

**From:** Shari-IWIRC [<mailto:sbedker@iwirc.com>]

**Sent:** Wednesday, August 05, 2015 3:40 PM

**To:** Shari-IWIRC

**Subject:** IWIRC Leadership Summit Takeaways and Report from Carren Shulman

**TO:** IWIRC 2015 Leadership Summit Attendees

**FROM:** Shari Bedker

**DATE:** August 5, 2015

Please find below an excellent write up on the Summit provided by Carren Shulman. Carren had mentioned she would do this for attendees. We do hope that you will find it useful for your professional development as well as help you report to your firm on the proceedings so they see how important it is to support your participation in IWIRC.

Thank you.

## IWIRC Leadership Summit

### Takeaways:

Meeting other women leaders from around the U.S. and the globe and learning how they lead and what makes them tick

Meeting and re-connecting with women who will make introductions to others in the industry; clients, potential clients, other industry leaders

Women who will recommend you for boards, membership, and engagements

Learning and honing skills that allow us to grow within our companies and firms and our networks

List making - what we will do to improve our networks, amp up our marketing, and develop work and our own brand Identifying areas that are at the forefront now in our industry

### Summit Recap:

I've wanted to host the IWIRC Leadership Summit since attending my first Summit in Atlanta in 2012 as a representative of the NY Chapter. I had never seen so many women professionals in one place. We spent 2 days getting to know every single woman in the room from throughout the U.S., Canada, Europe, China and Japan. We described our practices to each other and strived right there at that meeting and beyond to help each other personally and professionally. I was so impressed, I prepared a write up that was circulated to the NY chapter and to Shari for publication on our website to raise awareness about this fabulous organization. I learned the following year at the Summit, in Cleveland, and the year after at the Summit in San Francisco, that this is the hallmark of every single IWIRC leadership summit and has been since its inception in 2008, before women's leadership discussions were popular. In 24 years of practice, I have never seen an organization that places this much focus and emphasis on developing women professionals as leaders within their organizations and as business developers. I'm proud to say the feedback from the NY Summit confirms that we achieved the goals of the organization to help women grow as leaders and as business developers.

Since we all must report back to our companies and firms about our work at the Summit, I offered to provide my report to my firm on the benefits derived from attending so that others can use that to create their own personal report, which I have done below this section. Just to recap the experience and trigger your own memorable experiences ...

This year, at least 17 fellow women leaders were brand new to the Summit. On Wednesday, we heard about the growth of the IWIRC organization, with new members and the addition of our new Puerto Rico chapter, opportunities to become more involved, the upcoming Fall conference, awards and sponsorship opportunities, and we heard from women Chapter leaders about their events and how they attract new members and attendees. We were encouraged to participate at the IWIRC International Board level by assisting with Membership, Sponsorship, Events and conference planning and given the opportunity to spend more time with the leaders in those positions to understand what they do and what benefits they have derived from those experiences. To develop business and build your brand we need to become more involved with an organization we love and respect and make the most of it by meeting people in our own and other markets and helping others; helping others pays you back in spades.

On Wednesday night, at our KCC, IWIRC and IWIRC NY sponsored dinner, we had 80 attendees over traditional Italian food at Tony's DiNapoli in Times Square where we talked for hours with old and new members about their current work, their markets and their experiences with and support from leadership at their firms. Again, the only way to connect with people in other markets is to talk with them and tell them what you do and listen to what they do.

At our Thursday morning meeting, we engaged in a thoughtful discussion of the book *Breaking Your Own Rules*, the assigned reading for the Summit, after watching the TED talk by the author on the book's subject, developing leadership skills, ... and sometimes grabbing the bull by the horns in volunteering for the role or putting ourselves out there even before we have 99% of the knowledge we think we need for the job. Hearing from women of different vintages and levels of experience, and from different backgrounds and businesses was eye-opening and thought provoking.

We also heard from our guest speaker, thanks to EPIQ, about the importance of working on our own "brands". Firms and companies brand themselves, and we need to do that too. Find your niche, speak on topics you know or can research relatively quickly and thoughtfully, and get in front of people who can recommend you for speaking parts and membership in important groups or organizations.

On Thursday, we were joined by Summit attendees and others from the NY Chapter at a dinner for nearly 100 industry people at Ed's Chowder House, across from Lincoln Center. Again, it gave us the chance to sit and talk with people we don't otherwise spend time with about our expertise and our current work, how to connect with each other on new work and how to connect with others with which we have contacts.

On our Summit work break, when we visited the 9-11 Memorial with more women we had not previously spent quality time with. While every moment of our lives isn't about work and

business, we only get work and introductions from people who get to know us and like us, and it's much easier and more fun to spend time with people we like at events like this, which also helps us achieve our business goals.

Report to My Firm [No pride in authorship, and add the client names for the benefit of your firm]:

*On Wednesday and Thursday, July 15 and 16, I attended the free annual Summit held by the International Women's Insolvency & Restructuring Confederation (IWIRC), an organization of more than 1000 women and men from around the US and the world, the sole purpose of which is to promote women in the fields of restructuring, insolvency and bankruptcy. (There is no charge to attend the Summit, unlike most other industry events/meetings, just the cost of travel and lodging, the latter of which is often negotiated at a very low rate). I was one of a limited group invited to attend because of my role as a Director on the IWIRC International Board and as co-chair of the NY Chapter. During the Summit, I reconnected with women leaders I had met at other IWIRC events from New Orleans, Ohio, and Vancouver. I met new women leaders from the Cayman Islands, Toronto, and China. And I spent more quality time with old friends and leaders in their industry and locale from Germany, California, Delaware, Boston and Alabama, catching up on our current work, what is working and what isn't in terms of business development and increasing our own individual exposure in the restructuring/bankruptcy world.*

*At the dinners on Wednesday and Thursday night I was able to catch up with 80-100 women on our collective experiences, or just to introduce myself with a goal to following up later. Just by way of example, at our Thursday night dinner I connected a financial advisor friend whom I learned was pitching a creditors committee in a pending bankruptcy case with a Summit attendee who is on the committee (since the pitch was by telephone the two had not met). I was able to effusively support my financial advisor friend for the role, who was very appreciative, and my financial advisor friend and I discussed a possible article we intend to write in multiple languages for publication here and abroad. And, since I too am involved in that bankruptcy case, I intend to chat more with my friend on the committee about the international dispute. I can give many great examples of current and past connections I've made at the Summits and at other IWIRC events that have led to great work, access to clients and industries and memberships in industry organizations that I otherwise would not have had if I was not involved in the organization.*

*At our Thursday morning meeting, we engaged in a thoughtful discussion of the book *Breaking Your Own Rules*, the assigned reading for the Summit, after watching the TED talk by the author on the book's subject, developing leadership skills. Hearing from women of different vintages and levels of experience, and from different backgrounds and businesses was eye-opening and thought provoking and allowed me to prepare my own To-Do list to get out in front of clients and others. And we had a speaker on Thursday who spoke to us about building your own brand. Firms and companies have them and it's a huge benefit to a company to have their attorneys develop a brand of their own.*

*My involvement with IWIRC and attendance at the Summit has resulted in great work and connections for me. Two IWIRC members and longtime friends I met through the IWIRC Summit and events recommended me for membership in III last year, a prestigious organization in the bankruptcy world that takes few members each year. This year, another friend I met through the IWIRC Summits invited me to speak at an ABI conference that was attended by few NY attorneys and had only a handful of women speakers. It was a great opportunity to meet attorneys and judges from other markets who have a similar practice, and to establish my authority on a topic I've followed for over a decade. I now have another round of marketing materials to post on Linked In and send to clients. One IWIRC member I met at a prior IWIRC Summit introduced me to someone from her company who just this year became a great client and more work is beginning to flow in from them. And another IWIRC friend invited me to an industry party last Fall to which I had never been invited, exposing me to people in my industry I hadn't otherwise run into. These are all measurable pluses of IWIRC from the last 12 months and directly helps me develop business and brand myself, which of course benefits the Firm.*

*Following the conference, here's what I plan to do .... (add your version of "Follow Up" below)*

*Summit Follow Up:*

*Go back through the conference attendee list and look up the women I spoke with, or didn't have time to meet, and connect with them.*

*Email them, send them a Linked-In connection, or call and ask to chat about something they're working on or that I'm working on that might be an opportunity for me or them.*

*Ask about writing a joint article for publication or a blog site - even the IWIRC site - on a topic we're both familiar with [box checked!].*

*Plan a Regional Event; as we heard at the Summit, the regional event can be remote, through the tv or just a bunch of us getting together for lunch.*

*Think about the quote I stood in front of that I thought defined me best as a leader, and use that thinking back at the office.*

*Update my LinkedIn and related profiles at least monthly*

*Calendar now my planned follow up for each month.*

I hope you will all strive to hold the Leadership Summit in your market and uphold the tradition of bringing women together for such an amazing experience of professional and personal growth and development. The cost need not be great. Through the generous donations of our NY Chapter, the yearly donations from KCC and EPIQ, donations of funds, food and space by Morrison & Foerster, support financially and organizationally from IWIRC International (Shari, Beth, Nancy, Jen McLemore), and of course the significant time, effort and expertise put into this by our NY Board, we made this happen, and you can make this happen in your network too. Bringing us together is the key to our development as leaders and lawyers.

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