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Vanessa L. Smith, Esq. is principal and National Managing Director of Vantage Solutions LLC, a national human resource and workplace strategies consulting firm. Prior to founding Vantage Solutions LLC, Ms. Smith practiced law with the national law firm of Gardner, Carton & Douglas and the international law firm of Winston & Strawn. There, she developed an expertise in litigating employment practice lawsuits, counseling large and small employers on compliance with laws affecting the workplace and preparing employment-related policies, procedures and contracts.

Vantage Solutions LLC specializes in organizational development and design, human resource consulting, human resource outsourcing, staffing and training. Its goal is to provide large and small businesses with proactive and preemptive human resources and compliance advice and counsel on workplace matters to help them attract, develop, reward and retain greatness in their employee population. Her practice focuses on creating and implementing practical workplace strategies that result in high workplace performance and productivity. This includes organizational development and design, guidance and insight on daily employment decisions, preparation and application of enterprise-wide employment policies and procedures and appropriate education and training on such topics as diversity in the workplace, leadership and coaching and mentoring. Ms. Smith also investigates and mediates workplace conflicts to assist employers in taking prompt, effective and defensible employment actions.

Ms. Smith speaks frequently on the legal and business aspects of workplace issues and has been a guest presenter on various employment topics before the Price-Waterhouse CFO Forum, the ADP Professionals Forum, the Metropolitan Chicago Cultural Human Resources Group and at the 54th and 58th Annual SHRM Conferences. She has taught courses related to Human Resources and Employment Law, including PHR and SPHR certification classes, for Keller Graduate School of Management, Northern Illinois University and DePaul University. She recently was the featured workplace expert for "The Career Elevator", a job readiness media tool designed to assist recent high school and college graduates prepare for work. Ms. Smith is called upon often by companies to review and advise on best workplace practices and to offer her expert opinion on the effectiveness of such policies.

Ms. Smith is active in the human resource community, and has served as a board member of the National Human Resources Development Committee for the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) and on the Human Resources Advisory Board of Northern Illinois University. She also is a member of the Illinois State Council and a member of the Society of Human Resource Professionals (SHRP) and the Human Resources Management Association of Chicago (HRMAC). She is active in the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce and is a Board Member for Chicago Youth Centers, where she chairs the HR Committee and the Abraham Lincoln Center, both human services agencies serving Chicagoland youth.

Ms. Smith received her Juris Doctor from the University of Michigan Law School and her undergraduate degree in Economics from Howard University.