.6 | 11.7 |
| Two year college degree | 38 | 8.3 | 8.4 |
| Four year college degree | 108 | 23.7 | 23.8 |
| Master's degree | 114 | 25 | 25.1 |
| Doctoral degree | 14 | 3.1 | 3.1 |
| Professional degree (JD/MD) | 31 | 6.8 | 6.8 |
| Total | 454 | 99.6 | 100 |
| Missing | 2 | 0.4 | |
| Grand Total | 456 | 100 | |

Table 6. Mother's Education

The next set of variables, ambition and desire to be partner, are summarized below in Table 7. There was quite a bit of variation for both of these variables. Respondents' ambition scores ranged from a minimum of 1.4 to a maximum of 5, with a mean of 3.91 (a fairly high ambition score). There was a greater range of scores for respondents' desire to be partner, ranging from 1 to 5, with a lower mean of 3.27 and a much larger standard deviation of 1.21. This suggests that most of the women lawyers who responded to the survey are relatively ambitious, but that a lesser number of them were committed to pursuing partnership in BigLaw.

| Variable | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|----------------------|----------|----------------|----------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| Ambition | 456 | 1.4 | 5 | 3.91 | 0.69 |
| Desire to be partner | 455 | 1 | 5 | 3.27 | 1.21 |

Table 7. Aspiration Variables

The final set of variables, whether or not the respondent was a partner and the percentage of offers she received from firms she interviewed with, are summarized in Table 8 and Table 9. Roughly one third of those who responded were partners (160), and roughly two thirds were not (295). The offer percentage varied quite a bit, ranging from a high of 100% to a low of 39%, with a mean of 71.16%. The standard deviation was just shy of 24 (23.93) and indicates that there is a lot of variance in this number among respondents.

| Variable | N | Yes (%) | No (%) |
|-----------------|----------|----------------|---------------|
| Partner? | 455 | 160 (35.1) | 295 (64.7) |

Table 8. Partners vs. Non-Partners

| Variable | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|------------------|----------|----------------|----------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| Offer Percentage | 448 | 39 | 100 | 71.16 | 23.93 |

Table 9. Offer Percentage

Correlations

This section will cover the correlations between each of the variables described above. A complete list of the correlations appears in Table 10. The strongest correlation among the variables is between (1) whether or not the lawyer had children, and (2) if she had children while she was a lawyer. Given that the profession of law requires a significant amount of schooling (20 years at a minimum: 13 years of K-12, 4 years of college and 3 years of law school), that it tends to be a career for most people rather than a job that they hold for a short period of time, and that women reach BigLaw, in most cases, during their prime childbearing years, it makes sense that these numbers would be

highly correlated (the Pearson Coefficient is .943 and this is highly significant at the .05 level). Similarly, there are highly significant correlations (at the .05 level) of medium strength between whether or not the lawyer was married and if she had children, and whether or not she was married and if she had children while she was a lawyer (the Pearson Coefficients are .439 and .436, respectively). Again, these numbers are not surprising as we would expect to see relationships between these kinds of variables.

There is a medium strength relationship between a lawyer's desire to be partner and whether or not she is a partner (the Pearson Coefficient is .482), which is highly significant at the .05 level. Similarly, there is a medium strength relationship between a lawyer's ambition score and her desire to be partner (the Pearson Coefficient is .395), and this is also highly significant at the .05 level. We would expect to see at least some relationship here as one could argue that wanting to become a partner (which is the highest position one can attain in BigLaw) is a demonstration of ambition, at least in the law firm setting. As noted in the previous section, this does not imply that all ambitious people in BigLaw want to become partners.

There are medium to weak relationships, although both are highly significant at the .05 level, between a lawyer's desire to be partner, whether or not she has children, and her grit score (the Pearson Coefficients are .221, and .324 respectively). Because the relationships are relatively weak, not too much should be made of them, but one could surmise that a woman may be more inclined to make partner, which is associated with higher compensation, if she has a family to support and/or in cases where she is the primary breadwinner. Grit was also related, at a significance level of .05, although not

very strongly, to a lawyer's ambition score and to whether or not she was a partner (the Pearson Coefficients are .312 and .193 respectively). The relationship between grit, the desire to be partner, ambition score, and other variables will be discussed in further detail in the next section.

There were a number of significant relationships (all at the .05 level) between whether or not a lawyer was a partner, the highest level of education attained by her mother, whether or not she had had children, and if she did have children, whether or not she had them as a lawyer (the Pearson Coefficients are: -.248, .304, and .309).

Interestingly, the relationship between whether or not a lawyer was a partner and the highest level of education attained by her mother is an inverse relationship, suggesting that women who have less educated mothers are more likely to be partners. This is a potentially interesting finding and will be discussed in further detail in the next section.

The other significant correlations worth mentioning (all at the .05 level) are those between a lawyer's high school GPA and her undergraduate GPA (the Pearson Coefficient is .270), between a lawyer's law school and undergraduate school tiers (the Pearson Coefficient is .396) and between a lawyer's law school GPA and percentage of offers she received from law firms (.319). None of these findings are particularly strong, or particularly surprising, except for the fact that one might have expected them to be stronger. All of these variables are included in this study because they are all characteristics, traits, and factors that have been known to contribute to success in the world of BigLaw. Given that some of them are similar, such as ambition and desire to be

partner, or even grit and mindset, it is somewhat surprising that they are not more highly correlated.

| | | Grit | Mindset | Law School GPA | Undergrad GPA | High School GPA | Law School Tier | Undergrad Tier | Mother Edu | Married? | Kids? | Kids While Lawyer? | Ambition | Desire to be Partner | Partner | Offer Percentage |
|-----------------------------|------------|------|---------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|------------|----------|---------|--------------------|----------|----------------------|---------|------------------|
| Grit Score | PC | 1 | .159** | .044 | .065 | -.008 | .113* | .007 | -.141** | .073 | .096* | .097* | .312** | .324** | .193** | .103* |
| | Sig. (2-t) | | .001 | .367 | .181 | .878 | .022 | .893 | .003 | .119 | .042 | .041 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .030 |
| Mindset Score | PC | | 1 | -.007 | .009 | -.039 | .120* | .029 | -.140** | -.002 | -.001 | -.025 | .181** | .094* | .021 | .017 |
| | Sig. (2-t) | | | .887 | .847 | .434 | .015 | .601 | .003 | .963 | .977 | .594 | .000 | .045 | .649 | .723 |
| Law School GPA | PC | | | 1 | .231** | .233** | .021 | -.054 | .056 | .027 | .058 | .062 | .071 | .021 | -.013 | .319** |
| | Sig. (2-t) | | | | .000 | .000 | .682 | .345 | .248 | .580 | .233 | .208 | .143 | .673 | .785 | .000 |
| Undergrad GPA | PC | | | | 1 | .270** | -.163** | .093 | -.004 | .096* | .106* | .117* | .102* | .067 | .068 | .030 |
| | Sig. (2-t) | | | | | .000 | .001 | .100 | .933 | .049 | .030 | .017 | .035 | .171 | .164 | .536 |
| High School GPA | PC | | | | | 1 | -.084 | -.093 | .042 | -.031 | -.016 | -.020 | .007 | -.029 | -.089 | .009 |
| | Sig. (2-t) | | | | | | .106 | .104 | .401 | .541 | .741 | .698 | .886 | .556 | .072 | .850 |
| Law School Tier | PC | | | | | | 1 | .396** | -.113* | .006 | -.019 | .005 | .044 | .017 | -.050 | -.040 |
| | Sig. (2-t) | | | | | | | .000 | .022 | .899 | .697 | .925 | .378 | .740 | .319 | .424 |
| Undergrad Tier | PC | | | | | | | 1 | -.160** | .144** | .161** | .156** | .001 | .072 | .125* | -.087 |
| | Sig. (2-t) | | | | | | | | .004 | .009 | .004 | .005 | .991 | .195 | .024 | .118 |
| Mother's Education | PC | | | | | | | | 1 | -.062 | -.127** | -.095* | -.007 | -.121* | -.248** | -.014 |
| | Sig. (2-t) | | | | | | | | | .185 | .007 | .046 | .889 | .010 | .000 | .775 |
| Married? | PC | | | | | | | | | 1 | .439** | .436** | -.036 | .102* | .121** | .101* |
| | Sig. (2-t) | | | | | | | | | | .000 | .000 | .439 | .030 | .010 | .032 |
| Kids? | PC | | | | | | | | | | 1 | .943** | -.048 | .221** | .304** | .158** |
| | Sig. (2-t) | | | | | | | | | | | .000 | .306 | .000 | .000 | .001 |
| Kids While Lawyer? | PC | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | -.050 | .203** | .309** | .168** |
| | Sig. (2-t) | | | | | | | | | | | | .297 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| Ambition | PC | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | .395** | .150** | .078 |
| | Sig. (2-t) | | | | | | | | | | | | | .000 | .001 | .100 |
| Desire to be Partner | PC | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | .482** | .050 |
| | Sig. (2-t) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | .000 | .294 |
| Partner | PC | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | .078 |
| | Sig. (2-t) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | .099 |
| Offer Percentage | PC | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-t) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). * . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 10. Correlations Between the Variables

Grit, Mindset, and Success

This section will provide a detailed overview of the relationship between grit, mindset, and success in BigLaw. To do this, I will show ten tables that look at what happens to the relationship between grit—or mindset—and each of five different measures of success for women in BigLaw (quality of work, message received at the most recent performance review, the number of hours billed, compensation relative to peers, and partnership prospects) when you control for other factors that may also impact these measures of success (such as grades, family and work history, and partnership aspirations). Each table includes six models, each of which contain progressively more variables, starting with one and going up to a total of fourteen (see Table 11). The variables have been grouped together into six buckets, as follows: single variable (grit or mindset), grades (includes high school, undergraduate and law school grades), tier (includes tier of law and undergraduate schools), family history (includes mother's education, marital status, whether or not one has children and if so, when), aspirations (includes ambition score and desire to be a partner), and, finally, work history (includes whether the lawyer is or is not a partner and how many offers she has received). This approach allows for a thorough analysis of the relationship between grit, mindset, and each measure of success, and is justified by the fact that the variables are not highly correlated with one another. In other words, each set of variables is independent enough from one another to justify an approach that treats them as distinct entities.

| Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 | Model 6 |
|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Mindset Score</i> | <i>Mindset Score</i> | <i>Mindset Score</i> | <i>Mindset Score</i> | <i>Mindset Score</i> | <i>Mindset Score</i> |
| | <i>Grades</i> | <i>Grades</i> | <i>Grades</i> | <i>Grades</i> | <i>Grades</i> |
| | Law School GPA | Law School GPA | Law School GPA | Law School GPA | Law School GPA |
| | Undergrad GPA | Undergrad GPA | Undergrad GPA | Undergrad GPA | Undergrad GPA |
| | High School GPA | High School GPA | High School GPA | High School GPA | High School GPA |
| | | <i>Tier</i> | <i>Tier</i> | <i>Tier</i> | <i>Tier</i> |
| | | Law School Tier | Law School Tier | Law School Tier | Law School Tier |
| | | Undergrad Tier | Undergrad Tier | Undergrad Tier | Undergrad Tier |
| | | <i>Family History</i> | <i>Family History</i> | <i>Family History</i> | <i>Family History</i> |
| | | | Mother's Education | Mother's Education | Mother's Education |
| | | | Married? | Married? | Married? |
| | | | Kids? | Kids? | Kids? |
| | | | Kids While Lawyer? | Kids While Lawyer? | Kids While Lawyer? |
| | | | | <i>Aspirations</i> | <i>Aspirations</i> |
| | | | | Ambition | Ambition |
| | | | | Desire to be Partner | Desire to be Partner |
| | | | | | <i>Work History</i> |
| | | | | | Partner? |
| | | | | | Offer Percentage |

Table 11. Success Model Structure

Grit & Performance

Before we consider the relationship between grit and performance—that is, the nature of the message that the lawyer received at her last performance review—we must first look at the performance characteristics of the sample. This is particularly important when it comes to performance, as the vast majority of lawyers (92.4% of those who responded to this question) fall into the top two categories: very good and outstanding. Only 6.6% of those who responded said they received an “average” performance rating, 1% a “below average” rating, and no one a “poor” rating (see Table 12). This limited distribution results in a very high mean (4.345) and a very low standard deviation (0.646). The descriptive statistics for each measure of success are listed in Table 13.

This is an important fact because the results of the survey only tell us about a very limited group of performers—those who are doing very well—and thus there may be stronger connections between grit and performance than we see in the present analysis.

| Performance Rating | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|---------------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Poor | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Below average | 4 | .8 | 1.0 |
| Average | 27 | 5.7 | 6.6 |
| Very Good | 202 | 42.3 | 49.4 |
| Outstanding | 176 | 36.9 | 43.0 |
| Total | 409 | 85.7 | 100.0 |
| Missing | 68 | 14.3 | |
| Grand Total | 477 | 100.0 | |

Table 12. Performance Ratings

| Success Measure | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|------------------------|----------|----------------|----------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| Performance | 409 | 2 | 5 | 4.345 | 0.646 |
| Quality | 415 | 1 | 5 | 3.402 | 0.792 |
| Hours/Year | 412 | 1199 | 3001 | 1897.172 | 357.536 |
| Compensation | 190 | 1 | 3 | 2.01 | 0.698 |

Table 13. Success Measure Descriptives

In Model 1 (see Table 14), there is a strongly significant relationship (at the .001 level) between a lawyer’s grit score and her performance rating. Specifically, if a lawyer increased her grit score from 1 to 5, she would be able to move into the next highest performance rating category (e.g., from below average to average, or from very good to outstanding). In Model 2, which controls for academic performance and GPA in particular, we find that the strength of this relationship, while still significant, is slightly less so (at the .01 level) and the magnitude of the effect decreases (from .277 to .185). As

we begin to control for other factors—law school prestige, family history, and aspirations—the magnitude of the relationship continues to decrease until it is quite small (.016). When you control for work history, in Model 6, it increases again, but only very slightly to .017.

The r-squared values in this table tell us that grit score alone accounts for roughly 5.5% of a lawyer's overall performance score. Adding in additional variables (grades, tiers of schools, and family history) actually tells us less about a lawyer's performance score than grit score alone. When we add in aspirations, however, we are able to explain about 11% of the overall performance rating, or roughly another 5%. Looking at the relationship between performance and the two aspirations variables (ambition score and strength of the lawyer's desire to be partner) we find that ambition score is strongly related to performance (at the .01 level) and has a similar magnitude as grit (.191) which persists even when we account for whether or not the lawyer is a partner, and how many offers she received (i.e. her marketplace desirability when she was hired by her firm). We do not see a significant relationship between a lawyer's desire to be partner and her performance rating.

If we take grit out of the model entirely, and run the model with all of the other variables, the r-squared value tells us that the other variables still account for roughly 11% of the overall performance rating. If we then add grit back in, the r-squared value remains constant, which tells us that grit does not add anything to our understanding of performance when we account for these other factors.

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 | Model 6 |
|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Grit | .277*** (.057) | .185** (.070) | .123 (.076) | .133 (.078) | .016 (.080) | .017 (.081) |
| Grades | | | | | | |
| Law School GPA | | -.054 (.128) | -.167 (.142) | -.198 (.144) | -.219 (.139) | -.224 (.147) |
| Undergrad GPA | | .005 (.123) | -.085 (.140) | -.110 (.142) | -.182 (.139) | -.181 (.140) |
| High School GPA | | .260 (.144) | .221 (.144) | .170 (.147) | .190 (.142) | .189 (.143) |
| Tier | | | | | | |
| Law School Tier | | | -.028 (.056) | -.019 (.058) | -.015 (.056) | -.016 (.056) |
| Undergrad Tier | | | .025 (.058) | .005 (.060) | -.008 (.058) | -.005 (.059) |
| Family History | | | | | | |
| Mother's Education | | | | .026 (.021) | .024 (.020) | .023 (.021) |
| Married? | | | | .017 (.090) | .044 (.087) | .044 (.088) |
| Kids? | | | | .311 (.274) | .214 (.266) | .209 (.269) |
| Kids While Lawyer? | | | | -.199 (.271) | -.129 (.262) | -.116 (.265) |
| Aspirations | | | | | | |
| Ambition | | | | | .191** (.062) | .189** (.063) |
| Desire to be Partner | | | | | .063 (.036) | .071 (.041) |
| Work History | | | | | | |
| Partner? | | | | | | -.041 (.094) |
| Offer Percentage | | | | | | .000 (.002) |
| R-squared | .055 | .028 | .022 | .038 | .110 | .110 |
| Percent Change | | -.027 | -.006 | .016 | .072 | .000 |

Table 14. Grit and Performance

Grit & Hours

In contrast to the performance scores, which were very unevenly distributed, there is quite a bit of variation in the number of average billable hours—note that these are paying client hours only and do not include pro bono hours—per year (see Table 13, Table 15, and Figure 2). The mean number of hours billed per year was 1897, and the standard deviation was a relatively high 357. These numbers provide us with a terrific range through which we can track the effects of grit.

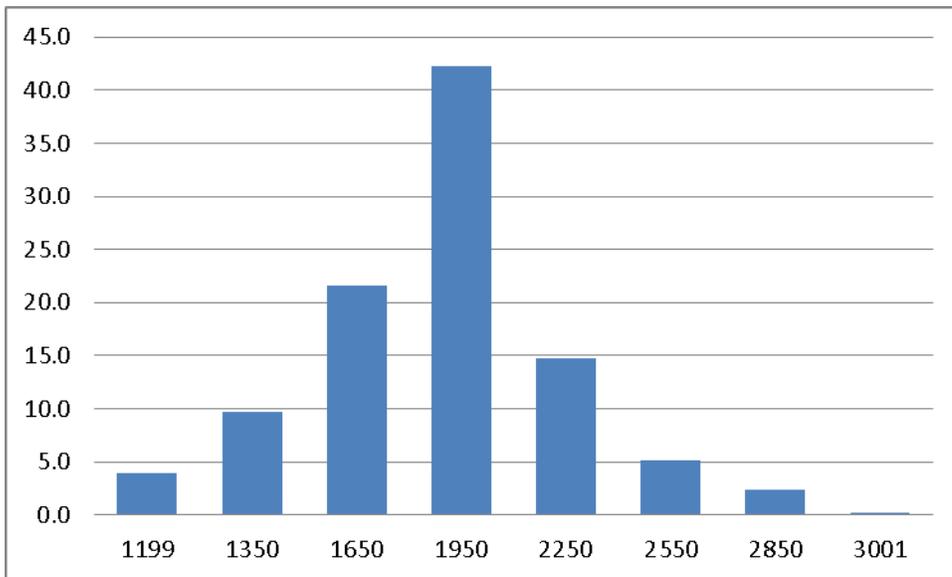


Figure 2. Hours per Year as a Percentage of Total

| Average Hours/Year | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|---------------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| 1199 | 16 | 3.4 | 3.9 |
| 1350 | 40 | 8.4 | 9.7 |
| 1650 | 89 | 18.7 | 21.6 |
| 1950 | 174 | 36.5 | 42.2 |
| 2250 | 61 | 12.8 | 14.8 |
| 2550 | 21 | 4.4 | 5.1 |
| 2850 | 10 | 2.1 | 2.4 |
| 3001 | 1 | .2 | .2 |
| Total | 412 | 86.4 | 100.0 |
| Missing | 65 | 13.6 | |
| Grand Total | 477 | 100.0 | |

Table 15. Hours Distributions

In Model 1, we see a strongly significant relationship (at the .01 level) between grit score and the number of hours a lawyer bills (see Table 16). As we add in and control for additional variables—grades, tier of schools, and family history—the strength and magnitude of this relationship increases (from .899 to 1.748 at a significance level of .001). When we control for the aspiration variables (ambition and desire to be partner), the strength of the relationship decreases slightly (to a still strong .01 level) and the magnitude decreases to a still relatively high 1.370. When we add in the final set of work history variables in Model 6, the strength of the relationship increases to the .001 level, and the magnitude climbs to 1.435. This final set of numbers tells us that grit score is a great predictor of hours worked for both partners and non-partners—and that this is true even when we control for 13 additional variables that have been known to impact success. Specifically, if a lawyer increases her grit score from a 4 to a 5, she will bill an

additional 144 hours per year, and if she increases her score from a 3 to a 5, she will bill an additional 288 hours per year.

When we consider the r-squared values, we see that while grit alone does not explain that much about hours worked (only about 2%), the final model, which includes all of the variables, explains about 18.5%. As we add in additional variables, we are able to explain progressively more about the average number of client hours billed by lawyers each year.

There are a number of other interesting findings in Table 16. First of all, there is a significant relationship, although slightly less so than some of the other findings (at the .05 level) between how many hours a lawyer bills and the highest level of education her mother completed. The magnitude and strength of this relationship remain relatively constant when other variables are controlled for, and ultimately suggest that a woman is likely to bill roughly 23 additional hours per year for every additional level of education her mother completes. Secondly, there is a significant relationship (at the .05 level) between a lawyer's desire to be partner, and the number of hours she bills (the magnitude is .539, which suggests that she will bill an additional 54 hours per year for every one unit increase in the strength of her desire to be partner). Thirdly, there is a significant relationship (at the .05 level) between how many offers a lawyer received, and how many hours she is likely to bill, although the magnitude here is very small (.022), which suggests that she is only likely to bill an additional two hours—a negligible amount. Fourthly, there is significant relationship (at the .05 level) between the prestige, or tier, of the law school which the lawyer attends and the number of hours she bills, with a

magnitude of .653, suggesting that she will bill about 65 additional hours if she moves from tier 2 to tier 1.

The last important takeaway with respect to grit and average billable hours is that there is a very strong, highly significant relationship (at the .01 level) between hours and whether or not the lawyer is a partner. This magnitude of this relationship is 1.440, suggesting that partners in this sample bill roughly 144 more hours than associates each year.

If we take grit out of the model entirely, and run the model with all of the other variables, the r-squared value tells us that the other variables account for roughly 14.9% of the overall hours. If we then add grit back in, the r-squared value jumps to 18.5%, which tells us that grit still explains about 3.6% about the number of hours a woman will work, even when we are accounting for these other factors.

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 | Model 6 |
|-----------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Grit | .899** (.319) | 1.122** (.376) | 1.362** (.422) | 1.748*** (.425) | 1.370** (.445) | 1.435*** (.440) |
| Grades | | | | | | |
| Law School GPA | | 1.248 (.690) | 1.547* (.787) | 1.431 (.782) | 1.376 (.776) | .718 (.794) |
| Undergrad GPA | | -.273 (.665) | -.770 (.778) | -.687 (.776) | -.866 (.776) | -.643 (.759) |
| High School GPA | | .786 (.776) | .626 (.802) | .637 (.801) | .710 (.795) | .700 (.776) |
| Tier | | | | | | |
| Law School Tier | | | -.611 (.313) | -.572 (.314) | -.550 (.312) | .653* (.306) |
| Undergrad Tier | | | -.067 (.322) | .233 (.325) | .181 (.323) | .397 (.322) |
| Family History | | | | | | |
| Mother's Education | | | | .266* (.114) | .268* (.113) | .234* (.112) |
| Married? | | | | -.645 (.487) | -.548 (.484) | -.679 (.475) |
| Kids? | | | | -.758 (1.496) | -1.134 (1.493) | -1.313 (1.456) |
| Kids While Lawyer? | | | | -.014 (1.480) | .206 (1.469) | .572 (1.438) |
| Aspirations | | | | | | |
| Ambition | | | | | .451 (.347) | .307 (.343) |
| Desire to be Partner | | | | | .310 (.201) | .539* (.220) |
| Work History | | | | | | |
| Partner? | | | | | | 1.440** (.507) |
| Offer Percentage | | | | | | .022* (.009) |
| R-squared | .019 | .038 | .066 | .120 | .143 | .185 |
| Percent Change | | .019 | .028 | .054 | .023 | .042 |

Table 16. Grit and Hours

Grit & Quality of Work

As was the case with the hours distributions, there is quite a bit of variation in the perceived quality of the work among the lawyers in the sample. For our purposes, quality was indicated by the frequency with which the lawyer works on the most high profile, complex matters at her firm (see Table 17). The mean for quality is 3.402 and the standard deviation is .792. Nearly half of the respondents who answered this question (49%) indicated that they “sometimes” worked on the high profile matters, and 33% said they worked on these kinds of matters “most of the time”.

| How often do you work on the most high profile, complex matters at the firm? | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|---|------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Never (1) | 2 | .4 | .5 |
| Rarely (2) | 38 | 8.0 | 9.2 |
| Sometimes (3) | 202 | 42.3 | 48.7 |
| Most of the time (4) | 137 | 28.7 | 33.0 |
| Always (5) | 36 | 7.5 | 8.7 |
| Total | 415 | 87.0 | 100.0 |
| Missing | 62 | 13.0 | |
| Grand Total | 477 | 100.0 | |

Table 17. Quality of the Work

When we look a bit more closely at the relationship between grit score and the quality of the work the lawyer receives, we see that there is a very highly significant relationship (at the .001 level) between these two variables (see Table 18). When we add in additional buckets of variables—grades and school tier—the strength of the relationship decreases although the magnitude remains relatively constant. When we add in family history, the strength remains constant while the magnitude increases (from .261

to .313). When we add in the aspirations variables, the strength and magnitude decrease again (from .313 to .218). Finally, when we arrive at the final model, Model 6, which includes the work history variables, we see the strength of the relationship increase to a significance of .01 and the magnitude rise to .254. This magnitude suggests that for every one unit increase in grit score, the quality of the work the lawyer receives will increase by .254 (e.g, if a lawyer were to increase her grit score from a 1 to a 5, she would be able to increase by one category the frequency with which she receives the highest quality work).

In Model 1, which considers the relationship between quality of work and grit score alone, we are able to explain about 3.5% of the overall quality of work rating. As we add in additional variables from model to model, we are able to explain progressively more about this overall rating, and by the time we reach Model 6 we can explain roughly 12%. The greatest single gain with respect to this number comes when we add in the aspirations variables, and specifically the ambition variable. There is a highly significant relationship (at the .001 level) between ambition score and quality of work, which is lessened only slightly (to the .01 level) when we add in the work history variables—the magnitude of these relationships are .260 and .234 respectively (which is very similar to the magnitude of the relationship between grit score and quality of work).

The last finding to note in Table 18 is that there is a significant relationship (at the .05 level) between law school tier and quality of work, although the magnitude is relatively low (.144), suggesting that tier has somewhat of an impact, although not much of one.

If we take grit out of the model entirely, and run the model with all of the other variables, the r-squared value tells us that the other variables account for roughly 9.7% of the quality of work rating. If we then add grit back in, the r-squared value jumps to 11.8%, which tells us that grit still explains about 2.1% about the quality of work rating, even when we are accounting for these other factors.

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 | Model 6 |
|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Grit | .268*** (.070) | .272** (.086) | .261** (.099) | .313** (.101) | .218* (.105) | .254** (.105) |
| Grades | | | | | | |
| Law School GPA | | .153 (.158) | .187 (.184) | .139 (.187) | .102 (.184) | .109 (.190) |
| Undergrad GPA | | .047 (.152) | -.141 (.182) | -.108 (.185) | -.194 (.183) | -.171 (.182) |
| High School GPA | | .199 (.177) | .208 (.188) | .217 (.191) | .225 (.188) | .238 (.186) |
| Tier | | | | | | |
| Law School Tier | | | .144* (.073) | -.137 (.075) | -.139 (.074) | -.123 (.073) |
| Undergrad Tier | | | -.025 (.075) | -.002 (.078) | -.011 (.076) | -.046 (.077) |
| Family History | | | | | | |
| Mother's Education | | | | .016 (.027) | .014 (.027) | .018 (.027) |
| Married? | | | | -.087 (.116) | -.061 (.114) | -.048 (.113) |
| Kids? | | | | .000 (.358) | -.050 (.353) | -.052 (.348) |
| Kids While Lawyer? | | | | -.021 (.354) | .047 (.348) | .025 (.344) |
| Aspirations | | | | | | |
| Ambition | | | | | .260*** (.081) | .234** (.081) |
| Desire to be Partner | | | | | .002 (.047) | -.035 (.052) |
| Work History | | | | | | |
| Partner? | | | | | | .191 (.121) |
| Offer Percentage | | | | | | .001 (.002) |
| R-squared | .035 | .037 | .049 | .059 | .104 | .118 |
| Percent Change | | .002 | .012 | .010 | .045 | .014 |

Table 18. Grit and Quality

Grit & Compensation

The data in this section applies to partners only as it is generally the case that associate salaries in BigLaw are paid in lockstep according to class year (i.e., everyone in the class of 2012 earns the same salary), and thus one cannot surmise that differences in salary are attributable to performance rather than some other factor. Like hours and quality of work, there was a healthy distribution in terms of partner compensation which is treated here as a relative measure rather than fixed dollar amounts. Table 19 shows the frequencies for each measure. The mean is 2.01 and the standard deviation is .698 (see Table 13).

| Relative to your peers, your financial compensation is: | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|--|------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Above average (3) | 47 | 24.7 | 24.7 |
| Average (2) | 98 | 51.6 | 51.6 |
| Below average (1) | 45 | 23.7 | 23.7 |
| Total | 190 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

Table 19. Partner Compensation Frequencies

When we take a closer look at the relationship between grit score and compensation for partners (see Table 20), we see that there are no significant relationships between the variables, either at the outset or when we control for the other variables in Models 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6.

The r-squared values tell us that grit alone explains next to nothing about a lawyer's compensation score. When you introduce grades you can explain about 1%, and this number stays the same with the introduction of school tiers. When you introduce family history it explains a little more—about 2%—and then there is another very small

jump to 3% when you introduce the aspiration scores. Finally, the introduction of the offer percentage variable in Model 6 allows us to explain about 6.5%, which is still a very small number.

If we take grit out of the model entirely, and run the model with all of the other variables, the r-squared value tells us that the other variables account for roughly 5.6% of the compensation score. If we then add grit back in, the r-squared value rises to 6.5%, suggesting that grit explains just a very small percentage (.9%) about compensation when we are accounting for these other factors.

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 | Model 6 |
|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Grit | .041 (.104) | -.016 (.130) | .113 (.133) | .215 (.181) | .165 (.190) | .199 (.197) |
| Grades | | | | | | |
| Law School GPA | | .260 (.249) | .068 (.285) | .037 (.297) | .046 (.299) | -.038 (.328) |
| Undergrad GPA | | -.277 (.273) | -.207 (.319) | -.203 (.333) | -.224 (.338) | -.232 (.337) |
| High School GPA | | .087 (.295) | .041 (.295) | .098 (.309) | .105 (.312) | .162 (.312) |
| Tier | | | | | | |
| Law School Tier | | | -.091 (.136) | -.113 (.142) | -.104 (.144) | -.150 (.144) |
| Undergrad Tier | | | .077 (.120) | .110 (.125) | .103 (.126) | .094 (.126) |
| Family History | | | | | | |
| Mother's Education | | | | .009 (.043) | .005 (.044) | .003 (.044) |
| Married? | | | | -.054 (.201) | -.032 (.205) | -.084 (.207) |
| Kids? | | | | -.329 (.670) | -.384 (.677) | -.427 (.677) |
| Kids While Lawyer? | | | | .434 (.651) | .498 (.658) | .590 (.657) |
| Aspirations | | | | | | |
| Ambition | | | | | .055 (.140) | .036 (.141) |
| Desire to be Partner | | | | | .055 (.091) | -.002 (.095) |
| Work History | | | | | | |
| Offer Percentage | | | | | | .002 (.004) |
| R-squared | .001 | .011 | .011 | .022 | .029 | .065 |
| Percent Change | | .010 | .000 | .011 | .007 | .036 |

Table 20. Grit and Compensation

Grit & Partnership Prospects

295 of the lawyers in the study—roughly 65%—described themselves as non-partners (see Table 8), and of those 295, 74.6% said that they were on partnership track, which is to say that they were performing well enough to be in the running for eventual promotion to partner and therefore their partnership prospects were good. Table 21 shows the nature of this relationship. In Model 1, we see a highly significant relationship between grit score and whether or not the lawyer was on partnership track (note that unlike the previous tables in this analysis, Table 21 reports the odds ratio, or the predicted change in odds for a unit increase in the predictor, rather than the B value). The odds ratio of 2.532 in Model 1 tells us that for every unit increase in grit score, a lawyer has two and a half times greater odds of being on partnership track. When we account for grades, these odds decrease to 2.285, and the strength of this relationship decreases. When we add in the prestige variables, the odds decrease again to 1.883, and the significance disappears.

The r-squared values tell us that grit score alone explains roughly 5% of a lawyer's partnership prospects. This number decreases to 3.6% when you add in grades, and holds relatively steady when you add in the prestige variables. The most significant change in the r-squared value occurs when you add in the aspirations variables—at this point in the table we see a large jump to 19.1%. It appears that this can be attributed to the addition of the “desire to be partner” variable, which is highly significant at the .001 level. This tells us that for every unit increase in a lawyer's desire to be partner (e.g,

from “it is something I want very much” to “it is my ultimate professional goal”), a lawyer is nearly three times more likely to be on partnership track versus not on partnership track. Importantly, when we add in the work history variables, the strength of this relationship persists at the .001 significance level, and the r-squared value holds strong at 19.1%. This fact tells us that the relationship is pretty strong because the variance is not easily soaked up when we control for other variables. It also tells us that the strength of a lawyer’s desire to be partner explains a lot about whether a lawyer is on partnership track.

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 | Model 6 |
|-----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Grit | 2.532*** (.286) | 2.285** (.310) | 1.883 (.376) | 1.941 (.396) | 1.288 (.445) | 1.329 (.452) |
| Grades | | | | | | |
| Law School GPA | | 1.200 (.619) | 1.077 (.761) | .904 (.807) | .580 (.913) | .654 (.909) |
| Undergrad GPA | | .929 (.557) | 1.576 (.655) | 1.502 (.675) | 1.702 (.756) | 1.832 (.758) |
| High School GPA | | 1.911 (.667) | 1.551 (.757) | 1.968 (.771) | 3.166 (.904) | 3.273 (.892) |
| Tier | | | | | | |
| Law School Tier | | | 1.252 (.312) | 1.237 (.317) | 1.375 (.348) | 1.446 (.358) |
| Undergrad Tier | | | 1.335 (.392) | 1.682 (.423) | 1.654 (.458) | 1.458 (.461) |
| Family History | | | | | | |
| Mother's Education | | | | 1.167 (.122) | 1.210 (.137) | 1.216 (.138) |
| Married? | | | | .676 (.466) | .557 (.519) | .527 (.522) |
| Kids? | | | | .000 (23166.057) | .000 (21891.591) | .000 (21710.818) |
| Kids While Lawyer? | | | | 603854476.972 (23166.057) | 309443678.618 (21891.591) | 258566712.259 (21710.818) |
| Aspirations | | | | | | |
| Ambition | | | | | .918 (.361) | .933 (.358) |
| Desire to be Partner | | | | | 2.925*** (.266) | 2.910*** (.268) |
| Work History | | | | | | |
| Offer Percentage | | | | | | .988 (.010) |
| R-squared | .046 | .036 | .038 | .063 | .191 | .191 |
| Percent Change | | -.010 | .002 | .025 | .128 | .000 |

Table 21. Grit and Partnership Prospects

Mindset & Performance

As the vast majority of lawyers (92.4% of those who responded) fall into the top two categories of performance (see Table 12), the results of the survey only tell us about a very limited group of performers—those who are doing very well—and thus, as was the case with grit, there may be stronger connections between mindset and performance than we see in the present analysis. It is worth noting here (and this will be discussed further when we consider the limitations and suitability of the data in the next chapter) that on some level, because there is an up or out culture in BigLaw, most of the lawyers who are currently practicing will tend to be high performers, except for a very small subset who are likely on their way out.

When we consider the relationship between mindset score and performance rating (see Table 22), we see that there is a statistically significant relationship (at the .05 level) between the two variables, although the magnitude of the relationship is relatively weak at .083 (e.g., a lawyer would have to increase her mindset score from 1 to 5 in order to see an improvement of 1/3 of a point in performance rating—that is, one third closer to “outstanding” from a baseline of “very good”). When you control for grades, the significance disappears, and magnitude is halved to .043. As you add in the other variables—school tier, family history, aspirations, and work history, the magnitude continues to decrease, and in Model 6 you end up with an extremely low magnitude of just .003.

The strongest relationship in Table 22 is between ambition score and performance rating, when controlling for mindset, grades, school tier, family history, and work history. This relationship is significant at the .01 level, with a magnitude of .191. When you look at the r-squared values, you can see that the variables in Model 4 explain about 3% of a lawyer's performance rating, and when you add in ambition score in Model 5, you are able to explain a full 11%, which is a noteworthy increase.

The highest magnitude in Table 22 is .329 and describes the relationship between whether or not a lawyer has children and her performance score. Although that is a potentially interesting finding, it is not significant and thus is likely due to random chance.

If we take mindset out of the model entirely, and run the model with all of the other variables, the r-squared value tells us that the other variables still account for roughly 11% of the overall performance rating. If we then add mindset back in, the r-squared value remains constant, which tells us that mindset does not add anything to our understanding of performance when we account for these other factors.

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 | Model 6 |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Mindset | .083* (.036) | .043 (.039) | .020 (.042) | .028 (.043) | .005 (.041) | .003 (.042) |
| Grades | | | | | | |
| Law School GPA | | -.054 (.129) | -.164 (.142) | -.194 (.144) | -.219 (.139) | -.224 (.147) |
| Undergrad GPA | | .031 (.124) | -.065 (.140) | -.095 (.143) | -.181 (.139) | -.180 (.140) |
| High School GPA | | .249 (.145) | .211 (.145) | .162 (.148) | .190 (.142) | .188 (.143) |
| Tier | | | | | | |
| Law School Tier | | | -.017 (.056) | -.010 (.058) | -.014 (.055) | -.015 (.056) |
| Undergrad Tier | | | .022 (.058) | -.001 (.060) | -.009 (.058) | -.006 (.059) |
| Family History | | | | | | |
| Mother's Education | | | | .022 (.021) | .024 (.020) | .022 (.020) |
| Married? | | | | .023 (.091) | .045 (.087) | .045 (.088) |
| Kids? | | | | .329 (.278) | .216 (.269) | .208 (.271) |
| Kids While Lawyer? | | | | -.205 (.274) | -.130 (.264) | -.116 (.267) |
| Aspirations | | | | | | |
| Ambition | | | | | .192** (.061) | .191** (.062) |
| Desire to be Partner | | | | | .065 (.035) | .072 (.040) |
| Work History | | | | | | |
| Partner? | | | | | | -.040 (.094) |
| Offer Percentage | | | | | | .000 (.002) |
| R-squared | .013 | .012 | .013 | .029 | .110 | .110 |
| Percent Change | | -.001 | .001 | .016 | .081 | .000 |

Table 22. Mindset and Performance

Mindset & Hours

As noted in the summary of the grit and hours results, there is a nice spread of average hours in the sample, with a mean of 1897 hours billed per year and a standard deviation of 357. Given this distribution, we can be fairly certain that if there was a relationship between mindset score and hours, we would see it in this data set, and as it turns out, there are no significant relationships between these variables (see Table 23). The only significant relationships in Table 23 (both at the .01 level) are between a lawyer's desire to be partner and her hours, and whether or not she is a partner and her hours. The magnitudes for both of these relationships are relatively high, suggesting that if a lawyer is a partner, she is likely to bill about 142 more hours per year than she would if she were not a partner, and that a one unit change in the strength of her desire to be partner corresponds to an additional 66 hours of billable time per year.

There is also a significant relationship (at the .05 level) between the number of offers the lawyer received and her average yearly hours, although the relationship is small in magnitude (.023). All of the findings mentioned above are consistent with the grit and hours findings, except that there are far fewer significant relationships here—the r-squared values tell us that even Model 6 only explains about 4% of a lawyer's average billable hours.

If we take mindset out of the model entirely, and run the model with all of the other variables, the r-squared value tells us that the other variables still account for roughly 14.9% of the overall hours a woman will work. If we then add mindset back in,

the r-squared value remains constant (explaining about 15%), which tells us that mindset does not add anything to our understanding of hours when we account for these other factors.

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 | Model 6 |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Mindset | -.038 (.199) | .025 (.212) | .024 (.237) | .075 (.239) | -.027 (.236) | -.090 (.232) |
| Grades | | | | | | |
| Law School GPA | | 1.250 (.699) | 1.610 (.802) | 1.540 (.808) | 1.442 (.792) | .767 (.811) |
| Undergrad GPA | | -.083 (.670) | -.530 (.790) | -.463 (.800) | -.779 (.790) | -.566 (.775) |
| High School GPA | | .677 (.786) | .486 (.817) | .483 (.828) | .620 (.810) | .614 (.793) |
| Tier | | | | | | |
| Law School Tier | | | -.464 (.316) | -.429 (.323) | -.437 (.316) | -.525 (.310) |
| Undergrad Tier | | | -.100 (.328) | .148 (.335) | .105 (.328) | .333 (.328) |
| Family History | | | | | | |
| Mother's Education | | | | .202 (.117) | .221 (.114) | .184 (.114) |
| Married? | | | | -.517 (.503) | -.409 (.492) | -.523 (.485) |
| Kids? | | | | -.782 (1.560) | -1.367 (1.535) | -1.629 (1.503) |
| Kids While Lawyer? | | | | .141 (1.538) | .457 (1.505) | .858 (1.479) |
| Aspirations | | | | | | |
| Ambition | | | | | .636 (.350) | .525 (.346) |
| Desire to be Partner | | | | | .428 (.201) | .660** (.223) |
| Work History | | | | | | |
| Partner? | | | | | | 1.418** (.520) |
| Offer Percentage | | | | | | .023* (.009) |
| R-squared | .000 | .014 | .029 | .061 | .110 | .150 |
| Percent Change | | .014 | .015 | .032 | .049 | .040 |

Table 23. Mindset and Hours

Mindset & Quality of Work

With respect to quality of work, there is a nice spread in the sample, with a mean of 3.402 and a standard deviation of .792. As was the case with mindset and hours, with a distribution like this one, we can be fairly certain that if there was a relationship between mindset score and quality of work, we would see it in this data set. Interestingly, when we review the numbers in Table 24, the only statistically significant relationship between the variables appears in Model 4, when we introduce the family history variables. When we control for mother's education, whether or not the lawyer is married and has children, and if she does have children whether or not she had them while working as a lawyer, we see the magnitude of the relationship jump from .099 to .116. While this is still relatively small, the significance is not very strong, and the r-squared value is still quite low (4%) it is nevertheless a curious finding. However, when the aspirations variables are introduced in Model 5, the significance disappears and the magnitude drops back down to .090, underscoring the fact that this was not a strong relationship to begin with, and simultaneously highlighting the impact of the aspirations variables, and ambition score in particular.

Looking a bit more closely at the numbers, it is clear that there is a highly significant relationship (at the .01 level) between ambition and quality of work, the strength of which is not diminished when controlling for the work history variables (whether or not a lawyer is a partner and her offer percentage). The magnitudes of the relationship before and after controlling for work history are .274 and .258 respectively,

so while the magnitude does decrease a bit, it is relatively stable. As noted above, the r-squared values tell us that we are not able to explain much of the quality rating through Model 4 (about 4%) but that once we factor in the aspirations variables in Model 5 (ambition and desire to be partner) we are able to explain nearly 10%. This is not a terribly large number in and of itself, but it does represent a notable increase.

If we take mindset out of the model entirely, and run the model with all of the other variables, the r-squared value tells us that the other variables still account for roughly 9.7% of the quality of work rating. If we then add mindset back in, the r-squared value remains nearly constant (explaining about 10.5%), which tells us that mindset does not add anything to our understanding of the quality of work rating when we account for these other factors.

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 | Model 6 |
|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Mindset | .080 (.044) | .072 (.048) | .099 (.055) | .116* (.056) | .090 (.055) | .082 (.055) |
| Grades | | | | | | |
| Law School GPA | | .154 (.159) | .189 (.186) | .140 (.189) | .099 (.184) | .106 (.191) |
| Undergrad GPA | | .084 (.153) | -.101 (.183) | -.072 (.187) | -.177 (.184) | -.155 (.183) |
| High School GPA | | .185 (.179) | .194 (.189) | .204 (.193) | .222 (.189) | .236 (.187) |
| Tier | | | | | | |
| Law School Tier | | | -.124 (.073) | -.119 (.075) | -.127 (.073) | -.107 (.073) |
| Undergrad Tier | | | -.037 (.076) | -.021 (.078) | -.027 (.076) | -.062 (.077) |
| Family History | | | | | | |
| Mother's Education | | | | .009 (.027) | .010 (.026) | .013 (.027) |
| Married? | | | | -.081 (.117) | -.056 (.114) | -.039 (.114) |
| Kids? | | | | .087 (.365) | .001 (.358) | -.013 (.354) |
| Kids While Lawyer? | | | | -.065 (.359) | .017 (.351) | -.004 (.349) |
| Aspirations | | | | | | |
| Ambition | | | | | .274** (.081) | .258** (.080) |
| Desire to be Partner | | | | | .019 (.047) | -.018 (.052) |
| Work History | | | | | | |
| Partner? | | | | | | .213 (.122) |
| Offer Percentage | | | | | | .001 (.002) |
| R-squared | .008 | .016 | .036 | .040 | .098 | .105 |
| Percent Change | | .008 | .020 | .004 | .058 | .007 |

Table 24. Mindset and Quality

Mindset & Compensation

In spite of a robust compensation range in the data, there are no statistically significant relationships between compensation and mindset (see Table 25). When considered alone, mindset accounts for less than 1% of a partner's compensation score. As we introduce more variables, we are able to account for a maximum of 4% in Model 6. Interestingly, while the relationships between mindset and compensation are not significant, it is worth noting that all of them, in each of the six models, are inversely related—that is, as mindset score increases, compensation decreases.

If we take mindset out of the model entirely, and run the model with all of the other variables, the r-squared value tells us that the other variables account for roughly 5.6% of the compensation score. If we then add mindset back in, the r-squared value rises to 6.9%, suggesting that mindset explains just a very small percentage (1.3%) about compensation when we are accounting for these other factors.

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 | Model 6 |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Mindset | -.072 (.068) | -.095 (.077) | -.082 (.083) | -.101 (.089) | -.117 (.090) | -.112 (.091) |
| Grades | | | | | | |
| Law School GPA | | .256 (.248) | .090 (.285) | .103 (.297) | .107 (.297) | .027 (.328) |
| Undergrad GPA | | -.238 (.273) | -.202 (.319) | -.163 (.334) | -.182 (.338) | -.198 (.338) |
| High School GPA | | .080 (.294) | .031 (.295) | .073 (.309) | .077 (.311) | .139 (.312) |
| Tier | | | | | | |
| Law School Tier | | | -.070 (.135) | -.086 (.141) | -.084 (.142) | -.124 (.143) |
| Undergrad Tier | | | .070 (.119) | .090 (.124) | .088 (.124) | .077 (.125) |
| Family History | | | | | | |
| Mother's Education | | | | -.007 (.043) | -.010 (.043) | -.015 (.043) |
| Married? | | | | .007 (.202) | .031 (.205) | -.011 (.208) |
| Kids? | | | | -.587 (.691) | -.683 (.696) | -.739 (.695) |
| Kids While Lawyer? | | | | .607 (.667) | .720 (.672) | .816 (.671) |
| Aspirations | | | | | | |
| Ambition | | | | | .056 (.140) | .043 (.140) |
| Desire to be Partner | | | | | .091 (.089) | .040 (.094) |
| Work History | | | | | | |
| Offer Percentage | | | | | | .002 (.004) |
| R-squared | .005 | .020 | .013 | .021 | .037 | .041 |
| Percent Change | | .015 | -.007 | .008 | .016 | .004 |

Table 25. Mindset and Compensation

Mindset & Partnership Prospects

Table 26 shows the relationship between mindset score and partnership prospects (i.e., whether or not a lawyer is on partnership track). Just like Table 21, Table 26 reports the odds ratio, or the predicted change in odds for a unit increase in the predictor, rather than the B value. There are no significant relationships in this table except for the relationship between “desire to be partner” and whether or not the lawyer is on partnership track. This is a highly significant relationship (at the .001 level), even when controlling for a number of other variables, including mindset score, grades, family history, and work history. The odds ratio tells us that for every unit increase in “desire to be partner” (e.g., from “it is something I want very much” to “it is my ultimate professional goal”) a lawyer is three times more likely to be on partnership track versus not on partnership track.

Mindset score alone tells us next to nothing (0%) about a lawyer’s partnership prospects, and we understand only slightly more as we add in other variables, eventually reaching about 5% in Model 4 when accounting for grades, prestige/tier, and family history. However, when we add in “desire to be partner”, this number jumps to just shy of 19%, and stays at 19% even when we control for work history. This tells us that the strength of a lawyer’s desire to be partner explains a lot about whether a lawyer is on partnership track.

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 | Model 6 |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Mindset | 1.052 (.166) | 1.062 (.189) | 1.060 (.226) | 1.149 (.229) | 1.057 (.262) | 1.070 (.271) |
| Grades | | | | | | |
| Law School GPA | | 1.219 (.614) | 1.094 (.762) | .871 (.812) | .549 (.915) | .610 (.913) |
| Undergrad GPA | | 1.052 (.557) | 1.739 (.653) | 1.667 (.673) | 1.773 (.760) | 1.923 (.763) |
| High School GPA | | 1.871 (.656) | 1.540 (.746) | 1.996 (.771) | 3.201 (.910) | 3.345 (.901) |
| Tier | | | | | | |
| Law School Tier | | | 1.330 (.304) | 1.276 (.308) | 1.391 (.346) | 1.458 (.355) |
| Undergrad Tier | | | 1.322 (.389) | 1.642 (.422) | 1.644 (.459) | 1.447 (.463) |
| Family History | | | | | | |
| Mother's Education | | | | 1.148 (.121) | 1.202 (.184) | 1.209 (.139) |
| Married? | | | | .631 (.462) | .549 (.519) | .519 (.521) |
| Kids? | | | | .000 (22989.726) | .000 (21896.881) | .000 (21717.369) |
| Kids While Lawyer? | | | | 591557516.226 (22989.726) | 294785742.595 (21896.881) | 244675497.999 (21717.369) |
| Aspirations | | | | | | |
| Ambition | | | | | .937 (.362) | .956 (.358) |
| Desire to be Partner | | | | | 2.978*** (.264) | 2.973*** (.265) |
| Work History | | | | | | |
| Offer Percentage | | | | | | .988 (.010) |
| R-squared | .000 | .006 | .022 | .049 | .189 | .189 |
| Percent Change | | .006 | .016 | .027 | .140 | .000 |

Table 26. Mindset and Partnership Prospects

Part II: Interview Results

This section will provide an overview of the results of the nine qualitative interviews conducted between January 24 and February 8, 2013. Each interview lasted somewhere between twenty-six and fifty-six minutes, and most lasted approximately forty minutes. I used the survey responses to identify female lawyers who had high grit scores, growth mindsets, and who performed well on the various measures of BigLaw success; I also identified lawyers who did not perform well on the measures of success and who had low grit scores and fixed mindsets. Finally, I identified lawyers who were successful, but had low grit scores and/or fixed mindsets, and lawyers who were not successful but had high grit scores and growth mindsets (see Figure 3). I also spoke to a mix of partners and non-partners in order to ensure that I was able to see how these issues played out at different stages of a lawyer's career. Interviewing this subset of the lawyers in the study allows for a more complete understanding of the specific ways in which grit and mindset impact—and do not impact—success.

| | | Grit | |
|----------------|-------------|---|--|
| | | High | Low |
| Mindset | High | Interviewee #5 (Successful Partner) Interviewee #9 (Successful Associate) | Interviewee #2 (Successful Associate) Interviewee #6 (Successful Partner) |
| | Low | Interviewee #8 (Successful Associate) Interviewee #4 (Less Successful, but not Unsuccessful, Partner) Interviewee #3 (Successful Partner) | Interviewee #1 (Unsuccessful Associate) Interviewee #7 (Successful Associate) |

Figure 3. Grit and Mindset Characteristics of Interviewees

Grit and Success

During the interview process I asked each lawyer what she thought were the two or three greatest contributors to her success (Interview Question #8, see Appendix C). Almost all of the lawyers in the study mentioned hard work as either the number one contributor or one of the top three. Many of the lawyers described the “relentless pace” of the work in BigLaw and cited the ability to “work just crazy long hours” as essential to their success (Interviewee #9, 2013, pg. 13; Interviewee #5, 2013, pg. 10). When describing what hard work looks like in BigLaw, one interviewee described what she did to prepare for an upcoming mediation:

I called a law school friend of mine who had taken a mediation course and he gave me tips and stuff that he had from class. I talked to people over the weekend. I read everything. I practiced. I came up with ideas and I basically worked all weekend to prepare for it...I prepared, I mean I just, I was up all night preparing for it...(Interviewee #2, 2013, pg. 5-6).

Others described a similarly gritty approach:

If it's conquering something, you know, I-I will put in whatever it takes to-to get that done. You know, but not just sloppily done, you know, done in-in a way that, uh, I [can take pride in] and feel comfortable with. (Interviewee #8, 2013, pg. 8)

I think my tendency is to double down on the work I do...I've always had the mentality that whenever somebody gives me something to do, my job is to make their life easier with the task. So, I won't only do what they ask but I will go above and beyond and get them the next five things they need. And be on top of it. And solve all of the problems before they come up, so that oftentimes, when my boss asks me for something, I've already done it and I can tell him, "I already did it." (Interviewee #2, 2013, pg. 8).

I asked all of the women I interviewed whether or not they saw a direct connection between how hard they worked and the amount of success they were able to achieve, and all of them said yes. Nevertheless, while most of the women described hard work as essential to success, several noted that hard work alone is not sufficient, and must be supplemented by other critical skills. As one lawyer noted:

There are a lot of people who work really hard, um, and they couldn't find up or down, you know. And-and I think that, it's like how you work, some partners I know, they want me to respond immediately. And so I put [every]thing aside and get what they need. You know, some other ones, some other people, like they're like, oh, take your time, but I want it to be perfect, you know. Um, I think that there is, you know, if I look around, some people have been fired who try really hard, but just-just didn't have it. (Interviewee #9, 2013, pg. 13).

In addition to hard work, the lawyers mentioned intelligence, responsiveness, effectiveness, emotional intelligence and savvy, time management, and having great

mentors as factors which contributed heavily to their success. Although some of these other factors were mentioned more than once, none were mentioned as often as hard work, and none consistently enough to suggest an emerging pattern or theme.

Because grit entails not only hard work and perseverance, but also passion, I asked each lawyer I interviewed whether or not she was passionate about the practice of law (Interview Question #6, see Appendix C). The more junior lawyers (non-partners) I spoke with, both successful and unsuccessful, were not passionate about the practice of law, but rather about what the practice of law could do for them and the challenges it provided them with.

Well I think I'm passionate about being powerful and about being actualized, and about feeling like I have a role and that that role matters. Um, and I think the law provides that...I do feel really passionate about what I'm doing. But I think it's more about because of what it allows me to be. (Interviewee #9, 2013, pg. 10).

No...I don't feel that way about my job. I feel like I do it because I get paid to do it. I enjoy challenges that come with it...I like succeeding at challenges that I [set] for myself...But I wouldn't say that I am passionate about the law. (Interviewee #2, 2013, pg. 7).

I cannot say that I'm passionate about practicing law; I could say that I am passionate about certain aspects of laws. I like, I like health law, so I am passionate about health law, it's interesting, I like to learn about it, I like to, um, think about it, I like to strategize about it. But, if you asked me about, you know, criminal law or, in general, lawyers, I can't say that I have the same fervor or passion. (Interviewee #8, 2013, pg. 7).

While many of the junior lawyers I spoke with said they were not passionate about the practice of law, they nevertheless described moments of passion they experienced on the job, if not directly related to practicing then related to how they felt when they received

positive feedback from more senior lawyers, or when they completed a particularly challenging task. One junior lawyer described this experience as follows:

Last night I was here until 5:00 am, I got in at 10 and the partner said to me, so I gave him the memo and he said to me, “That was really good research. That was really clearly written.” And I’m exhausted, but I almost started crying. I was like, “Oh my goodness.” It feels so good to work hard, to be successful, and to have somebody appreciate that you’ve worked hard on something. (Interviewee #1, 2013, pg. 5).

The more senior lawyers, in contrast, were much more likely to be openly passionate about the practice of law, and many of them even used the word “love” to describe how they felt about it.

I’ve always been passionate about the law and my job. Wherever I was, whatever I was doing. (Interviewee #6, 2013, pg. 11).

I loved the practice of law from the very beginning...I love it very much. I can’t say that I enjoy certain aspects, business aspects of the practice of law, that have become so prevalent, but the practice of law itself, I love it just as much as I did when I started. That’s why I keep going. (Interviewee #3, 2013, pg. 4).

I loved law school like the moment I set [foot] in my first classroom and even though I was scared shitless by the Socratic method I was also excited by it. And so it’s the same sort of thing in practice...every day is you know an opportunity to learn something new and to sharpen your skills and to meet new people and do good work for those people and solve problems and you know be creative with a team of people that you like working with. (Interviewee #4, 2013, pg. 10).

When asked to describe how their passion for the practice of law had changed over time, the vast majority of the senior lawyers I spoke with said that it had remained consistently strong over time, with small ups and downs along the way that were most often attributable to a tough case or a difficult client. In other words, the cause of the ups and

downs were situational and generally the result of specific events rather than a reflection of changing moods or feelings about the practice of law.

To summarize, all of the women I interviewed, both successful and unsuccessful, junior (non-partners) and senior (partners), worked extremely hard, and all of them saw their hard work as directly related to their ability to be successful in BigLaw. Most also noted that hard work alone is not enough, and they went on to describe other factors that impacted their success, although interestingly there were no obvious commonalities among the factors they mentioned other than hard work. With respect to passion, the senior lawyers all tended to feel very passionately about their work, while the junior lawyers—both successful and unsuccessful—tended to say they didn't feel passionately, but they nevertheless described feeling moments of passion at work. The data from these interviews suggests that women in senior positions in BigLaw tend to be gritty, as they are clearly passionate and persistently hard working, while the junior lawyers, while equally hard working, tend to be less outwardly passionate, and potentially less gritty. It was not clear whether there were significant differences in grit between the successful and unsuccessful lawyers at each level (i.e., successful junior associates vs. unsuccessful junior associates), but it did seem to be the case that, broadly speaking, the senior lawyers were more outwardly gritty than the junior lawyers.

Mindset and Success

In order to understand how mindset factored into success in BigLaw, I asked the lawyers to describe their responses when faced with a particularly challenging or messy

situation at work (Interview Question #5, see Appendix C). Many of the junior, non-partners described having an initial moment of panic. These moments of panic tended to happen in private, behind closed doors. As one lawyer explained, “I just didn’t want to show any vulnerability and I really wanted to be the avatar that I wanted to be.”

(Interviewee #9, 2013, pg. 8). One lawyer described what it felt like to experience one of these moments:

...I feel like at first I hate myself. I sort of feel like a sense of, um, depression, I think, in a way. And feel overwhelmed by like my insufficiencies and my lack of ability to do things well...it seems overwhelming and I kind of can’t really process exactly what I’m doing. And then, I like shake myself out of it and after a certain amount of time, whether it’s like five minutes or an hour. And then I just do it. (Interviewee #9, 2013, pg. 8-9).

Other junior lawyers reported similar experiences:

I always have to have a moment of panic. It’s almost as if the moment of panic motivates me to do what I need to do to get it done...It wouldn’t be a challenge if you didn’t have the moment of panic [laughs]. (Interviewee #7, 2013, pg. 7).

There have been times...when I felt like I was busting my ass and doing the best job I could do and things were...not lining up with the expectations of uh, my colleagues let’s say and that certainly would be discouraging...(Interviewee #8, 2013, pg. 6).

Although the moment of panic was an experience that many junior lawyers had in common, it was something that the successful junior lawyers were able to work through and ultimately overcome. They described a number of different techniques they used to work through these moments, including yoga and retreating to their offices to calm down in private after a particularly stressful encounter. Importantly, all of the successful lawyers had some kind of plan for dealing with these moments and moving past them

while the less successful lawyers tended to feel overwhelmed by them and to find it difficult to move on. One successful lawyer explained:

[H]ow I orient is like very, like warrior approach and sort of like in this very direct, sort of confrontational like, I'm not afraid of that. Like it doesn't scare me to say, like I'm [going] to take something on and grab it and-and even if it's something terrible about myself. And to look at it and to do something with it and just not be debilitated. (Interviewee #9, 2013, pg. 24).

In contrast, one lawyer who was far less successful at work described a very different approach:

I panic every single day...I think the kicker I'm realizing is, we work so hard and so to feel like you work really hard and people don't like you, is devastating...I think that this is sort of the reckoning. You know, in middle school they're saying, "When you get to high school, this isn't gonna fly." And then you realize you can get away with anything in high school. And then they say, "Well when you get to college, this isn't gonna fly." And then you realize that you can get away with anything in college. So when you get to the real world...it's sort of like you work so hard and then...but that's average here. You know? (Interviewee #1, 2013, pg. 6).

A successful lawyer offered one plausible explanation for what was happening with the unsuccessful lawyers at her firm:

I think most people who quit, don't quit because they wanted to, if they were truly honest, they quit because someone told them, in some form, they weren't good enough. And they couldn't see, they couldn't figure it out, how to change. And so they had to leave. (Interviewee # 9, 2013, pg. 23).

This particular lawyer was of the opinion—and this was a view shared by others I spoke with—that one of the important differences between those who were successful and those who were not was the ability to process negative feedback without allowing it to become debilitating. One of the partners I spoke with described how essential this was to her

ability to succeed, and wondering how those who did not have this ability were able to success in the BigLaw environment.

I have found myself thinking many, many times, you know, here I am, this, like, really strong person who, you know, doesn't let people get me down, and I think of all the different things over the last 12 years that I've had to overcome and, you know, there have been days when I wasn't feeling good because of what I, you know, what someone said or somebody did in the firm. And I think, "How in the heck do other people survive?" Because I-I don't think most people are as strong as I am or as thick-skinned as I am. You know, how do other people make it through the day? (Interviewee #6, 2013, pg.11).

The moment of panic that the juniors described is not something that most of the partners I spoke with said they experienced. The partners consistently mentioned having a very strong sense of self and/or high levels of confidence which made it possible for them to avoid these moments of anxiousness and self-doubt. They all tended to be very matter-of-fact in their response to challenges, as described by three partners below:

I've never ever doubted that I was an All-Star...I think that in part that's my personality and my self-confidence and then I think that in turn you know obviously if you project that then people in response respond in kind they assume that you are...(Interviewee #5, 2013, pg. 6).

I don't really see any utility in that of saying oh crap I've never done this before or I don't-I don't know what to say about this. Well it's time to think about it and figure out what to do....(Interviewee #4, 2013, pg. 7).

I don't make decisions about myself based on what other people say. You know? You know, somebody tells me that I am not doing things correctly, you know, I'll think about it but if it comes right down to it, I-I-I just don't believe them ultimately. (Interviewee #6, 2013, pg. 8).

In spite of the fact that many of the partners I interviewed came across as extremely confident, one partner shared that this may not be entirely true. She pointed out that:

Anybody tells you that they've practiced law and don't have moments of panic are lying to you. Everybody has moments of panic, so, let me just tell you that. Um, but, but, we've all hit moments of panic, but it's not because of my doubt of my intellectual abilities. It's more the sheer volume of what needs to be done in the timeframe it needs to be done. So, if you were given enough time to do anything, your intellectual abilities would be able to do it. (Interviewee #6, 2013, pg. 7-8).

Another lawyer suggested that it isn't that successful lawyers don't have moments of panic, or that they do and are dishonest about them, but rather that they are so used to having them and moving on that they forget about them. In other words, they are so much a part of the routine of practicing in the BigLaw environment, that they have actually become non-events.

[I]t's difficult...every minute I'm here...it's like tough to breathe, you know...like [I] shut the door today and then like, you know, do yoga cow for like a minute. Because it feels overwhelming and it's hard to keep moving when you have to be constantly productive and just get over it. Because it's, you can't stop, you know, there's, it-it's just not possible. And I don't know where you could go to understand more about it, but it's just incredibly hard all the time. Like I don't, even when I go home right now, like right now I hadn't told you that, I probably forget that I even did that. But it definitely occurred, you know, and that definitely was like a really tough moment. But then also, like it goes away, I don't know. (Interviewee #9, 2013, pg. 26).

This lawyer was describing her ability not only to move past a significantly challenging moment, one which affected her so deeply that there were physical repercussions (it was "tough to breathe"), but actually to forget, somehow, that this moment had even occurred in the first place. It's difficult to ascertain whether the partners I spoke with didn't actually have moments of panic, or whether they did and just somehow managed to process them in a way that did not severely handicap them, but either way, the takeaway is that the highly successful women I spoke with do not let obstacles stand in their way,

which is a characteristic of a growth mindset (and, incidentally, of grit). One lawyer explained it in the following way:

I can't believe that there are actually women that do that, that they think, oh, I've hit like-like an obstacle and that means I should stop. I mean...that would honestly never occur to me. (Interviewee #9, 2013, pg.24).

As this quotation makes clear, the successful women never even considered backing down or questioning their own abilities in the face of obstacles. Rather than withdrawing when faced with a challenge, their approach was to dig in—to “double down on the work”—and to use the challenge as an opportunity to learn (Interviewee #2, 2013, pg. 8).

...[O]ne of the things I think that's been instrumental in my successes is that I've never really been a person that takes things personally. I have a pretty thick skin when it comes to criticism...so for me if something was a criticism I just assumed it was something that I needed to fix and to-to deal with and you know learn from and move on and I was very self-reflective on what my weaknesses and what my strengths were. (Interviewee #5, 2013, pg. 6).

The approach to work described above is reflective of a strong growth mindset, and was prevalent among the successful female partners and non-partners I spoke with, but not as common—or even absent—among the less successful non-partners. These findings suggests that a growth mindset is a trait which not only influences success, but is also common among the women in senior leadership positions in BigLaw.

Are Grit and Mindset More or Less Important to Success When We Account for Other Factors?

The quantitative part of this study looks at a number of factors that impact success in BigLaw—including grades, prestige of law school, and family history—and considers what happens to the relationship between grit and success when we control for these

factors. Similarly, in the qualitative portion of this study I asked the lawyers to reflect on the factors that had contributed to or detracted from their ability to succeed (Interview Question #8, Appendix C). Nearly all of the women I interviewed shared the belief that juggling the demands of work and family life was the single most important barrier to achieving success at the highest levels of leadership in BigLaw. One successful partner described the challenge as follows:

I think the biggest challenge I've faced over the years, uh, was trying to balance, uh, family responsibilities with my work responsibilities. That was always a challenge...(Interviewee #3, 2013, pg. 3-4).

All of the lawyers who had children said that it was extremely difficult to be successful in an environment that places such a strong emphasis on how many hours you work. Many even went a step further than that to suggest that choosing not to have children had significantly contributed to their ability to succeed. As one very successful partner explained:

I always think not having kids is a big thing. I really do in this environment. I think it was way easier to be successful at BigLaw not having had kids. I-I as sad as that sounds, I can affirmatively say that...I mean I can jump in on trials at the last minute without having to deal with like a whole rearrangement of my life, it's very simple. (Interviewee #5, 2013, pg. 10-11).

Similarly, junior lawyers described the ability to succeed as directly related to how many hours one could bill, which in turn was impacted by the decision to have children. One lawyer described the situation a friend of hers was in as follows:

She's very smart, went to top school[s], both Ivy League, both undergrad and law school. Um, but she got married and she's had three kids. She's like, she's 33 I think. And it definitely, she's not making the hours, and it's definitely a problem. And the amount of time she can spend working, is just not the same as I can. And

so, I, you know, there's, it's just not possible for her...so basically her goal now is like [G]od don't fire me...just make me counsel or of counsel...just let me stay...(Interviewee #9, 2013, pg. 19).

She went on to describe a successful female partner in her firm who had made the decision not to have children, and talked about how that had been an important contributor to her success because her law firm “look[s] at your last, the three years prior to your partnership eligibility and that's when they say, okay, what were your hours then?” (Interviewee #9, 2013, pg. 20).

While there was almost universal agreement among the lawyers I spoke with at all levels, both successful and unsuccessful, that having children made it very difficult to do the sheer volume of work required to be successful in BigLaw—one lawyer even jokingly suggested that “they work you until your ovaries fall out”—none of the women faulted their firms for this state of affairs (Interviewee #1, 2013, pg. 11). Indeed, many of the women praised their firms' efforts to support women with children, citing generous, 18-week maternity leave policies and open offers to work reduced hours. As another lawyer explained:

I don't blame the firm for it, at all. Um, I think they're trying very hard to make this a comfortable place for women. To make this a place where you can have children. (Interviewee #1, 2013, pg. 11).

In spite of many firms' willingness to make such accommodations, many of the women noted that working long hours was just the nature of the beast, and even those who ultimately pursued part-time arrangements found them relatively ineffective:

I did go part-time, and as so frequently happens with part-time working, it essentially meant I worked full-time and got paid part time. (Interviewee #3, 2013, pg. 4).

At the end of the day, the majority of women felt that the struggle to balance work and family life was a personal issue, and that women made the choice to opt out of BigLaw because the nature of the job is such that finding a healthy, manageable balance, while still being successful, was just too hard. As one partner pointed out:

Everything's gotta be done right now. An email has to be sent right now. And it places an enormous amount of stress on young women and we've—we've over the years lost some very, very talented young women lawyers because of the stress and pressures of the practice of law today...it just too-too-too severely impacted their family life, they just...it wasn't worth it. (Interviewee #3, 2013, pg. 8).

Along the same lines, some of the more junior lawyers I spoke with who had children described future plans that involved scaling back or stepping out of the practice of law altogether.

I definitely would love to be in a position where I work less. Spend more time with my kids...I mean, that's my ultimate goal. I don't know how, I mean, I've thought about going into education again. Or you know, being a professor...I need several hours to know who my kids are. Because they are old enough now to actually have personalities. (Interviewee #2, 2013, pg. 14).

In addition to the challenges of balancing work and family life, many of the junior lawyers noted that they had no desire to become partners and often found themselves wondering of the more senior lawyers “what is my incentive to become you?” (Interviewee #1, 2013, pg. 17). In this regard, it was clear that ambition and desire to be partner were important factors in determining who ultimately reached the highest levels of success. As one junior associate explained:

You have to want, I guess different things than I want. You have to be a really ambitious person and you have to really get off on working hard and I don't

know, just being like Gordon Gecko. Just being like that type. (Interviewee #1, 2013, pg. 17).

Similarly, another partner pointed out that in many cases, partnership just might not be what many women ultimately want for themselves. As she described it:

It's not like there's this huge backlog of women who want to be promoted to partner. Um, and just don't make it because they couldn't find a good strong mentor for them. People make decisions to leave and...there are many cases where the system has failed but, but I do think that the personal choice aspect of career development and career trajectory is often overlooked. (Interviewee #4, 2013, pg. 22).

Other than choosing to have children and ambition and desire to be partner, none of the other factors that I considered in the survey (such as grades, where one went to law school, how highly that law school was ranked, etc.) came up in the interviews consistently enough to merit mention here.

Are Grit and Mindset Outcomes or Precursors to Success?

I asked all of the lawyers I spoke with a number of different questions designed to understand whether high levels of grit and growth mindsets were something that the women had picked up at their respective firms—or through the practice of law over time—or whether these were traits that the women arrived with. The majority of successful women lawyers I spoke with were clearly gritty before they arrived at their respective firms. For example, one lawyer described how she approached studying in law school in a way that suggests she had high levels of grit well before she arrived at her firm:

I mean, I studied at law school through the third year, like seven days a week, morning to night. And it was the most pleasurable thing. And I remember, yes, I do remember like fantasizing like about not having to do it. But I really so enjoyed like every moment of just being, I don't know, so completely, like I was one with what I was doing. (Interviewee #9, 2013, pg. 22).

Similarly, many lawyers described their processes when pursuing specific goals, and these processes tended to be extremely gritty. For example, one lawyer described her approach to finding a law firm job as follows:

I called every law firm in the city...[a]nd that was like hundreds of law firms. I mean, like it was more than just the 200, but like I called so many firms and I was like, hi, I got a clerkship, um, are you, you know, are you interested in hiring me. I mean, like it was, I just was relentless about it. (Interviewee #9, 2013, pg. 25).

Along those same lines, one of the partners described her process for buying a house:

...[E]ach time there is a house on the market like I do whatever it takes to get that house, you know, um, or like for example...when I was a teenager and stuff there was a guy I wanted to date like I would do whatever it took to date that guy, and like I'm just extremely focused and I think extremely persuasive...(Interviewee #5, 2013, pg. 19).

In some cases, evidence of grit was present at a very early age. Several of the lawyers mentioned that as children, they had pursued certain activities for very long periods of time and with great enthusiasm—one lawyer has taken ballet for 12 years, another had been on a competitive cheerleading team for 8 years, and a third had been devoted to a non-profit organization for close to 20 years. One of the partners I spoke with said that while she had not pursued a single activity for a long period of time, she tended to pursue every activity in a very gritty, aggressive way:

Since I was little, there was a toy I wanted I would be relentless with my parents, if there was a trip I wanted to take like I will even now I will plan it way in advance and do whatever is necessary to make it happen I just believe that people

personally have to make stuff happen that they want to have happen in their lives and I've always believed that. (Interviewee #5, 2013, pg. 20).

Interestingly, when I asked the lawyers who had high levels of grit whether or not it could be taught, most said no.

I don't think you can give people, if people don't have fire and the combination of fire and competence and persuasiveness you have to both have the passion to do it and the ability to do it and I think that those two things if you don't have those things inherently I don't think that can be taught. (Interviewee #5, 2013, pg. 20).

When I asked the lawyers whether or not they thought certain people were naturally gifted at the practice of law, the responses were mixed (Interview Question #11, Appendix C). This question was designed to provide information about each lawyer's mindset—the idea being that those with fixed mindsets would believe that some people were “born” with certain natural abilities that made it easier for them to succeed while those with a growth mindset would believe that anyone can succeed provided that they work hard enough and immerse themselves completely in the pursuit of it. Perhaps because the sample size was too small, there were no obvious patterns in the responses, either among the successful and unsuccessful lawyers or among different levels of seniority. It was also unclear whether or not the lawyers who did have growth mindsets had always had them, or whether they had acquired them while working in BigLaw.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

This section will review the central findings of this study and offer further analysis and discussion of the results. There were a number of important discoveries in this study, which I have condensed into five key findings:

1. Grit is related to a number of measures of success in BigLaw and most significantly to hours and quality of work
2. Grit seems to be a precursor to BigLaw success rather than an outcome of BigLaw success
3. A growth mindset is not quantitatively related to measures of success in BigLaw, but many successful female lawyers display growth mindset characteristics
4. Ambition is strongly related to performance and quality of work
5. Desire to be partner is strongly related to hours and whether or not a female lawyer is on partnership track

Each of these findings will be discussed in further detail below.

Finding #1: Grit is related to a number of measures of success in BigLaw and most significantly to hours and quality of work

At the outset of this study, I hypothesized that grit would be related to a number of measures of success for women in BigLaw, and the results suggest that this is indeed the case. Grit is most strongly related to how many hours women work and to their own perception of the quality of the work they receive (see Chapter 4). The fact that the

strength of these relationships hold—even when controlling for thirteen other factors which have been known to influence success—makes these findings especially meaningful.

In order to fully comprehend what the relationship between grit and hours means in practical terms, consider the fact that the average billable rate for a BigLaw lawyer is at least \$540 per hour, and an increasing number of partners now bill their time at over \$1,000 per hour (Jones, 2012). If you do the math using those numbers, a very gritty partner is likely to bring in close to \$300,000 more each year than a moderately gritty partner (this assumes grit scores of 5 and 3 respectively). Similarly, even a more modestly billing associate is likely to earn about \$155,000 more than her less gritty peer (again assuming grit scores of 5 and 3). When you consider that the average number of lawyers at each AmLaw 200 firm is 578, the earning potential is staggering (American Lawyer 200 Report, 2012).

It is more difficult to quantify the potential impact of the relationship between grit and a lawyer's perception of the quality of the work she receives (i.e., how often she works on the most complex and high profile work her firm has to offer). Some studies have suggested that employees are less likely to experience burnout if they are satisfied with the content of their work and they feel that their work matters and is meaningful (Cranston & Keller, 2013; Janssen, Schaufeli & Houkes, 1999). Burnout is defined as a psychological syndrome that involves a prolonged response to chronic interpersonal stressors on the job (Maslach, 2005). The three key dimensions of this response are “an overwhelming exhaustion, feelings of cynicism and detachment from the job, and a sense

of ineffectiveness and lack of accomplishment” (Maslach, 2005, p. 38). According to Maslach (2005), the most common consequences of burnout are poor quality of work, low morale, absenteeism, turnover, health problems, depression, and family problems. Given that all of these consequences have dire implications for employers, it seems clear that employers would want to avoid them. Ensuring that lawyers feel good about the quality of their work may be one of way of accomplishing this.

Not only are there benefits to having lawyers who feel good about the quality of their work, but there are also dangers associated with having lawyers who do not feel this way. First of all, assigning a lawyer to low profile, routine work may inadvertently send a message to her that the firm does not think very highly of her abilities. Given how challenging it is for all lawyers working in BigLaw, it may very well be the case that such a message would encourage those who are already struggling to juggle work and family responsibilities the extra push they need to opt out of the practice of law altogether. In an environment in which even the most highly committed, ambitious lawyers struggle to reconcile the demands of the job with their lives outside of the office, any evidence that they may not have what it takes to succeed may be just the encouragement they need to pursue a less demanding career choice.

Now that we have some understanding of what the relationships between grit, hours, and quality of work mean in practical terms, it is worth considering why grit is more strongly related to these two measures of success than any of the other success measures. On some level, it is not that surprising that there is such a strong connection between grit and number of hours worked—indeed, that is exactly what I predicted at the

outset of this study. More than any other measure of success in this study, number of hours worked is the most obvious and direct way for grit to manifest itself in the BigLaw environment. When we consider what we know about grit from prior research (as discussed in detail in Chapter 2) it seems to be the case that high levels of grit allow people to put in the time needed to succeed—whether they are middle-schoolers studying for the National Spelling Bee, West Point cadets trying to survive boot camp, or women lawyers trying to make partner in BigLaw. Grit is—by definition—a trait which is exemplified by persistence and perseverance not just for short term gains but for long term goals. One might even argue that if we didn't see a strong connection between grit and number of hours worked that it would be difficult to suggest that grit matters at all in the BigLaw environment.

When it comes to quality of work, the connection seems less obvious, at least from the outset. Why is grit so strongly related to this measure of success? While further research in this area is necessary before we can draw definitive conclusions, I think there are a number of reasons why this connection is as strong as it is. For example, one possible explanation is that gritty individuals tend to be among the highest performers on the job, and therefore they tend to receive only the best work—the work that is most important to the firm and the work these firms want to staff with their most dedicated and talented lawyers. Another possibility is that the gritty lawyers, who tend to embrace challenges and to see them as the best opportunities for learning, seek out these challenging assignments, even though—or perhaps precisely because—they tend to be the most demanding in terms of the effort required to successfully complete them. A

gritty lawyer would be likely to want to push herself and would certainly not shy away from long hours, so the most high profile, complex matters—the best matters—would be the ones she would raise her hand for. A third possibility is that gritty women lawyers are so focused on the work they have, and so committed to working hard and getting the most out of each assignment, that they are more likely to believe that they are working on the most high profile and complex matters, even if this is not the case. If this were true, the connection found in this research can be explained by the fact that gritty lawyers are just more likely to respond to a question like this one in a particular way. Along those lines, in a study of novice teachers, Duckworth, Quinn, and Seligman (2009) found that more optimistic teachers had higher grit and life satisfaction scores, and that grit and life satisfaction, in turn, predicted greater teacher effectiveness. It could be the case here that the gritty lawyers were also more optimistic and thus more likely to view their work as the most high quality work the firm had to offer.

Finding #2: Grit seems to be a precursor to BigLaw success rather than an outcome of BigLaw success

At the outset of this study, I did not have a strong sense of what the answer to this research question (is grit an outcome of—or precursor to—success) would be. On the one hand, I suspected that most women in BigLaw would be somewhat gritty—at least more so than the average person—because the path to BigLaw is a challenging one that requires hard work and long term commitment (law school takes three years and teaches you how to think like a lawyer rather than focusing on the practical aspects of practicing

law which lawyers tend to learn on the job from other, more experienced lawyers). On this point, I was correct: the average grit score for the lawyers in the study was 3.94, (and not one lawyer in the study had a score lower than 3) while the average grit score for women in the general population is only 3.43 (Duckworth, 2013). On the other hand, working in BigLaw is so challenging—mentally as well as physically—that I could also see how grit could be a learned coping mechanism—an outlook that women would pick up over time in order to persevere in such a high stress environment. What the results of this study ultimately suggest (although I note that these conclusions are based on data from only 9 interviews and should therefore be viewed as indicative rather than conclusive) was that in most cases grit was a precursor to success. That is to say that the gritty women I spoke with arrived in BigLaw with healthy amounts of grit and some of them had been this way since childhood. The most successful lawyers themselves summed it up best when they said things like “I do whatever it takes” and “I am just relentless” (Interviewee #5, 2013, pg. 19; Interviewee #9, 2013, pg. 25).

While I can confidently state that many women arrive at BigLaw with generous amounts of grit, I suspect it is also the case that their grit levels increase over time. Duckworth and Eskreis-Winkler (2013) found that grit increases monotonically—which is to say that it consistently increases and does not decrease or oscillate in relative value—throughout adulthood. Duckworth and Eskreis-Winkler (2013) suggest that this may be because people tend to appreciate the value of effort more as they get older or because they may simply be more interested in specializing later in life. Either way, the world of BigLaw seems to be an ideal location for growing grit. Because this study was

performed over the course of a few months rather than a few years, we cannot definitively quantify the nature of this relationship, but it presents a compelling opportunity for further research—it would be very telling, presumably, to check-in with the lawyers in this study a year or two from now and see what has happened to their grit scores.

Finding #3: A growth mindset is not quantitatively related to measures of success in BigLaw, but many successful female lawyers display growth mindset characteristics

Because others are investigating the link between grit and growth mindset, I was somewhat surprised to see that the connections between growth mindset and BigLaw success were not stronger than they appear to be here (Duckworth & Eskreis, 2013). The lack of hard data to support the connection between growth mindset and BigLaw success was all the more surprising when you consider the anecdotal evidence from the qualitative interviews, which so clearly contribute to Dweck’s body of evidence demonstrating that a growth mindset, and the belief in the power of effort, encourages people to construe failures and setbacks as learning opportunities rather than evidence that they have hit a personal ceiling and do not have what it takes to be successful. Indeed, all of the successful women in this study described how they were able to overcome obstacles—to use a “warrior approach” and in a very direct, even confrontational way say “I’m not afraid of that. It doesn’t scare me to take something on even if it’s something terrible about myself. And to look at it and to do something with it and just not be debilitated” (Interviewee #9, 2013, pg. 24).

Because the successful women in this study—at least the subset with whom I spoke—seem to have strong growth mindsets, it could be the case that while a growth mindset is something that contributes to success in BigLaw, it doesn't necessarily contribute to the measures of success that I investigated in this study. Interestingly, the data did reveal strongly significant (at the .001 level), positive associations between grit and growth mindset. As Duckworth and Eskreis-Winkler (2013) point out, this suggests that growth mindset may contribute to the tendency to sustain effort and commitment to long-term goals. It could be the case, then, that a growth mindset contributes to grit, which in turn contributes to the various measures of success, and that this mediating factor is why we do not see more of a direct impact.

There is an important distinction to be made here, which is that some women may have low mindset scores—meaning that they believe in fixed abilities, but still also believe strongly in the value of hard work. As discussed in Chapter 4, all of the women I spoke to underscored the importance of hard work, and emphasized how integral that was to the profession, but nevertheless, some of them didn't seem to believe that their success was based on hard work, but rather on the fact that they were “special” in some way. As one woman repeatedly said in our interview, “I've never ever doubted that I was an All-Star...I think that in part that's my personality and my self-confidence.” (Interviewee #5, 2013, pg. 6). I think it is likely that there are a number of women in BigLaw who view success as related more to endowment than effort—and therefore a belief in effort alone (or a pure mindset score) does not always predict success in this environment.

Finding #4: Ambition is highly correlated with performance and quality of work

At the outset of this study I did not make predictions about the strength of the relationship between ambition, performance, and quality of work. That said, I did expect that ambition would be a strong predictor of various measures of BigLaw success. As discussed in Chapter 4, the majority of lawyers in the study (92.4%) fall into the top two performance categories: very good and outstanding. Only 6.6% of those who responded said they received an “average” performance rating, 1% a “below average” rating, and no one a “poor” rating (see Table 12). This is an important fact because the results of the survey only tell us about a very limited group of performers—those who are doing very well—and thus, there may even be stronger connections between ambition and performance than we see here (see Table 14 & Table 22).

Importantly, ambition explains a lot about performance when controlling for both grit and mindset, as well as for all of the other variables considered in this analysis. Why is ambition such a powerful predictor of performance? There are several possible explanation for this. First of all, it could be the case that the people in the study who most wanted to be successful in life (and not necessarily within BigLaw) were predisposed to think of themselves as successful in their current positions—perhaps more so than those who had less of a vested interest in being seen this way. In other words, it

is possible that lawyers who really want to be successful see themselves that way.

Because the survey asked lawyers to describe the message that they received at their last performance review, therefore relying on a self-report measure rather than verifiable data from a third party source, it could be the case that the ambitious lawyers tended to give themselves higher ratings in this category. Alternatively, it could be the case that the ambitious lawyers want to succeed and they are willing to do whatever it takes to make that happen, and so they do.

When it comes to ambition and quality of work, the connection can be explained in much the same way as the connection between grit and quality of work. The three most likely explanations seem to be that (1) ambitious individuals tend to be among the highest performers on the job, and therefore they tend to receive the best work, (2) the ambitious lawyers tend to embrace challenges and to seek out challenging, high profile assignments, and (3), ambitious lawyers are so committed to working hard and getting the most out of each assignment that they are more likely to believe that they are working on the most high profile and complex matters, even if this is not the case.

Finding #5: Desire to be partner is strongly related to hours and whether or not a female lawyer is on partnership track

Although I did not have an opinion on whether or not there would be strong connections between the desire to be partner and how much a lawyer works and whether or not she is on track to become a partner, I think the fact that there is a relationship is not at all surprising. As I mentioned earlier, I have worked in law firms for the better part of twelve years, and in each firm it has always been the case that the number of hours a

lawyer works rises significantly in the three years leading up to partnership. Many of the lawyers I spoke with described this phenomenon as if was a known fact among lawyers working in BigLaw. As one of the women described it:

Well most firms, they look at your last, the three years prior to your partnership eligibility and that's when they say, okay, what were your hours then?...They basically look at your past and they're like, oh, you did this, these hours before, so you'll do them again. (Interviewee #9, 2013, pg. 20).

Given the fact that lawyers tend to believe that you are judged, in part, by how many hours you work, lawyers who have a strong desire to make partner will no doubt try to put in as many hours as possible. Conversely, lawyers who have a lesser—or no—desire to make partner will likely work less, because there is far less incentive to overexert oneself if there is no tangible benefit of doing so.

Similarly, it makes good sense that women who want to be partners tend to be the ones who are on partnership track. This is good news for the profession as it seems to suggest that those who really want to be partners have a good chance of making that happen. It also speaks to the fact that success in BigLaw has a lot to do with personal choice. As one successful woman rightly noted: “It's not like there's this huge backlog of women who want to be promoted to partner. People make decisions to leave and...there are many cases where the system has failed but, but I do think that the personal choice aspect of career development and career trajectory is often overlooked. (Interviewee #4, 2013, pg. 22).

Importantly, however, there may very well be women who want to make partner when they arrive at their respective firms, but quickly decide otherwise when they see firsthand what the demands of the job entail. As one junior lawyer explained:

What is my incentive to see my kids once every three weeks and sleep three hours a night so I can call Dubai?...We had dinner at a home of the partners. And it was just this absolutely...gorgeous house and she had said to me, we were working on something. I've never billed this much in my life. And in my head I was like, you have a really nice house. Like, why don't you want to be there? [Laugh].
Interviewee #1, 2013, pg. 17.

The results of this study only consider the desires of those who have made the choice to pursue partnership in spite of the demands and personal sacrifices required to get there. It would be very interesting to understand more about what happens to this desire over time and how many people opt out because they cannot reconcile the BigLaw lifestyle with their vision for the future—in other words, those who reasonably question the value of a lovely home that you can't actually spend any time in.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS

The final section of this analysis will focus on the limitations and suitability of the data and provide some suggestions for future research.

Limitations of the Data

There is one very important limitation of this study that must be noted at the outset, and that is the fact that all of the data collected in the study, in both the quantitative and qualitative phases, was self-reported by participants. Some of the data collected in the qualitative portion of the study can be validated through other sources (for example, a lawyer's title and the number of years she's been practicing can generally be verified through her firm's website or through other public records). This subset of the data, which can be broadly described as demographic data, generally presents the least concern to researchers as the data can often be independently verified and even if it cannot be, the nature of the problems posed seldom offset the convenience of collecting it through self-reports (Gupta & Beehr, 1982; Podsakoff & Organ, 1986).

For other subsets of the data collected in both the qualitative and quantitative phases of the research (such as the message the lawyer received at her most recent performance review and the relative measure of her compensation), no such validation is possible. As such, triangulation—defined as the process of collecting information from a variety of sources and methods in order to ensure its accuracy—has not been possible here (Maxwell, 2005). As Podsakoff and Organ (1986) point out, when we ask people to

report on past behavior or personality traits, measures which cannot be verified through other sources, the greatest risk is common method variance. Common method variance is when measures of two or more variables are collected from the same respondents and an attempt is made to interpret correlations among them. Because the measures come from the same source, any defect will contaminate both measures (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986).

Unfortunately, no simple statistical procedure can sufficiently eliminate the problems associated with same-source variance (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). However, I have attempted to reduce some of the variance by implementing a procedural technique called separation of measurement. This technique requires that measures of grit, mindset, and the success variables are collected at different points in time and through different media (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). I have employed this method for the respondents who participated in the qualitative portion of this study by collecting data from them both over the phone and online—in a live, one-on-one conversation and privately without human interaction—at different points in time (each interviewee completed the survey several weeks before the phone interview). As Podsakoff and Organ (1986) suggest, this approach helps to mitigate some of the problems associated with common method variance, including transient mood state, common stimulus cues, and the desire to be consistent, known as the *consistency motif* (p. 534). While this is not a perfect solution to the problem, many researchers have noted that despite the problems inherent in the use of self-report measures, the utility of these types of measures makes them virtually indispensable (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986; Gupta & Beehr, 1982; Sims, 1979).

The other obvious limitation is the fact that law firms have an up or out culture so it is very difficult to capture the results of women lawyers who are not high performers. While there will invariably be a few poor performing lawyers in a firm at any given time, this tends to be the exception rather than the rule. You can see evidence of this in the performance results section, which shows a significant lack of variance. It would be more effective to include lawyers in the study who have recently left their firms in order to gain a more complete picture of the ways in which grit and mindset influence success in BigLaw. Unfortunately, for logistical reasons, that has not been possible here.

Implications & Future Research

Are grit and mindset among the secrets to success for female lawyers in BigLaw? At the very least, the results of this study suggest that grit in particular is related to various measures of success, most significantly the number of hours that a lawyer bills and her own perception of the quality of work that she receives. This finding does provide employers with one way to help reduce the gender gap at the leadership level. Given that grit is predictive of workplace success, employers can recruit the kinds of women who are likely to withstand the challenges that they may encounter along the path to leadership. Furthermore, law firms can nurture grit in their high-potential women and thus provide them with a useful tool that would be likely to assist at least some of them in achieving success at the highest levels. While further research is needed in order to identify truly effective ways of nurturing such traits, there is some reason to believe that employers can accomplish this by providing specific kinds of feedback to female

employees as part of the formal and informal review processes (Dweck, 2002; Dweck, 2006). Additionally, law firms can design and implement policies and procedures that reward female employees for demonstrations of these traits.

Recruiting for grit and implementing programs designed to develop and enhance this trait among female lawyers represents an appealing approach for law firms who are committed to finding a strategy to change the current landscape and the pronounced lack of female leaders. It has been argued elsewhere that having women in leadership positions is not only a cultural imperative but also directly impacts the bottom line (Cohen & Kornfeld, 2006). Thus, there are both social and financial reasons to motivate legal employers to reduce the gender gap, even in those organizations that are not already committed to achieving more equality at the highest levels of leadership. Giving some thought to the importance of grit in this context may well provide a viable first step towards advancing such a strategy.

APPENDIX A

EMAIL TO PARTICIPANT

Dear First Name,

I imagine you're quite busy, so I'll try to be brief. I am a graduate student at the University of Pennsylvania studying some of the traits that impact female success in large law firms. To that end, I would like to ask you to participate in a very short, voluntary survey designed to measure the impact of two non-cognitive traits—grit and mindset—that may influence the success of female lawyers currently practicing in today's top firms.

In order to ensure that the results are both non-biased and generalizable, I am reaching out to a random sample of female lawyers in the AmLaw 200, which is how I've identified you. If you'd be willing to spare a few minutes to contribute to this research effort I would be extremely grateful—the more responses we have, the more meaningful the results will be.

The survey will take no more than 10 minutes of your time. Results from this survey may be used to provide legal employers with a deeper understanding of what contributes to female success and may provide one way for firms to chip away at the gender gap at the leadership level.

The information you provide will be used for research only and will be kept strictly confidential. All survey responses will remain in my sole possession. Your individual results will not be used except in an aggregate analysis. Once your individual results are combined with other outcome metrics, all identifying information will be eliminated. Neither you, nor your firm, will ever be identified for any reason. All study results will reference aggregate data only.

Follow this link to the Survey:

LINK

Or, copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

WEB ADDRESS

If you have any questions about your voluntary participation in this process or this assessment, please do not hesitate to contact me, Milana Hogan, at 646.201.8098, or the University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board at 215.573.2540 (please reference study number #816985).

Many thanks in advance for your participation!

Best,
Milana

Milana Hogan, M.S.Ed.
University of Pennsylvania
Phone: 646.201.8098
Email: milanah@gse.upenn.edu

APPENDIX B

Grit & Mindset Survey

Instructions & Overview

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this voluntary survey. This survey is designed to measure the impact of two non-cognitive traits—grit and mindset—that may influence the success of female lawyers currently practicing in today’s firms.

The survey will take no more than 10 minutes of your time. Results from this survey may be used to provide legal employers with a deeper understanding of what contributes to female success and may provide one way for firms to chip away at the gender gap at the leadership level.

As you complete the survey, remember that there are no right, preferred, or wrong answers. Your candid responses on this survey will help us understand more about these important traits and how we might leverage them in the future.

The information you provide will be used for research only and will be kept strictly confidential. All survey responses will remain in my sole possession. Your individual results will not be used except in an aggregate analysis. Once your individual results are combined with other outcome metrics, all identifying information will be eliminated. Neither you, nor your firm, will ever be identified for any reason. All study results will reference aggregate data only.

If you have any questions about your voluntary participation in this process or this assessment, please do not hesitate to contact me, Milana Hogan, at 646.201.8098, or the University of Pennsylvania’s Institutional Review Board at 215.573.2540.

Many thanks in advance for your participation!

Best,
Milana

Milana Hogan, M.S.Ed.
Phone: 646.201.8098
Email: milanah@gse.upenn.edu

My Firm

Approximately how many lawyers work at your firm (all offices)?

- Less than 50 (1)
- 50-100 (2)
- 101-250 (3)
- 251-500 (4)
- 501-750 (5)
- 751-1000 (6)
- 1001+ (7)

How many offices does your firm have?

- 1 (1)
- 2-5 (2)
- 6-9 (3)
- 10-14 (4)
- 15+ (5)

Does your firm have offices outside of the United States?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Is your firm part of the AmLaw 200?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Not sure (3)

What is the starting salary for entry-level associates at your firm (excluding bonus)?

- Below market (\$160,000) (1)
- Market (\$160,000) (2)
- Above market (\$160,000) (3)

Mindset

Please read each statement carefully and then indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree

| | Strongly Agree (0) | Agree (1) | Mostly Agree (2) | Mostly Disagree (3) | Disagree (4) | Strongly Disagree (5) |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| You have a certain amount of intelligence, and you can't really do much to change it (1) | <input type="radio"/> |
| Your intelligence is something about you that you can't change very much (2) | <input type="radio"/> |
| No matter who you are, you can significantly change your intelligence level (3) | <input type="radio"/> |
| To be honest, you can't really change how intelligent you are (4) | <input type="radio"/> |
| You can always substantially change how intelligent you are (5) | <input type="radio"/> |
| You can learn new things, but | <input type="radio"/> |

| | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <p>you can't really change your basic intelligence (6)</p> <p>No matter how much intelligence you have, you can always change it quite a bit (7)</p> <p>You can change even your basic intelligence level considerably (8)</p> | <input type="radio"/> |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|

My Practice

Which of the following best describes your practice area?

- Bankruptcy (1)
- Banking & Finance (2)
- Children & Family (3)
- Corporate (4)
- Criminal (5)
- Education (6)
- Environmental (7)
- Health (8)
- Immigration (9)

- Intellectual Property (10)
- Insurance (11)
- International (12)
- Labor & Employment (13)
- Litigation (14)
- Mergers & Acquisitions (15)
- Real Estate (16)
- Securities (17)
- Tax (18)
- Torts (19)
- Trusts & Estates (20)
- Other (21) _____

Which of the following best describes your current position?

- Junior Associate (class of 2010, 2011, or 2012) (1)
- Midlevel Associate (class of 2007, 2008, or 2009) (2)
- Senior Associate (class of 2004, 2005, or 2006) (3)
- Staff Attorney (all class years) (4)
- Specialist or Special Counsel (Class of 2003+) (5)
- Non-Equity Partner (6)
- Equity Partner (7)
- Equity Partner and current or former member of the Management or Executive Committee (8)

If answer choice 5 or above is selected, then skip to “Which of the following best describes...”

My Work

To the best of your knowledge, are you on partnership track?

- Yes (1)
- No (0)

Which of the following best describes the message you received at your last performance review?

- Your performance was outstanding (5)
- Your performance was very good (4)
- Your performance was average (3)
- Your performance was below average (2)
- Your performance was poor (1)

On average, how many hours do you bill a year (excluding pro bono)?

- Less than 1200 (1)
- 1200-1500 (2)
- 1501-1800 (3)
- 1801-2100 (4)
- 2101-2400 (5)
- 2401-2700 (6)
- 2701-3000 (7)
- 3000+ (8)

On average, how many pro bono hours do you bill a year?

- None (1)
- Less than 25 (2)
- 25-50 (3)
- 51-100 (4)
- 101-250 (5)
- 250+ (6)

How often do you get to work on the most high profile, complex matters at the firm?

- Always (5)
- Most of the time (4)
- Sometimes (3)
- Rarely (2)
- Never (1)

Which of the following best describes your long-term career plans?

- I plan to stay at my firm for my entire career (1)
- I plan to stay at my firm for at least the next 3-5 years (2)
- I plan to stay at my firm for the next 1-2 years (3)
- I am currently looking for a new job in BigLaw (4)

- I am currently looking for a new job outside of BigLaw, but I still plan to practice law (5)
- I am currently looking for a new job outside of BigLaw and I do not plan to continue practicing law (6)

Skip to “Please read each statement carefully”

My Work

Which of the following best describes the message you received at your last performance review? If you no longer receive performance reviews, which of the following best describes the most recent message you received from firm management?

- Your performance was outstanding (5)
- Your performance was very good (4)
- Your performance was average (3)
- Your performance was below average (2)
- Your performance was poor (1)

On average, how many hours do you bill a year (excluding pro bono)?

- Less than 1200 (1)
- 1200-1500 (2)
- 1501-1800 (3)
- 1801-2100 (4)
- 2101-2400 (5)
- 2401-2700 (6)
- 2701-3000 (7)
- 3000+ (8)

On average, how many pro bono hours do you bill a year?

- None (1)
- Less than 25 (2)
- 25-50 (3)
- 51-100 (4)
- 101-250 (5)
- 250+ (6)

How often do you get to work on the most high profile, complex matters at the firm?

- Always (5)
- Most of the time (4)
- Sometimes (3)
- Rarely (2)
- Never (1)

Relative to your peers (either partners or other senior lawyers who have the same title as you and who have been with the firm for roughly the same amount of time) your financial compensation is:

- Above average (3)
- Average (2)
- Below average (1)
- Not sure (.)

Which of the following best describes your long-term career plans?

- I plan to stay at my firm for my entire career (1)
- I plan to stay at my firm for at least the next 3-5 years (2)
- I plan to stay at my firm for the next 1-2 years (3)
- I am currently looking for a new job in BigLaw (4)
- I am currently looking for a new job outside of BigLaw, but I still plan to practice law (5)
- I am currently looking for a new job outside of BigLaw and I do not plan to continue practicing law (6)

Mindset

Please read each statement carefully and then indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree.

| | Strongly Agree (0) | Agree (1) | Mostly Agree (2) | Mostly Disagree (3) | Disagree (4) | Strongly Disagree (5) |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| You have a certain amount of talent, and you can't really do much to change it (1) | <input type="radio"/> |
| Your talent in an area is something about you that you can't change very much (2) | <input type="radio"/> |
| No matter who you are, you can significantly change your level of talent (3) | <input type="radio"/> |
| To be honest, you can't really change how much talent you have (4) | <input type="radio"/> |
| You can always substantially change how much talent you have (5) | <input type="radio"/> |
| You can learn new things, but | <input type="radio"/> |

| | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <p>you can't really change your basic level of talent (6)</p> <p>No matter how much talent you have, you can always change it quite a bit (7)</p> <p>You can change even your basic level of talent considerably (8)</p> | <input type="radio"/> |
| | <input type="radio"/> |

Academic Background

What is the longest amount of time that you have devoted to the pursuit of a single objective (i.e. learning to play an instrument, learning a new language, playing a team sport, etc.)?

- 1-2 years (1)
- 3-4 years (2)
- 5-7 years (3)
- 8-10 years (4)
- 10+ years (5)

What year were you born?_____

What year did you graduate from law school?_____

What tier was your law school in?

- Top tier (T1-T14) (1)
- Second tier (T15-T100) (2)
- Third tier (T101-T145) (3)
- Fourth tier (T146+) (4)
- Not sure (5)

What was your law school GPA (or GPA equivalent)?

- 4.0+ (1)
- 3.7-3.9 (2)
- 3.4-3.6 (3)
- 3.0-3.3 (4)
- 2.7-2.9 (5)
- 2.4-2.6 (6)
- 2.0-2.3 (7)
- Below 2.0 (8)

What tier was your undergraduate institution in?

- Top tier (1-50) (1)
- Second tier (51-100) (2)
- Third tier (101-150) (3)
- Fourth tier (151-200+) (4)
- Not sure (5)

What was your undergraduate GPA (or GPA equivalent)?

- 4.0+ (1)
- 3.7-3.9 (2)
- 3.4-3.6 (3)
- 3.0-3.3 (4)
- 2.7-2.9 (5)
- 2.4-2.6 (6)
- 2.0-2.3 (7)
- Below 2.0 (8)

What was your high school GPA (or GPA equivalent)?

- 4.0+ (1)
- 3.7-3.9 (2)
- 3.4-3.6 (3)
- 3.0-3.3 (4)
- 2.7-2.9 (5)
- 2.4-2.6 (6)
- 2.0-2.3 (7)
- Below 2.0 (8)
- Not sure (9)

Grit

Please respond to the following items. Be honest - there are no right or wrong answers!

| | Very much like me (1) | Mostly like me (2) | Somewhat like me (3) | Not much like me (4) | Not like me at all (5) |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| New ideas and projects sometimes distract me from previous ones (1) | <input type="radio"/> |
| My interests change from year to year (2) | <input type="radio"/> |
| I have been obsessed with a certain idea or project for a short time but later lost interest (3) | <input type="radio"/> |
| I often set a goal but later choose to pursue a different one (4) | <input type="radio"/> |
| I have difficulty maintaining focus on projects that take more than a few months to complete (5) | <input type="radio"/> |
| I become interested in new pursuits every few months (6) | <input type="radio"/> |

My Employment History

How long have you worked at your firm?

- Less than 1 year (1)
- 1-2 years (2)
- 3-4 years (3)
- 5-6 years (4)
- 7-8 years (5)
- 9-10 years (6)
- 11-15 years (7)
- 16-20 years (8)
- 21+ years (9)

How many firms did you apply to while in law school?

- 1-4 (1)
- 5-9 (2)
- 10+ (3)

At roughly what percentage of the firms you interviewed with did you receive an offer?

- 100% (1)
- 85-99% (2)
- 70-84% (3)
- 55-69% (4)
- 40-54% (5)
- Less than 40% (6)

Not counting your current position, how many full time lawyer positions have you held?

- 0 (1)
- 1 (2)
- 2 (3)
- 3 (4)
- 4 (5)
- 5+ (6)

Not counting your current position, how many full time, post-undergraduate jobs have you held?

- 0 (1)
- 1 (2)
- 2 (3)
- 3 (4)
- 4 (5)
- 5+ (6)

Grit

Please respond to the following items. Be honest - there are no right or wrong answers!

| | Very much like me (5) | Mostly like me (4) | Somewhat like me (3) | Not much like me (2) | Not like me at all (1) |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| I have overcome setbacks to conquer an important challenge (1) | <input type="radio"/> |
| Setbacks don't discourage me (2) | <input type="radio"/> |
| I am a hard worker (3) | <input type="radio"/> |
| I finish whatever I begin (4) | <input type="radio"/> |
| I have achieved a goal that took years of work (5) | <input type="radio"/> |
| I am diligent (6) | <input type="radio"/> |

My Family

Are you married or in a domestic partnership?

- Yes (1)
- No (0)

Do you have children?

- Yes (1)
- No (0)

If you have children, did you have them while you were working as a lawyer?

- Yes (1)
- No (0)
- Not applicable (.)

What is the highest level of education your mother completed?

- Less than high school (1)
- High school/GED (2)
- Some college (3)
- 2 year college degree (4)
- 4 year college degree (5)
- Master's degree (6)
- Doctoral degree (7)
- Professional degree (JD/MD) (8)

My Goals

How would you describe your desire to become a partner?

- It was (or is) my ultimate professional goal (5)
- It was (or is) something I want very much (4)
- It was (or is) something I want to achieve, but other professional goals are more important to me (3)
- It was (or is) not that important to me (2)
- It was (or is) something I was never interested in (1)

How much does it matter to you to have a job where there is an opportunity for promotion and advancement?

- It matters very much (3)
- It matters somewhat (2)
- It doesn't matter (1)

How much does it matter to you to have a job that you find challenging?

- It matters very much (3)
- It matters somewhat (2)
- It doesn't matter (1)

Please respond to the following 5 items. Be honest – there are no right or wrong answers!

| | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| I aim to be the best in the world at what I do (1) | <input type="radio"/> |
| Achieving something of lasting importance is the highest goal in life (2) | <input type="radio"/> |
| I think achievement is overrated (3) | <input type="radio"/> |
| I am driven to succeed (4) | <input type="radio"/> |
| I am ambitious (5) | <input type="radio"/> |

My Contact Information (Optional)

Would you be willing to have an extended conversation (45-60 minutes in length) over the phone to discuss your experiences in greater detail?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If you said yes to the question above, please provide your name and contact information.

APPENDIX C

“Hi NAME,

Many thanks for agreeing to participate in this study. This interview will last approximately 45 minutes to one hour, and I promise to stay within those time constraints.

As I mentioned to you over email, I am a doctoral student at the University of Pennsylvania, and I am studying the non-cognitive traits that impact female success in large law firms. My research includes two phases, the first is the online survey you took a few weeks ago, and the second is a series of interviews with women lawyers currently working in BigLaw.

The goal of my research is to measure the impact (or lack thereof) of two non-cognitive traits—grit and mindset—on the success of female lawyers.

The information you provide will be used for research purposes only and will be kept strictly confidential. Your individual results will not be shared with anyone and will only be used in an the aggregate analysis.

Do you have any questions before we start?”

Interview Questions

1. What is your current title? How many years have you been practicing law?
2. Was there a specific moment in your life when you realized that you wanted to be a lawyer? If so, can you describe that moment (place, time of day, etc.)? If not, what led you to this career choice?
3. Have you ever pursued a career outside of the law?
4. Please describe your career as a lawyer thus far. How would you describe your journey to where you are now? Has it been what you expected it would be?
5. What was the messiest, most complex and challenging matter you’ve worked on as a lawyer? What (specifically) was complex about it? What (specific) challenges did it confront you with? How did you overcome the challenges it presented? Did you learn anything in particular from that experience that proved helpful later on?
6. Has your passion for the practice of law changed over time? If you were to graph it out, what would it look like?
7. What do you like best about your work? Are these the same things you liked best when you were just starting out?

8. What do you think are the two or three most important factors that have contributed to your success?
9. I am going to ask a series of shorter questions, you can answer these with a simple yes or no, and then you can qualify afterwards if you'd like to.
 - a. Do you consider yourself to be a feminist?
 - b. In your experience, has there been a connection between how hard you work and the amount of success you've been able to achieve?
 - c. In general, did you receive enough constructive feedback from senior lawyers when you were an associate?
 - d. Do you think the associates who meet the firm's hiring standards have the intellectual capacity to be successful lawyers? In other words, is it a level playing field once new associates arrive at the firm?
10. Please describe an average work day (i.e. what time do you arrive in the office, when do you take lunch, when do you leave, etc.).
11. In your opinion, are some people more naturally gifted at the practice of law than others? If yes, please describe someone else who displays such gifts (no names necessary); if not, please describe your own experience of that process.
12. Please describe your long-term career plans.
13. What is the longest amount of time you have devoted to a particular matter or the pursuit of a specific, long-term objective? Please describe the matter or objective and how you pursued it.
14. Do women and men have an equal chance at success? If not, why not?
15. What should I, as the researcher, know about women and success in BigLaw?

REFERENCES

- Barsade, S., & Gibson, D. (2007). Why does affect matter in organizations? *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 36-59.
- Bashi, S. & Iskander, M. (2006). Why legal education is failing women. *Yale Journal of Law and Feminism*, 18, 389-406.
- Becker, G. (1964). *Human capital*. New York, NY: National Bureau of Economic Research.
- Berg, H., & Ferber, M. (1983). Men and women graduate students: Who succeeds and why? *The Journal of Higher Education*, 54(6), 629-648.
- Biernat, C., Tocci, M., & Williams, J. (2012). The language of performance evaluations: Gender-based shifts in content and consistency of judgment. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 3 no. 2, 186-192.
- Blau, F., & Ferber, M. (1992). *The economics of women, men and work*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Blau, P. (1977). *Inequality and heterogeneity*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- Bowers, A. (2000). Women at the university of texas school of law: A call for action *Texas Journal of Women and Law*, 117.
- Burke, R., & McKeen, C. (1996). Do women at the top make a difference? Gender proportions and the experiences of managerial and professional women. *Human Relations*, 49, 1093-104.
- Catalyst Statistical Overview of Women in the Workplace (2010). Retrieved from <http://www.catalyst.org/publication/219/statistical-overview-of-women-in-the-workplace>.
- Chanow, L., & Rikleen, L. (2012). *Power in law: Lessons from the 2011 women's power summit on law and leadership*. White paper published by The Center for Women in Law, University of Texas School of Law.
- Cohen, R., & Kornfeld, L. (2006). Women leaders and the bottom line. *Bloomberg Corporate Law Journal*, 1, 55-61.

- Cook, C, Heath, F., & Thompson, R. (2000). A meta-analysis of response rates in web- or internet-based surveys. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 60*, 821-836.
- Council of American Survey Research Organizations Code of Standards and Ethics for Survey Research (2006). Retrieved from www.casro.org/codeofstandards.cfm
- Cox, C. (1926). *Genetic studies of genius: Vol. 2. The early mental traits of three hundred geniuses*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Cranston, S., & Keller, S. (2013). Increasing the ‘meaning quotient’ of work. *McKinsey Quarterly*. Retrieved from https://www.mckinseyquarterly.com/Organization/Change_Management/Increasing_the_meaning_quotient_of_work_3055
- Creswell, J.W. (2008). *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*, 3rd ed., Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Denney, R. (2007). What being a non-equity partner means: From lifestyle to leadership choices. *Law Practice, 33*, 12-13.
- Doskoch, P. (2005). The winning edge. *Psychology Today*. Retrieved from <http://www.psychologytoday.com/print/23153?page=2>
- Dreher, G. (2003). Breaking the glass ceiling: The effects of sex ratios and work-life programs on female leadership at the top. *Human Relations, 56*(5), 541-562.
- Duckworth, A. & Eskreis-Winkler, L. (2013). True grit. *Observer, 26*(4). Retrieved from <http://www.psychologicalscience.org/index.php/publications/observer/2013/april-13>
- Duckworth, A., Kirby, T., Gollwitzer, A. & Oettingen, G. (2012). Teaching self-regulation improves academic performance. Manuscript submitted for publication.
- Duckworth, A. & Allred, K. (in press). Temperament in the classroom. In R.L. Shiner & M. Zentner (Eds.), *Handbook of temperament*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Duckworth, A., & Seligman, M. (2006). Self-discipline gives girls the edge: Gender in self-discipline, grades, and achievement test scores. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 98*(1), 198-208.
- Duckworth, A., Peterson, C., Matthews, M., & Kelly, D. (2007). Grit: Perseverance and passion for long-term goals. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 92*(6), 1087-1101.

- Duckworth, A. L., Quinn, P. D., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2009). Positive predictors of teacher effectiveness. *Journal of Positive Psychology, 19*, 540–547.
- Duckworth, A., & Quinn, P. (2009). Development and validation of the short grit scale (Grit-S). *Journal of Personality Assessment, 91*, 166-174.
- Duckworth, A., Kirby, T., Tsukayama, E., Bernstein, H., & Ericsson, K. (in press). Deliberate practice spells success: Why grittier competitors triumph at the national spelling bee. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*.
- Dweck, C. (2002). Messages that motivate: How praise molds students' beliefs, motivation, and performance (in surprising ways). In J. Aronson (Ed.), *Improving academic achievement: Impact of psychological factors on education* (37-60). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- Dweck, C. (2006). *Mindset: The new psychology of success*. New York, NY: Random House.
- Dweck, C., & Sorich, L. (1999). Mastery-oriented thinking. In C.R. Snyder (Ed.), *Coping: The psychology of what works*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Ericsson, K., & Charness, N. (1994). Expert performance: Its structure and acquisition. *American Psychologist, 49*(8), 725-747.
- Ericsson, K. (2004). Deliberate practice and the acquisition and maintenance of expert performance in medicine and related domains. *Academic Medicine 79*(10), S70-S81.
- Etulain, R., & Riley, G. (1997). *By grit & grace: Eleven women who shaped the American west*. Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing.
- Farmer, H. (1985). Model of career achievement motivation for women and men. *Journal of Counselling Psychology 32*(3), 363-390.
- Forbes, M. (2010). What do highly successful women and 7-year olds have in common? Retrieved from blogs.forbes.com/moirafortbes/2010/10/12/what-do-highly-successful-women-and-7-year-olds-gave-in-common-2/
- Fricke, R. (2008). Sampling methods for Web and Email Surveys. In N. Fielding, R. M. Lee & G. Blank (Eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Online Research Methods* (Vol. 1). Los Angeles: Sage. 195-217.

- Groves, Robert M. (1989). *Survey errors and survey costs*. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.
- Guinier, L. (1994). Becoming gentlemen: Women's experiences at one ivy league law school, *University of Pennsylvania Law Review* 143 (1), 3.
- Guinier, L. (1997). *Becoming gentlemen: Women, law school, and institutional change*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Gupta, N., & Beehr, T.A. (1982). A test of the correspondence between self-reports and data sources about work organizations. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 20, 1-13.
- Hand, E., & Savas, T. (2010). *Women of true grit*. Florence, AL: Canterbury House Publishing, Ltd.
- Heckman, J., & Rubinstein, Y. (2001). The importance of non-cognitive skills: Lessons from the GED testing program. *The American Economic Review*, 91(2), 145-149.
- Henderson, W., & Zhaorsky, R. (2012). The pedigree problem: Are law school ties choking the profession? *American Bar Association Journal*, July 1.
- Henning, M., & Jardim, A. (1977). *The managerial woman*. Garden City, NY: Anchor.
- Hornett, A., & Finn, R. (2006). Lock in on coordinates: Mapping the glass ceiling with career women's reflections on power. *Advancing Women in Leadership*, 20, 1-17.
- Howe, M. (1999). Prodigies and creativity. In R. Sternberg (Ed.), *Handbook of creativity*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Hyde, K. (2000). Recognizing deductive processes in qualitative research. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, 3(2), 82-89.
- Ibarra, H., Carter, N., & Silva, C. (2010). Why men still get more promotions than women. *Harvard Business Review*, 80-92.
- Igbaria, M., & Shayo, C. (1997). The impact of race and gender differences on job performance evaluations and career success. *Equal Opportunities International*, 16(8), 12-23.
- Iijima, A. (1998). Lessons learned: Legal education and law student dysfunction. *Journal of Legal Education*, 48, 524.

- Janssen, P., Schaufeli W., & Houkes, I. (1999). Work-related and individual determinants of the three burnout dimensions. *Work & Stress* 13(1), 74-86.
- Jones, L. (2012). Rich lawyers are getting richer faster. Retrieved from http://newsandinsight.thomsonreuters.com/Legal/News/2012/04__April/Rich_lawyers_are_getting_richer_faster/
- Johnson, P., & Indvik, J. (1999). Organizational benefits of having emotionally intelligent managers and employees. *Journal of Workplace Learning*, 11(3), 84-88.
- Johnson, R.B., & Onwuegbuzie (2004). Mixed methods research: A research paradigm whose time has come. *Educational Researcher* 33(7), 14-26.
- Judge, T., Higgins, C., Thoresen, C., & Barrick, M. (1999). The big five personality traits, general mental ability, and career success across the life span. *Personnel Psychology*, 52, 621-652.
- Keller, E. (2001). The anomaly of a woman in physics. In M. Wyer, M. Barbercheck, D. Geisman, H. O. Ozturk, & M. Wayne (Eds.), *Women, science, and technology: A reader in feminist science studies*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Kyllonen, P. (2005). The case for non-cognitive assessments. *R&D Connections*, September, 1-7.
- Leslie, J. (2009). The leadership gap. *Center for Creative Leadership*, 1-14.
- Levinson, D., Darrow, C., Klein, E., Levinson, M., & McKee, B. (1978). *The seasons in a man's life*. New York, NY: Knopf.
- Loscocco, K., & Robinson, J. (1991). Barriers to women's small-business success in the United States. *Gender & Society* 5(4), 511-532.
- Markham, W. (1987). Sex, relocation, and occupational advancement. In A.H. Stromberg, L. Larwood & B.A. Gutek (Eds), *Women and work: An annual review* (207-31). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Marshall, M.N. (1996). Sampling for qualitative research. *Family Practice* 13, 522-525.
- Maslach, C. (2005). *Stress and quality of working life: Current perspectives in occupational health*. Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing.

- Maxwell, J.A. (2005). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Melamed, T. (1995). Barriers to women's career success: Human capital, career choices, structural determinants, or simply sex discrimination. *Applied Psychology* 44(4), 283-373.
- National Association of Women Lawyers (NAWL) Report of the Seventh Annual National Survey on Retention and Promotion of Women in Law Firms (2012). Retrieved from <http://nawl.timberlakepublishing.com/files/NAWL%202012%20Survey%20Report%20final.pdf>
- Neufeld, A. (2005). Costs of an outdated pedagogy? Study on gender at harvard law school. *American University Journal of Gender, Social Policy & Law*, 13, 511-592.
- Neumann, R. (2000). Women in legal education: What the statistics show. *Journal of Legal Education*, 50, 313-357.
- Newton, J. (1987). *Uncommon friends: Life with Thomas Edison, Henry Ford, Harvey Firestone, Alexis Carrel & Charles Lindbergh*. New York, NY: Harcourt, Inc.
- Orstein, S., & Isabella, L. (1990). Age vs. stage models of career attitudes of women: A partial replication and extension. *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 36, 1-19.
- Patton, M.Q. (1991). *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods*, 2nd ed., Sage Publications, Newbury Park, CA.
- Pfeffer, J. (2010). Power play. *Harvard Business Review* July/August, 84-90.
- Podsakoff, P.M., & Organ, D.W. (1986). Self-reports in organizational research: Problems and prospects. *Journal of Management* 12(4), 531-544.
- Purvis, D. (2012). Female law students, gendered self-evaluation and the promise of positive psychology. *Michigan State Law Review* (in press).
- Ragins, B. (1989). Barriers to mentoring: The female manager's dilemma. *Human Relations* 42(1), 11-22.
- Richard, L. (2013). The lawyer personality: why lawyers are skeptical. Retrieved from <http://www.lawyerbrainblog.com/2013/02/the-lawyer-personality-why-lawyers-are-skeptical/>

- Robertson-Kraft, C. & Duckworth, A.L. (2012). True grit: Trait-level perseverance and passion for long-term goals predicts effectiveness and retention among novice teachers. Manuscript submitted for publication.
- Salovey, P., & Mayer, J. (1990). Emotional intelligence. *Imagination, Cognition and Personality*, 9, 185-211.
- Sandberg, S. (2010). Why we have too few women leaders. Retrieved from www.ted.com/sheryl_sandberg_why_we_have_too_few_women_leaders.html
- Sedlacek, W. (in press). Noncognitive measures for higher education admissions. In B. McGaw, E. Baker, & P. L. Peterson (Eds.), *International encyclopedia of education, third edition*. Amsterdam, The Netherlands: Elsevier.
- Simonton, D. (1999). *Origins of genius: Darwinian perspectives on creativity*. New York, NY: Oxford.
- Simpson, R., & Altman, Y. (2000). The time bounded glass ceiling and young women managers: Career progress and career success—evidence from the U.K. *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 24, 190-198.
- Super, D. (1957). *The psychology of careers*. New York, NY: Harper.
- Top Law Firms (2012). Retrieved from <http://www.top-law-schools.com/introduction-to-biglaw.html>
- Tsukayama, E., Duckworth, A. & Kim, B. (2011). Resisting everything except temptation: Evidence and an explanation for domain-specific impulsivity. *European Journal of Personality*. Advance online publication. doi: 10.1002/per.841
- White, B. (1995). The career development of successful women. *Women in Management Review* 10(3), 4-15.
- Wightman, L. (1996). LSAC research report series: Women in legal education: A comparison of the law school performance and law school experiences of women and men. Retrieved from <http://www.lsac.org/lisacresources/Research/RR/pdf/Wightman-LSAC-96.pdf>