



Mosaic Executive Search



Opportunity Profile

# Clark Wilson LLP

## **Chief Operating Officer Search**



## About Clark Wilson

Clark Wilson LLP is a thriving regional law firm based in Vancouver, BC that provides an excellent platform for business-minded professionals. Consistently recognized by Canadian Lawyer as one of Western Canada's top 10 regional firms, most recently certified as a "Great Place to Work" and "Canada's Best Workplaces for Women" by Great Place to Work® Institute Canada, the Clark Wilson team is comprised of over 100 accomplished lawyers and 150 dedicated support staff, including individuals from a diverse range of backgrounds and experience.

Clark Wilson has enjoyed consistent growth, high retention, and positive morale based on an organization-wide dedication to its core values of Caring, Quality, Teamwork, and Trust. Moreover, the firm is strategically future-oriented, placing great emphasis on succession planning, empowering the next-generation of leaders, and making demonstrable investments to sustain its growth and adapt to the evolving nature of professional services.

Known for their industry insight and strategic networks, lawyers at Clark Wilson serve as trusted advisors to businesses and their principals in British Columbia. The firm helps its corporate clients grow their businesses domestically and abroad, ensures that they are connected with the best resources wherever they do business, and guides them through legal challenges and dispute resolution when necessary.



International companies and their foreign legal representation also seek assistance from Clark Wilson to successfully expand their businesses into British Columbia and throughout Canada. As well, the firm has a number of complementary practice groups to provide top-tier personal services to clients and their families in areas such as Wills, estates and trusts and family law.

Clark Wilson has a long history serving clients in core sectors of BC's business community, including the real estate sector; finance and venture capital; the technology industry; higher learning; health care; "Gateway" clients (airports and other transport); infrastructure and construction; insurance; energy and natural resources; and, economic development ventures on First Nations lands.

Clark Wilson is owned and managed locally. With all of its owners and decision makers located in the firm's Vancouver office, decisions are made centrally, quickly and decisively, with a focus on consensus. Governance is through a quasi-corporate model, with an elected Executive Committee made up of four elected partners who advise the Managing Partner and COO on material decisions. The firm is financially very sound and profitable.







# The Opportunity

## Chief Operating Officer

Reporting to the Managing Partner, and indirectly to Clark Wilson's Executive Committee and the Partnership overall, the COO plays a pivotal role in nearly all of the firm's major decisions.

The COO is a highly trusted leader and a chief spokesperson charged with grounding the firm's day-to-day decisions to the organization's values. All 150+ non-lawyer staff at the firm report into the COO portfolio. Direct reports include the Director of Professional Development, Director of Finance, Director of Human Resources, Director of IT, and Director of Client Relations.

Moreover, the COO plays an instrumental strategic role in respect of recruiting, retaining, and supporting the firm's lawyers—the core driver of the firm's growth, success, and top-line revenue.

Externally, the COO is actively involved in the legal community. As the firm's representative with the BC Legal Management Association, as well as other formal and informal networks, the COO remains up-to-date on the latest developments within the legal industry, including HR, compensation, and technology trends.

The new COO will step into a role that has been carefully prepared and set up for success. The incumbent, who is highly respected and has enjoyed a long tenure, has provided a long window of notice, and will be available to support the new leader's onboarding into the role.



## Key Responsibilities

### Leadership, Vision, Strategic Direction

Together with the Managing Partner (“MP”) and Executive Committee (“EC”):

- Develop the strategic vision (short, medium, and longer term) of the firm, which is reviewed and evaluated each year, and develop and implement the annual firm plan.

### Senior Management/Administration Team

- Work with the Senior Management Team on annual plans for their respective areas (in addition to their components of the annual firm plan).
- Meet regularly with all Management Team members, individually and as a team, and provide related support.

### Financial Performance

- Working with the Director of Finance, establish an annual financial plan/budget for review by the MP and EC, and approval by the Partnership.
- Together with the Director of Finance and the Management Team, actively pursue achievement of the financial plan through monitoring, managing, and approving expenses considering capacity (in consultation with the MP and Reporting Partners).
- In consultation and coordination with the Accounts Committee (including the MP and Director of Finance), monitor and manage WIP, Accounts Receivable, and time recording practices.



## **Practice Groups**

- Together with the MP, meet with Practice Groups and individual partners to discuss performance plans, key priorities and challenges, and how management can best support achievement of their goals.

## **Recruiting, Retention, Succession, and Termination**

- Together with the MP and EC, identify practice areas for key strategic recruiting.
- Together with the MP, Reporting Partners, and Practice Group Chairs, support senior retention, succession, and strategic recruiting opportunities.

## **Compensation**

- Participate actively in the compensation process for non-equity partners and Associates, including providing management perspective on performance, advocating “fairness,” and providing competitive market intelligence.

## **Premises**

- Together with the MP and EC, develop and implement long-term premises strategy and manage all aspects of premises operations.
- COVID-19: Oversee and provide communication on all aspects of the firm’s response to and management of COVID-19 orders and protocols.

## **Industry Involvement**

- Represent the firm in industry associations, and monitor and report on trends and local market activity.

## **Insurance/Risk Management**

- Lead the firm’s Disaster Recovery Planning, and procure and manage all firm insurances to minimize risk exposure.

## **Policies and Procedures**

- Update firm policies and procedures as needed, and promote related compliance.





## Essential Qualities & Experience

The ideal candidate will bring a background and demonstrable track record reflecting the firm's values of Caring, Quality, Teamwork, and Trust. They will be comfortable leading directly and indirectly, seamlessly adapt their communication style to their audience, listen to the individual needs of all stakeholders, and be driven by the pursuit of collective success rather than personal accomplishments and recognition.

Business sense combined with a low-ego, responsiveness, a high degree of empathy, and patience will be keys to success in this role, as will be the ability to become an expert in top-tier professional service delivery.

Our client inclusively welcomes credibly experienced leaders to apply for the role, but will prioritize candidates who have experience:

- Leading and growing a comparable multi-disciplinary department or organization;
- Championing and implementing institutional initiatives and innovations;
- Reporting to a diverse range of owners or decision-makers;
- Building consensus across stakeholders;
- Participating in strategic planning and succession planning;
- Optimizing business/professional services operations; and,
- Providing strategic insight to recruitment and retention priorities in a highly competitive talent market.

Experience with the legal sector, professional services (accounting, finance, real estate, engineering, etc.), service-oriented businesses, regulated environments, or organizations supporting a diverse range of sophisticated stakeholders (post-secondary, public sector, etc.) will be considered an asset.

Financial fluency is required, especially in respect of budgeting, though an accounting designation is not necessary for this position.



## Compensation & Search Process

Clark Wilson's COO position is a strategic leadership role and is budgeted to pay in the top end of the market for comparable roles, depending on experience.

The search process will include conventional longlist, shortlist, and committee interview stages. Shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete a psychometric assessment. We will request for finalists to complete an interview with our industrial psychologist, offer comprehensive references, and complete a background check.

We expect to complete our first review of applications on June 18, 2021. While the start date is flexible, the candidate will ideally begin in the Fall of 2021.

Mosaic Search aims to inclusively consider candidates. Due to the expected volume of inquiries, however, we can only fully commit to responding to candidates who the client instructs us to proceed with in this process.

As the client has some flexibility for timing in this search and prioritizes diversity, we encourage candidates who require timing or other accommodations to contact us directly with any related questions, which can be addressed in confidence as appropriate.





## Contact

To apply, please forward your resume and cover letter to [info@mosaicsearch.ca](mailto:info@mosaicsearch.ca)

You are also welcome to email

**Dave Namkung** ([dave@mosaicsearch.ca](mailto:dave@mosaicsearch.ca)) or

**Jane Hill** ([jhill@mosaicsearch.ca](mailto:jhill@mosaicsearch.ca)) with any related questions.