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Organizing a smaller firm

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Example: Noréns

1957:	Founded
1975 – 2010:	Slow growth. Family business → partnership
2010 – 2020:	Generational shift

Today:

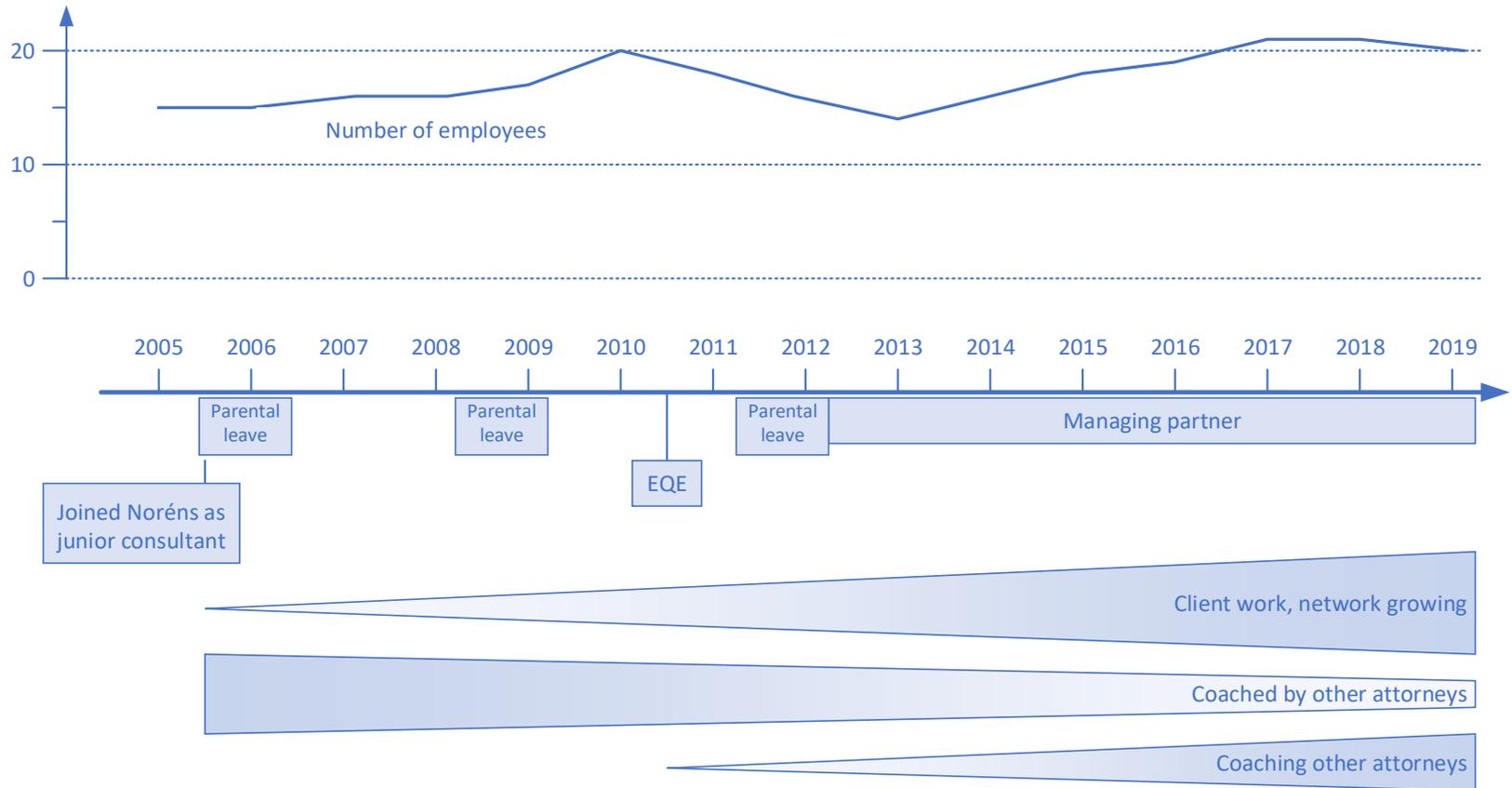
- 7 "younger" consultants
- 3 "more senior" consultants
- 8 experienced paralegals
- One single office in Stockholm

Client base:

- SME → Focus on both strategy and handicraft
- Predominantly domestic → Network salesmanship

Example: Noréns

My own perspective as an employee



Example: Noréns

Some challenges

Hiring and keeping talent:

Do we hire junior consultants (risky and costly!) or experienced consultants (what's in it for them?)
Who to make partner?

Internal time management:

Do we spend time networking or drafting?
Do we spend time learning from each other or drafting?
Who does strategy/financing/marketing/policies/premises/recruitment/coffee, etc.? HR?

External time management:

Family + renovation + career – all at once!
Travelling – fringe benefit or hassle?

Processes:

Workload balancing across consultants and work absorption
Smooth yet fail-proof internal processes

Example: Noréns

Some basic thoughts

Society in general (and IP, too) is moving towards increasingly network-based and specialized work structures. Attorney brand is often more important than firm brand.

Experienced attorneys are often driven more by fun than by money.

Modern technology makes work from anywhere possible.

It is difficult and painful to assign long-standing clients between consultants.

Running a company still requires a lot of administration.

Long-term focus is important in the long run.

Example: Noréns

How we try to do things (or would want to do things)

Focus on results, not on time and place. And fun.

No set salary policy or career paths, flexible salaries are encouraged.

Create long-term commitment via partnership program (tied to clearly defined responsibility).

Encourage and fund individual initiative – business development, social, educational.

Encourage external collaborations.

Compete by doing a good job rather than building walls.

Simple processes/guidelines, minimum internal administration. Outsource peripheral functions.

Strong and knowledgeable paralegal support staff with adequate responsibility.

Flat organization (or...?). At least strive for prestigeless climate.

Encourage senior attorney participation (as partners?).

Management tasks delegated among partners.

Active partnership / board.