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 MAJOR, LINDSEY & AFRICA

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# WOMEN LEADING THE LAW

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Around the world, organizations understand the importance of—and are focused on—increasing gender parity throughout their ranks. The legal industry is no different and is often one of the more scrutinized professions when viewed through the lens of gender equality. We at Major, Lindsey & Africa pride ourselves on our efforts to diversify the profession and our organization.

We are pleased to highlight some of these remarkable women who are making their mark on the legal industry.



## Courtney Capute

Partner-in-Charge,  
Venable's Baltimore Office

<https://www.venable.com/courtney-g-capute>

VENABLE LLP

*Courtney Capute has spent her entire career at Venable. She started in the real estate practice group and found a home there. Transactional law fit her skill set and personality, particularly after she came to appreciate how real property and zoning issues could drive the development of a neighborhood when she and her husband purchased a row house in Baltimore's Fells Point. Courtney became a non-equity partner in 1996 and converted to equity partner shortly thereafter. Her practice is multifaceted; she represents hotel brands and other businesses in the acquisition and sale of hotel properties and in the negotiation of their hotel management agreements. Courtney also represents CMBS special services lenders in loan restructurings and defaults. She currently serves as the partner-in-charge of Venable's Baltimore office, is a member of the Venable Expansion Committee and co-chairs Venable's Hospitality Industry Sector Initiative.*

### **Who helped you the most on your career path?**

Jim Wright, my former practice group chair, helped me most. Working with someone of his experience, caliber and character was invaluable to me. Jim showed me the importance of valuing and respecting everyone's contributions. He was skilled at taking the long view and putting each member of our team in a position to succeed, and as a result, Jim generated loyalty and inspired people to do their best work. His philosophy had nothing to do with gender; it was about respecting people for what they brought to the table. As a result, Jim created a collaborative atmosphere.

### **Were there any moments early in your career that surprised you in terms of how you were treated? What struggles did you encounter and how did you overcome those roadblocks in your career?**

I've been fortunate in my career; I have not been confronted with gender-related roadblocks, and I don't think the challenges I've faced were different from those encountered by any working parent, man or woman. Everyone has responsibilities to other people in their lives and those responsibilities place demands on one's time. I'm fortunate to have a very supportive spouse who celebrates my successes. Needless to say, law is a demanding career, and beyond that, the challenges can be self-imposed. You've got to take ownership and figure out how you are going to accomplish your objectives. Being self-aware is important because it will help you to better understand your strengths and overcome your weaknesses.

Throughout my career, I have been given opportunities to serve on committees and to prove myself. Moments that surprised me had

more to do with the level of responsibility I was given, which was both empowering and, at times, terrifying, but it taught me a lot. One of the challenges of a large law firm is making sure we recognize the skills as well as the weaknesses of our young lawyers so we tap into their tremendous potential and put them in a position to succeed. The percentage of lifers at Venable really speaks to that; my own experience at this firm has always been positive.

### **What has been your greatest challenge as the partner-in-charge of the Baltimore office?**

My greatest challenge as the partner-in-charge of Venable's Baltimore office is to find ways to encourage greater community engagement and to actively promote our office and our capabilities while still maintaining my practice. What's been nice for me is that at this point in my career, this leadership position draws on a different skill set. It presents a whole new set of challenges that are different from representing clients. I am always trying to figure out ways to encourage greater engagement between our young attorneys in the legal community and the community at large.

We actively encourage nonprofit board participation and currently have Baltimore attorneys who are on more than 120 boards in the community. My personal participation on boards has been incredibly satisfying. For example, my work with Turn Around, Inc., an organization that counsels survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence, has been very gratifying. My experience has been that with almost any nonprofit work, you feel great about the difference you are making and walk away with skills you wouldn't have had otherwise.

### **How important is it to Venable to have women in leadership?**

Very important. Whether it is gender or ethnic diversity, everyone brings a different perspective to the table, which is critical to any organization. You can create a better outcome if you have more

perspectives in the mix to get you there. And the importance of having role models should not be underestimated.

Because the advancement of women in leadership positions is of great importance to Venable, we formed an affinity group called WAVE (Women Attorneys at Venable), which is a diverse group of women attorneys and firm professionals whose mission is to improve the rate of retention, promotion and advancement of women attorneys within the firm and to increase the number and strength of women attorney applicants. What's more, since 2015, Venable has been a member of the prestigious Women in Law Empowerment Forum (WILEF), a national group "dedicated to assisting women in law to assume leadership roles within the NLJ 250 and Fortune 1000 legal departments and within their respective communities."

### **How do you or your organization help women advance in the workplace and the legal profession?**

First, I respect the individual, whether man or woman. I try to be attentive to what's going on and make sure everyone is treated fairly and that skill sets aren't being overlooked—I strive to match skill sets with tasks. And where people do not have an advocate, I try to be one.

Second, within the organization, our WAVE program is terrific, and I enthusiastically support the group's efforts. It's valuable for women in the organization and helps them navigate situations by heightened self-awareness.

### **What advice would you give to young lawyers who desire to become a partner in a law firm?**

Grab every opportunity that comes your way. You still have to set priorities and stick with them, but it's really about taking advantage of prospects that are put before you or that you've created for yourself. Understand from the outset what it takes to succeed as a lawyer; figure out what it takes to be a partner and pursue that goal.

**“You can create a better outcome if you have more perspectives in the mix to get you there.”**



## Cynthia Gibson

Executive Vice President and Chief  
Legal & Business Affairs Officer,  
Scripps Networks Interactive

<http://www.scrippsnetworksinteractive.com/newsroom/company-news/Scripps-Networks-Interactive-names-new-chief-legal-officer/>



*Cynthia Gibson spent 20 years in private practice before making the leap in-house. “I felt as if I had done all that I could do in that arena. I’d made partner, led a practice group and was on the management committee. I started wondering if I might be ready for a change.” She spoke with a number of close contacts about options to do something different, and one of those conversations led to talk about possibly joining Scripps Networks Interactive’s legal department. Cynthia knew the quality of the people and leadership at Scripps and really admired the entrepreneurial spirit of the business. In 2009, she joined Scripps’ legal team, before being named chief legal officer after participating in a nationwide search as the internal candidate.*

### **Who helped you the most on your career path?**

In my law firm, I was initially the only woman lawyer, the first woman partner and, during my time, the only woman in management, so there were not a lot of female role models for me. Early on, one of my mentors told me that you need to find your own voice, be authentic and true to yourself. I was in litigation during a time women tried to emulate men, so this advice stuck with me. Being my own person has been helpful in my success—and having a sense of authenticity is important in doing that.

Other advice that was helpful to me was to look at the business issue that brought the client to you, not just the law review article legal issues. What is the problem you are trying to solve? One of my mentors called me into his office after I wrote this memo that I thought was amazing, in which I told the client why he couldn’t do what he wanted to do. My mentor said, “How is this helpful to the client? You know what business objective they want to achieve, but instead you’ve just said no in six different ways. Maybe suggest to them a different approach that is both compliant and achieves their business objective?” Growing up in a culture like that has been such a benefit in the corporate setting.

### **Were there any moments early in your career that surprised you in terms of how you were treated? What struggles did you encounter, and how did you overcome those roadblocks in your career?**

As a young female lawyer, a lot of assumptions were made about me, including that I was the court reporter or secretary, and many male attorneys would call me things like “little lady.” I had two options: I could hang on to it or just let it go and realize that there is not much I can do other than work harder and smarter.

### **What has been your greatest challenge as the general counsel of Scripps? What keeps you up at night?**

When I joined, we had a relatively small international business, and now we’re a truly global business. We’ve had to scale up our function and help the business realize the opportunities of expansion while also managing the risks associated with having significant business in multiple jurisdictions abroad. There are cultural differences and legal differences, and you often have to take both into account. Navigating our evolution from a domestic business to a global one has been a challenge, but it has also been a tremendously rewarding experience.

### **How important is it to your corporation to have women in leadership?**

I went from being in an environment where I was a senior woman and there were very few women around to Scripps Networks, where there are women everywhere, at every level. It’s a unique and special place. Scripps is a great company and place to be a professional of any sort. It doesn’t matter your gender, sexual preference or ethnicity. Our founder, Ken Lowe, values all people, and Scripps still has a founder-led culture today.

### **How do you or your organization help women advance in the workplace and the legal profession?**

As a senior woman growing up in my law firm, I felt a sense of personal responsibility to support the younger women in the firm. I’ve carried that with me throughout my career. I’m always willing to spend time with

women who are coming up along the way. At Scripps, diversity is part of the culture and DNA, so we don’t have many formal processes because we just live it.

Personally, I’ve been involved in a women’s leadership group at United Way at the local and national levels. United Way does a fantastic job of bringing together women leaders and gathering them in a way that not a lot of other organizations do. I’ve learned so much about the power of bringing women together.

### **What advice would you give to young lawyers who desire to become a legal leader in a corporation?**

Approach your legal advice through a business lens. Practical legal advice is critical, and I’m always surprised when I work with lawyers who have an ivory tower view of the law and don’t translate that into how it relates to the business.

Being a person of integrity is the best long-term way to go. You start building your reputation in big and small ways from day one in your career. In hindsight, the fact that I always tried to do things the right way has paid off.

Look for leadership opportunities outside the office. You’ll be very one dimensional if you only stay within the office. I’ve had terrific leadership opportunities in the volunteer work I’ve done, well ahead of in the office, and I continue to learn things there that translate to work. Plus, I meet lots of people that I learn a huge amount from.

“One of my mentors told me that you need to find your own voice, be authentic and true to yourself. (...) Being my own person has been helpful in my success—and having a sense of authenticity is important in doing that.”



## Stasia Kelly

Co-Managing Partner (Americas),  
DLA Piper

<https://www.dlapiper.com/en/us/people/k/kelly-stasia/>



*“Path? What path? I didn’t know there was a path to begin with. There were just decisions and opportunities that came up along the way.” Stasia Kelly was the first in her family/generation to graduate college. She didn’t even think about going to law school until she was three years out of college and realized she missed learning. She was working for Martin Marietta in the employee benefits department when ERISA was being legislated in Congress, and realized that she had a penchant for the law. Martin Marietta had a program that paid employees’ tuition for graduate school, so she applied to the evening program at George Washington Law School. After law school, Stasia took her first law firm opportunity at Wilmer, Cutler & Pickering. She made a slight four-year detour before starting at Wilmer, when her new husband became the head of the FBI Region in Dallas. She started at Wilmer in 1985, and spent 10 years there as an associate and a partner. In 1995, she was recruited to go in-house as the general counsel at Fannie Mae. This began her 15-year career as a general counsel, where she helped each company after Fannie Mae—Sears Roebuck, MCI/WorldComm and AIG—through challenging crises and built their legal and compliance functions into high-functioning teams. Stasia returned to private practice in 2010, joining DLA Piper, and becoming the co-managing partner of the Americas in 2013.*

### **Who helped you the most on your career path?**

When I worked in Dallas, the firm I worked for, Carrington Coleman, was a great place for women, even though we had big hair and silk ties! I had true mentors there who were all about training me to be a good lawyer. I never encountered a gender issue there. The firm was 20% women, which was very high at the time.

When I returned to Washington, D.C., I spent the next 10 years at Wilmer, Cutler & Pickering. I had incredible support from the firm as I moved up the associate ranks. The year I was up for partnership, I was also pregnant with twins. My partners thought I was crazy, but my priorities were clear. I was also the only woman in the practice area. One of the senior women came to me before the end of my maternity leave and suggested I step back a year and take more time before being put up for partnership (in those years it was an “up or out” system), but I couldn’t do it; it just wasn’t my personality. And I was fortunate to be made partner that year! I know that many people would not have made the same decision, but I have learned that the only one who can make a personal decision for you is you and your family. I never did like the term “work-life balance”—it is all life!

### **Were there any moments early in your career that surprised you in terms of how you were treated? What struggles did you encounter, and how did you overcome those roadblocks in your career?**

After law school, I could have stayed at Martin Marietta—I felt an obligation as the company had paid my way through law school. I was working a lot with the CEO at the time. I went to him and he sent me to the general counsel. The law department was pretty big, with 70–80 lawyers. I sat down with the GC and asked if he wanted me on the team. He said that I was bright and energetic, but “We already have a woman on the staff.” I know I could have made an issue of this—it was pretty amazing that it even happened. But I didn’t make a big deal about it, and instead I thought to myself that this was an opportunity to go learn how to be a good lawyer in a place that actually wanted me and was prepared to train me.

When I went in-house at Fannie Mae, I didn’t see any openly noticeable gender issues. Even then, Fannie Mae made a conscious effort to have diversity around the table. There were the same subtle issues that women have had forever—speaking up in a meeting and putting out an idea and no one reacting but then some man saying something similar and everyone thinking it was a great idea. Now Sears was a completely different matter. The customers were mostly women and they were focused on the customer, but internally, I ran into a lot of passive-aggressive males, when my colleagues would smile and nod but then turned around and did what they wanted.

### **What has been your greatest challenge as the managing partner? What keeps you up at night?**

Solving the problem of why we have so few women partners in law firms and even fewer in law firm leadership consumes a lot of my time. It has been way too many years that we have lived with this situation, and we need to find ways to solve it. At DLA, we have committed to a number

**“The only one who can make a personal decision for you is you and your family. I never did like the term ‘work-life balance’—it is all life!”**

of initiatives to help understand and address this issue—this effort has the commitment of the highest levels of DLA Piper leadership. We simply must solve this issue, and soon. I am happy to be part of this effort.

### **How important is it to your law firm to have women in leadership?**

It’s critical. It is not just a matter of equity and common sense; it is the only way that diversity of thought and action become part of an organization and its culture. That is true for corporations as well as for law firms. Organizations behave differently when there is a diversity of gender, background and experience; you generate better ideas and better solutions to problems. The key is to have women in leadership and to have them treated the same as men in leadership. There are still not enough women in leadership, but I have seen the conversation changing and hopefully the behavior will follow. And then we will see results.

### **How do you or your organization help women advance in the workplace and the legal profession?**

Every day of my life I’m devoting at least half of my day to trying to figure out how to help women in my firm or in companies rise up the ranks. Having someone who has been there and done that is helpful. I am involved in a number of initiatives both inside and outside the firm. In addition, DLA has committed to the Mansfield Rule, under which a percentage of our leadership positions will include diverse candidates. DLA has also partnered with the head of diversity at NYU law school. We have done training on issues such as unconscious bias across the firm. Our practice group leaders have developed initiatives that each one is incorporating into their practice groups. As I said, I have seen men become much more engaged in the discussion and committed to lasting diversity in the world of lawyers!

### **What advice would you give to young lawyers who desire to become a partner in a law firm?**

Be willing to take a risk. Those risks lead you to opportunities, which lead you to the kind of jobs you want to have.

Understand your business and be willing to do things outside the law firm.



## Ellen Koplow

Executive Vice President, General Counsel & Secretary, TD Ameritrade

<https://www.amtd.com/inside-td-ameritrade/leadership/leadership-details/default.aspx?ItemID=eaeebca8-38aa-44a0-9a05-383eab60e49d>



*Ellen Koplow started her legal career in private practice. She spent the first 15 years of her professional career developing her private practice, and became managing partner of the Columbia office of Miles and Stockbridge at age 35. At 39, Ellen was approached to go in-house at TD Ameritrade by the then GC to help develop the legal department and support the growing technology group. "At that point, I had created a good career with a good reputation in the community, so I decided to see where a new path might take me." In November 2000, she was named acting general counsel, and in 2001, she became general counsel.*

### **Who helped you the most on your career path?**

I was fortunate to have had peers and supervisors who saw potential in me. In private practice, it was the prior managing partner of the office who came to me and said I should be the next managing partner. It wasn't anything I set a goal to attain, but he saw this opportunity for me that I would not have seen for myself. Similarly, it was a woman whom I previously worked with who approached me to go in-house with her; and as GC, the CEOs I've been fortunate to work with have always been very supportive and provided me opportunities I might not have seen for myself.

### **Were there any moments early in your career that surprised you in terms of how you were treated? What struggles did you encounter, and how did you overcome those roadblocks in your career?**

The biggest struggle, in looking back, was trying to find a way to meet the standards I set for myself in both my personal and professional life, as a wife, mother and lawyer. It's constant, it's energizing and it's tiring.

Addressing client expectations has always been important, and there have been times when those expectations differed between me and my male peers. There was a time when I was in private practice when a large international client made the assumption that I would not be returning to work after I had my first child. I was so taken aback by that assumption that I called him up and told him, in a respectful way, to never doubt my focus and commitment to being his lawyer and being the best there can be...and of course, I'd be coming back. I recall him being appreciative of the call, but it was a call that my male colleagues would never have had to make.

Later in my career, I worked with an executive coach who helped me to realize the true amount of control we have over how we spend our time.

It was a turning point in the perspective I brought to my work and home life that allowed me to work better without continually feeling I needed to work harder.

### **What has been your greatest challenge as the general counsel of TD Ameritrade? What keeps you up at night?**

Since 1999, it's just been constant change, especially in financial services at TD Ameritrade since we operate mostly online. The laws and society's expectations around the Internet, operating via mobile apps, innovation, financial services, the economy, the politics, etc., are constantly changing. It's taking this constant churn and leading throughout in a positive way that is challenging. Keeping that energy going around all these areas requires continual focus.

### **How important is it to your organization to have women in leadership?**

It is very important to TD Ameritrade to have women in leadership. We spend a fair amount of time making sure we have a fair promotion system, measuring it, rewarding our associates for their work in this area and making sure we have initiatives to support women and other diverse groups. We make sure the leadership team is watching it and that our great HR team is supporting it. Over time, it's gotten stronger and stronger.

### **How do you or your organization help women advance in the workplace and the legal profession?**

We started our women's initiative in our company more than 10 years ago, and from there it developed into several women's groups to address issues of concern to our women associates. The women's

**“If women understand the importance of wealth (as a thread in the fabric of what creates stability in your life)... comfort with this aspect of their lives could help them in many ways.”**

initiatives have since evolved into our current D&I initiatives, with inclusiveness being a large and important part of our culture.

What I've learned from working in a financial services company is that if women understand the importance of wealth, not from a greedy perspective, but as a thread in the fabric of what creates stability in your life, if women would not be fearful of their financial selves, then that understanding and comfort with this aspect of their lives could help them in many ways. It would help them to speak when negotiating their salary or when they deserve a promotion; to invest prudently as a way to increase wealth over time; and overall to create a more stable life for themselves and their families. A few years ago I approached the University of Maryland (where I received my undergraduate degree) because I continued to be frustrated over the pay gap and believed that young women needed to better understand their financial selves as they started their careers. The university was enthusiastic and ran a program with the support of TD Ameritrade where in the fall they had a speaker come in to discuss financial management and investment, and in the spring, they offered a course on gender, finance and power. The students reacted wonderfully to it. At the beginning of class, most have no clue what financial health is, how to even begin investing and what it means to invest in a 401K. They have no lens into the fact that women live longer and get paid less and can end up in difficult financial straits if they are not watching their financial well-being. Just seeing the light bulbs go off in both the men and women students is incredible. Now, when these students get their first jobs, they have an understanding of the importance of their salaries, why they should invest in a 401(k) and how to invest in their own futures.

### **What advice would you give to young lawyers who desire to become a legal leader in a corporation?**

Be a good lawyer and learn to be a good leader, which means constant self-evaluation. Always look at how you can be better. We have our whole lives to live, and you need to understand who you are and how you can make yourself the best you can be to yourself and others. Only then can you bring your best self to work and get the best work out of yourself.

Be authentic, courageous and decisive. Be clear and follow the principles that are important to you. And remember to enjoy yourself along the journey—we always need to do more of that.



## Barbara Levi Mager

General Counsel & Global  
Head of Legal, Sandoz

<https://www.sandoz.com/about-us/who-we-are/sandoz-leadership>

**SANDOZ** A Novartis  
Division

*Barbara Levi Mager studied law in Italy. She was interested in an international career, though she never studied English when she was in school. “I had a friend in New York who worked at a law firm that was looking for international people. They needed someone to spend six months doing document review for a major litigation. I took the opportunity and moved to the U.S. for six months.” Barbara ended up staying in the U.S. for eight years, learning English, taking an LL.M. in banking, corporate and finance law at Fordham, passing the New York bar exam and working for several law firms in NYC. It was right after September 11th and not the best time to look for a job, but Barbara wanted a new challenge, so she thought about moving back to Europe and working in-house. Barbara received an offer from Sandoz, a Novartis division, which was headquartered in Vienna. She took a very junior role even though she was a senior associate at the law firm. Today, Barbara is the general counsel of Sandoz, leading the legal and IP departments with more than 250 associates. She has made her way up through the ranks of Sandoz and Novartis Pharma, holding many different positions, including compliance, region general counsel; head legal for technical operations; head of legal for business development; and head of legal for product strategy and global franchises.*

### **Who helped you the most on your career path?**

At the beginning of my career, my parents always let me follow my passion. They were not particularly happy when I moved to the U.S.—not that they told me; I could just feel it. However, they never put any pressure on me and supported me throughout my career. My husband and my children have also always been very supportive; they understood how important my work is to me and helped me in many ways and through many difficult times.

Also, professionally, many different people supported me. They were not necessarily managers; sometimes they were people on my team who just made me think differently, taught me small things, but those are the things that stick with you.

### **Were there any moments early in your career that surprised you in terms of how you were treated? What struggles did you encounter, and how did you overcome those roadblocks in your career?**

Very early in my career, there was one thing that had quite an impact: I was working in private practice in New York and my boss asked me to take over the case with a big client, an Italian company. I prepared

a lot for the meeting—weeks of working day and night. I thought that this would have been a great opportunity to show how prepared I was, and I wanted to know everything. When the day arrived, I entered the meeting with my files and the most senior guy ended up asking me in a very dismissive way to get him coffee, clearly thinking that this was my job. I was taken so much by surprise that I didn’t know how to react. I still remember it like it was yesterday. I got him the coffee but I felt so humiliated that the only thing I knew was that it would never happen again. What that meeting taught me is confidence and not to allow anyone to put me into a box.

But overall, I was never treated differently than the men. In these 13 years at Novartis, I’ve been given all the possible opportunities without any gender bias. I have had four children in less than five years, I’ve changed roles and managers over the years, and they’ve all supported me. I’ve never felt I was held back.

### **What has been your greatest challenge as the general counsel of Sandoz? What keeps you up at night?**

It is not legal issues or cases that keep me up at night—it is people. The emotional part is the hard part; when you have a conversation about gaps in performance or with someone whose self-image is radically different from your own perception. How do you convey your message with clarity and show respect at the same time? How do you find the right balance of challenging and supporting? How do you stay true to your own judgment but keep an open mind for different opinions? I love to work with diverse teams and have constructive conversations. I always say: “Assume positive intent!”

“How do you stay true to your own judgment but keep an open mind for different opinions? (...) I always say: ‘Assume positive intent!’”

### **How important is it to your corporation to have women in leadership?**

Having women in leadership is more important today than ever before. Diversity and an inclusive environment are critical to performance, and gender diversity is an important element. We are spending a lot of time in our executive committee developing concrete actions. We have a good representation of women at mid-level management, but we’ve noticed that when you get to the top, the numbers become smaller. We’re trying to understand why that is and are super committed to changing it. You have to make diversity a priority to drive the change.

### **How do you or your organization help women advance in the workplace and the legal profession?**

We have many programs and initiatives in how we built a diverse talent pipeline, develop female talent and create an environment that supports women balancing work with family. As an example, we are putting together an initiative to develop a better pipeline so that we have more candidates for top roles. When we have open positions, we make sure we have a good mix of diverse candidates and pick the best-qualified person.

I’m super passionate about advancing women in the profession. I do a lot of mentoring within and outside the function. I try to share my experience with others to really show people that we can do whatever we want; it’s just up to us. I am not the only executive who invests in mentoring—this is really part of the way we work. We have started a mentoring program where executives mentor high-potential junior women, and we’ve developed a female executive forum where high-potential women gain exposure to senior leaders and projects. We’re looking into policies, for example, for flex time and paternity leave. It’s all about the environment you want to create.

### **What advice would you give to young lawyers who desire to become a legal leader in a corporation?**

Love what you do. Work hard. Don’t put limits on yourself.



## Lisa Mayhew

Managing Partner,  
Berwin Leighton Paisner

<http://www.blplaw.com/lawyer-directory/profile?lawyer=lisa-mayhew>



*Lisa Mayhew is an employment lawyer by background and was a partner in two other law firms (Hogan Lovells and Jones Day) prior to joining Berwin Leighton Paisner (BLP). Lisa was elected by the BLP partnership to join the firm's board in 2012. At that time, she also headed up BLP's Employment Pensions and Incentives Practice Group. Lisa sat on the board for three years as an independent partner member.*

*"Having contributed and been involved in lots of issues that impacted the firm as a whole, when the firm's long-standing managing partner decided in 2014 not to stand for another term, I was encouraged to put myself forward for the managing partner role. It was a contested election, so it wasn't a predetermined outcome. Frankly, I never had a long-standing ambition to become managing partner, which is probably what helped me approach the process with a certain lightness of heart. If I hadn't become appointed, then I had at least given it my best shot and demonstrated that you can approach these opportunities from different paths and a different profile." Lisa was elected into the role and assumed the position on May 1, 2015.*

### **Who helped you the most on your career path?**

There were partners, both male and female, that had a positive influence on my career. Some I admired for their technical and client relationship skills, and I learned a great deal from them as an L&E lawyer. And then there have been others who have supported me more broadly. When I was at Lovells, Lesley MacDonagh was the managing partner at time. It was even more unusual then to have a female managing partner at a firm of such a size.

### **Were there any moments early in your career that surprised you in terms of how you were treated? What struggles did you encounter, and how did you overcome those roadblocks in your career?**

I started in 1992 and, like lots of women, had experiences that I remember, such as attending a client meeting with a male trainee and the client making the assumption that he was the qualified lawyer. I also remember another occasion when I was the only woman in the room, attending an all-parties meeting, and being asked to pour the drinks for everyone, when I was in fact one of the more senior people in the room. But overall, there honestly haven't been any roadblocks in my career. L&E, in particular, is an area of law in which a lot of women practice, both in law firms and on the client side.

### **What has been your greatest challenge as managing partner? What keeps you up at night?**

It's a very different job than being a practising lawyer. As a practising lawyer, there's a beginning, middle and end to the task you have, even if it's a long-running matter. As managing partner, part of the transition is to understand and accept that the job is never complete. There is no beginning, middle or end to it.

### **How important is it to your law firm to have women in leadership?**

It is very important that we have diversity in leadership. Like many firms, we're not as diverse in terms of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation and social background as we should be. As an employment lawyer, I spent many years advising clients on this. As well as being the right thing to do, we all know that it is good for business. To have diversity of thought improves the quality of our decision-making. There is also, of course, the fact that our clients are diverse, and it is very important that we resemble them. It has to be a long-term commitment, however, because you can't move the needle overnight. It also requires genuine buy-in and leadership from the top to cascade throughout the organisation.

### **How do you or your organization help women advance in the workplace and the legal profession?**

We have a gender target for our partnership (30% female representation by the end of 2018), which distils into individual department- and office-specific targets. For example, our real estate group already has more than 30% female partners in it, but we've still given them a more stretching target to continue our progressive development.

**“(Diversity) has to be a long-term commitment, however, because you can't move the needle overnight.”**

For partners in leadership roles, we include specific objectives in their appraisals, which go to our Compensation Committee. For our partnership, we've introduced Partner Principles, which are essentially a code of behaviour. There are 16 principles in total in four categories, and our partners' performances are assessed against all of these principles, and that's tied to their compensation. One of those principles relates specifically to the issue we are talking about.

On a personal level, I participate in WILEF (Women in Law Empowerment Forum) and other women's networks, particularly within our client base.

### **What advice would you give to young lawyers who desire to become a partner in a law firm or legal leader in a corporation?**

Deliver to the best of your ability to your clients. You're nothing without your client relationships as a lawyer.

Understand there will be periods in your life where you experience personal change and you may not be able to give as much of yourself to your job. Don't make lasting decisions in those moments because life can change again. There are also so many routes to partnership now; it may happen at different times for different people.

Also, grab whatever opportunities come your way. If an opportunity naturally arises that you could potentially make a success of, then go for it. But be prepared to fail; you'll be a better-informed individual for trying and won't "lose yourself" in the process.

Lastly, there is enough pressure in this job, so don't add to that by pretending to be someone completely different. Trust your judgment on these things.





## Jami Wintz McKeon Chair, Morgan Lewis

<https://www.morganlewis.com/bios/jmckeon>

# Morgan Lewis

*Jami Wintz McKeon took a very linear path in her legal career, going straight from college to law school to working at Morgan Lewis starting in 1981. She has held various management positions, including membership on the firm's advisory board. Immediately prior to assuming the chair, she led Morgan Lewis's litigation practice, the firm's largest group. "I've had two jobs in my life—lifeguard and Morgan Lewis lawyer."*

### **Who helped you the most on your career path?**

I don't agree with the philosophy that "you have to see it to be it," because there wasn't much for me to see to be. A number of different people influenced my career. Many were men, some old-fashioned men. I also had peers who were mentors. As an associate, I worked for every partner in the litigation group at that time, and each one gave me an opportunity and supported my success. I had women partners along the way who were more like peers—Pam Daley, who left the firm to become a senior leader at GE, was someone who was a mentor, not because she was a woman but because she was heavily involved in recruiting like I was. Fran Milone, the previous chair, was a mentor. There were judges I tried cases in front of who encouraged me. Many and not just one influenced my career more than others.

### **Were there any moments early in your career that surprised you in terms of how you were treated? What struggles did you encounter, and how did you overcome those roadblocks in your career?**

There were struggles, but I think there is a balance, as I also had opportunities because I am a woman. There is no question that when I started practicing, there were people who really were not accustomed to young women being lawyers. I became a lawyer around the time it became improper to ask women if they were going to get married and have kids, but I was asked how I could be a good lawyer and a good mother. When I became pregnant, there were not many women at the firm and there was no formal maternity policy. The then managing partner asked me what a reasonable policy would be. We agreed to three months, and Morgan Lewis implemented that. I went out and came back; people were thrilled to have me back. I never experienced any difficulty from that because at that time everyone's expectation was that you were going to come back to work. I had lots of support, and I didn't miss a beat.

Now, when I was a litigator, there were judges who weren't great with women. One once told me he liked to make women cry, and when I didn't buckle under and was effective and successful in front of him, he never gave me a hard time again. I also had opposing counsel who were

obnoxious and dismissive—though they were often not paying a lot of attention and missed that I was doing things to dismantle their case.

If I could get past an initial issue, there was a flip side to it for a positive opportunity. There were lots of committees at the firm that wanted women to participate, so I got to do a lot of things my male counterparts weren't able to. I didn't have to be like anyone else because I wasn't. I got to carve my own path because it wasn't an option to be just like one of the guys.

There was advice out there to not have pictures of kids in your office or talk about "women hobbies," but you have to be yourself and be authentic. My kids came to the office with me on the weekends, and I had pictures they drew on the walls. I wore dresses and skirts because that's what I liked to wear; I talked about cooking and brought food in. I brought diversity to the table when people weren't talking about that word. Having people who are different from each other just makes life more interesting, and I benefited from the fact that I didn't fit into a particular model. And I'm not sure I would have done quite as well if I had tried to.

### **What has been your greatest challenge as the chair of Morgan Lewis? What keeps you up at night?**

I've always been very focused and engaged with the firm and always had a sense of responsibility, but as chair, everything keeps you up at night. I think everything we do is about relationships. The bigger your group is, the more relationships there are to pay attention to. For me, it's staying on top of what's going on in people's lives and careers and communicating with everyone so they understand that everyone is important. I think communicating effectively throughout the organization so that everyone is rowing in the same direction is a challenge. Size is a competitive advantage if you get everything else right—consistent high-quality work; exceptional client service; well-integrated, collaborative culture; and a culture where everyone recognizes that there is no limit to what you can achieve if you don't care who gets the credit. The focus on strategic things and work at a top level and winning talent are critically important, but you are more likely to be successful in all those things if you are successful in communicating and building relationships.

**“I benefited from the fact that I didn't fit into a particular model. And I'm not sure I would have done quite as well if I had tried to.”**

### **How important is it to your law firm to have women in leadership?**

Diversity is important in everything that anyone does. If Morgan Lewis was all women, I would say that it's important to have men in leadership. More-diverse organizations perform better because diversity of ideas leads to better results. If you get five people in a room with exactly the same everything, you are likely going to get a fairly homogenous reaction. If you throw someone into that room with a life that is extremely different from any existing perspective, you are going to bring in a different aspect to that decision. Women are important because law firms are traditionally male dominated but also because clients expect us to reflect them and their customer base. Groups that are more diverse get better results.

### **How do you or your organization help women advance in the workplace and the legal profession?**

We have a lot of diversity initiatives. We signed on to the Mansfield Rule, which requires that 30% of the candidates we consider for leadership positions and later recruiting be diverse; that was a no brainer, as we do that already. I appoint virtually all of the leadership in the firm; only two groups are elected (the advisory board and the compensation committee). I have the ability to make selections for our positions that allow us to diversify and shrink gaps. We also have the Morgan Lewis women business development-focused initiative, where we work with men and women to help advance women in the practice and help women work with our clients.

I'm personally involved in lots of organizations where I'm out there trying to support women—whether mentoring, speaking at events, or simply supporting women who have reached out for advice.

### **What advice would you give to young lawyers who desire to become a partner in a law firm?**

This is a great profession for everyone—women, people with children—because there is a lot of autonomy and flexibility. In recent years, it's become fashionable to act like you don't want to become partner. You should want to become a partner; it's a great thing to do. You should go for that.

Focus on being truly outstanding, meaning being completely engaged, giving 150%, being energized in what you are doing and at the same time being authentic and finding a way to stand out in your profession. It's much harder trying to be someone else. Bring your whole self, your best self to the job—that's the best recipe for success.



## Anna Erickson White

Former Managing Partner,  
Morrison Foerster

<https://www.mofo.com/people/anna-white.html>

MORRISON  
FOERSTER

*Anna Erickson White, a securities litigation partner, has spent her entire career at Morrison Foerster (MoFo), starting there as a summer associate in 1991. From early on, she was involved in different firm committees; she was the associate representative of the Palo Alto office, managed the summer associates for two years and, shortly after becoming a partner in 2000, sat on the firm-wide associate evaluation committee and was the head of litigation in Palo Alto. "I enjoyed those opportunities because they gave me a broad perspective of the firm and introduced me to the different people and practices in the firm." Anna served as MoFo's firm-wide managing partner twice, 2006–2009 and 2012–2015. Currently, Anna is on the firm's executive committee and board of directors and works in the San Francisco office.*

### Who helped you the most on your career path?

I was lucky; I started in the Palo Alto office, which was about 100 attorneys at that time and was led by AC Johnston, a longtime Morrison partner who retired at the end of 2016. AC is a prince. He set the tone of the litigation group in that office—work hard and produce excellent work product, treat your colleagues with respect and have fun. AC was also an important mentor to me because he was always encouraging and a big advocate for supporting and promoting women. He gave me a significant amount of opportunities and set a really good example of how I wanted to be as a lawyer and partner.

### Were there any moments early in your career that surprised you in terms of how you were treated? What struggles did you encounter, and how did you overcome those roadblocks in your career?

As an associate, I honestly didn't have many struggles related to being a woman; my colleagues were very supportive of my work and me. I had my first daughter in my second year and my second daughter after I was elevated to partnership. Although we didn't have a part-time policy at the time (and I had few, if any, women role models), the partners and associates I worked with were flexible with my schedule so that I could balance raising my daughters and working. We now, of course, have a great part-time policy available to our lawyers. To this day, I am grateful for my colleagues' support, and it has engendered a lot of loyalty from me. Many of my colleagues remain like family to my daughters.

All that said, there were times, of course, when gender issues would pop up. For example, after I came back from my first maternity leave, I was working with a male partner and my good male friend joined the case. Once my friend joined, the two of them would start talking about sports when we were together. Since I wasn't interested in sports at the time, I started feeling at a disadvantage and isolated. I talked to my friend about it and we reached a compromise: he couldn't talk about sports when we were all together and I couldn't talk about kids. It worked for us (and, of course, we had fun enforcing our deal).

What I learned from experiences like that was the importance of communication. As a seventh-year associate, the year I was up for partner, I was working on a matter that was going to trial within a matter of months. My older daughter was five at the time and I was pregnant with my younger daughter when the firm asked me to go to Japan for two weeks to take depositions. I'd been traveling a lot and it was taking a toll on my daughter and me. I told the firm I wanted to go but would like to take my daughter with me and they said it was fine. What's most telling about that experience is that I felt that I could make that request and that it would not (negatively) affect my partnership prospects.

### What has been your greatest challenge as the managing partner of Morrison Foerster? What keeps you up at night?

The things I worry about the most are the pressures on law firms in terms of showing annual growth in profits. That's important in a competitive market, but I worry it can be at the cost of having a long-term focus in a profession with a long tail (meaning it can take a long time for people to build their careers and a client base). Over the last five years or so, we've made it a priority to build for the long term by giving opportunities to younger talent at our firm, in both the leadership and practice ranks. It's made a difference and will be the gift that keeps on giving.

### How important is it to your law firm to have women in leadership?

Very. The advancement of women in our firm and the legal profession is extremely important to us. I'm proud of what we've done over the last decade or so. When I started, I was one of the few women in leadership positions in firm. There were two female managing partners before me, but there hadn't been many females in leadership on the practice group side. We've really pushed to have women as leaders in practice groups and as department chairs. It's made a big difference. As there are fewer women in our partnership, it's required, at times, that we ask these women who take on leadership roles to stretch themselves. They do it and they excel.

### How do you or your organization help women advance in the workplace and the legal profession?

We host a women's summit every 18 months, rotating between San Francisco and New York. We invite our female clients and put on a day-long program to

“Take opportunities even if they scare you. Stretch.”

discuss issues in various areas of the law as well as law firm practice. It helps our female attorneys and our in-house counterparts to improve their reputations and build connections. It's been a huge success.

Internally, my big focus last year was on recruiting more outstanding women lawyers to our already outstanding team. I personally spent a lot of time last year searching for and recruiting women securities litigation attorneys. I am very happy to say we added four women to our team last year. The more women on the team, the easier it is to retain and recruit other talented women.

### What advice would you give to young lawyers who desire to become a partner in a law firm?

- Develop personal relationships with the people you work with, which requires effort on your part. Do not be shy about asking to go to lunch or stopping by someone's office and asking for feedback or just to talk about an assignment (instead of doing it over email). Those things were really important to my career because people got to know and trust me, and it made difficult conversations easier. That's a huge piece of building a career regardless of whether you want to make partner. But it takes work, so associates need to be conscious of that and not assume the partners are going to take the lead. Yes, partners have lots to do, but, yes, they will usually be pleased to be asked.
- Don't underestimate the importance of a good support system. That means taking the time to develop friendships with the people you work with.
- Do great work and make sure you give yourself time to do it. Be realistic, though, about how much you can take on. Make sure you can deliver quality work—and then let it shine.
- Build and maintain professional relationships outside the firm from your first days as a lawyer. These relationships may not seem like they will pay off immediately, but they will soon enough.
- Take opportunities even if they scare you. Stretch. Don't be afraid to ask for help to prepare for those opportunities. If it means taking on pro bono matters or speaking opportunities, do it. They will help you become a better lawyer. Show the people you are working with that you are interested in your own development.
- Keep your eye on the long game. For example, if you have kids or other things that take up time that you would otherwise be spending on work, embrace them and try not to get impatient. When you're ready, you'll get back in the game, and those interruptions will have been beyond worth it.
- Own the firm and try to improve it from early on. You can participate in so many things—recruiting, the summer program, taking new colleagues out to coffee or lunch, or trying to improve law firm technologies, for example. Those are essential characteristics of a good partner, after all.



## Sharon White

CEO, Stephenson Harwood

<http://www.shlegal.com/people/sharon-white>

**STEPHENSON  
HARWOOD**

*Sharon White started her career as an accounts clerk, doing basic audit and accounts work while she studied for her A levels. "I took a slightly unusual path, though I knew I wanted to be a lawyer at that stage." After she completed her A levels, Sharon went on to study law at the University of Essex. She trained at a small firm before moving to Stephenson Harwood when she was two-years qualified—and she's been there ever since. "I joined the corporate team, and as time moved on, I became a partner in 1997 and then held various managerial roles." Before being appointed CEO in 2009, Sharon assisted with trainee recruitment, heading the trainee panel at one point; consulted on premises options at various stages; and briefly sat on the supervisory council before becoming head of the corporate group.*

### **Who helped you the most on your career path?**

I've been very lucky. I've had quite a lot of people—both men and women—who have supported me and given me a push throughout my career. In the small firm I was with, for example, I worked quite closely with a partner who was very much the sort of person you could discuss anything with. I will always remember, and be grateful for, the help and advice he provided. In one instance, he helped me explain a matter to a client without drawing attention to my inexperience. That stayed with me as the way to support people.

### **Were there any moments early in your career that surprised you in terms of how you were treated?**

### **What struggles did you encounter and how did you overcome those roadblocks in your career?**

Things have changed a lot over the last 30-plus years. In my early career, I don't remember having a woman client even at the junior level. All my clients were men and it's probably true to say that they weren't used to having a woman as their lawyer. But the majority were just interested in the quality of advice, and once comfortable with that, they never questioned me.

As an M&A lawyer, I spent lots of time sitting around waiting for documents to arrive, often late into the evening. After I had my son, it wasn't desirable to wait in the office late into the night, so I installed a fax machine at home, where I could spend that waiting time more productively. It wasn't without its issues. The only place for the fax was in my bedroom and I recall at least one occasion when the machine went off at night! Flexibility makes a big difference now.

What has most surprised me are the close bonds I've ended up forming with clients. If you look objectively, you might wonder what we have in common. I'm not into sports so that's not something to talk about with clients, but you find ways through working with them and being interested in what they are doing to find common links. Some of the clients I've been closest to have very different interests but that feeling of being in the trenches together is a great one.

### **What has been your greatest challenge as the CEO of Stephenson Harwood? What keeps you up at night?**

Originally, in 2009, it was the recession; it was quite a tough time to take on this role. We had enjoyed a successful period and I wanted to continue that, but the recession brought challenges. We've risen to those and have been able to continue to grow.

Now, as a country and a profession, facing Brexit is a challenge because no one can predict the outcome. And it's challenging in our roles to support our clients because there is not yet the clarity to be able to move forward and address the changes.

### **How important is it to your law firm to have women in leadership?**

I'm a believer in the idea that you can only be what you see. It's important that women see that there are senior women and have the confidence that there are possibilities for them. There are some women that don't want to advance to partner or other leadership roles and some that do, so seeing that the firm is a fair and diverse place is right. We continue to work hard in this area and have more women in leadership roles now than ever before. We're breaking down barriers and offering support and encouragement to everyone, no matter what their role. To do that, it's important to show that this is a place where anyone can progress.

**“You don't need to have a professional persona that's hugely different from your real persona.”**

### **How do you or your organization help women advance in the workplace and the legal profession?**

I'm really proud of our female career progression program, which launched in 2014. It's not just about making partner but about making the best career choices, tackling challenges and gaining new insights. As a result of that initiative, we are better at having open conversations about progression and any challenges or roadblocks that might be there. We do not have a one-size-fits-all approach; people can and should progress at different paces. It's great to see that programme develop and become a part of what we do at the firm.

We also have a number of initiatives on wider diversity. We're working with the Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust to raise the aspirations of disadvantaged young people, broaden their understanding of the careers available at a law firm and help them gain access to opportunities they might not otherwise have access to. Through the program, students visit us and get to see for themselves what we're doing and see what they can aspire to.

### **What advice would you give to young lawyers who desire to become a partner in a law firm?**

Retain your personality. Don't be tempted to fit in with the work environment; be the person you are. We've all seen it happen when new people join and they've written in this terribly formal way how they think a lawyer is supposed to write. There may be less pressure on these things now, but in my early days, a number of women you'd encounter were fearsome in ways and behaving in that way never sat comfortably with me. I've always acted in a way that feels natural and comfortable for me. You don't need to have a professional persona that's hugely different from your real persona.

Form really good relationships with your peers, senior colleagues and clients. I've had really good working relationships with partners from an early stage in my career that went beyond working with clients, including discussing what I wanted to get out of my career. Forming good relationships is important.

Don't be afraid to let people know what your aspirations are. There's a time and a place for these conversations, but don't be afraid to ask for advice on moving toward that goal.



## Sue Zabloudil

Managing Partner, Akerman's  
Los Angeles Office

<https://www.akerman.com/en/people/sue-zabloudil.html>

akerman

*Sue Zabloudil started as an associate at Sidley Austin in Los Angeles before she moved to Miami. There she found Akerman. "I chose Akerman because of Akerman's significant footprint in Florida and the group of attorneys I met were all sophisticated partners doing great deals. I realized they were doing really competitive work and I liked the people." When thinking about moving back to Los Angeles, Sue sat down with the firm's then chair. He already knew her dedication and her strategic vision, and he knew their clients' needs, particularly the need for a Los Angeles office. Sue moved back to LA in 2014 to establish and lead the new Akerman office.*

### **Who helped you the most on your career path?**

I had a strong mix of mentors, all with very strong work ethics and excellent practices. They understood that when you elevate a team as a whole, you were elevating everybody. They were not afraid to make another seat at the table whenever possible. They would put me on phone calls and pitches and gave me great exposure. Clients know you aren't alone on a transaction, and it's important to give associates exposure, too. That exposure was what triggered my success because they trusted me and saw my success as a vision for a team.

There was a partner that was happy to have someone with a work ethic on his team; gender didn't matter. He always knew my path was to head toward partnership, and the path was pretty straightforward through hard work and doing good-quality work. With him, he just wanted to have the best lawyers on the team (didn't matter what you looked like); he was great at campaigning for you. It's amazing how someone can impact reputations just by saying that person is the go-to or that person is so smart. That registers in people's heads and fuels itself—that positive whisper campaign.

### **Were there any moments early in your career that surprised you in terms of how you were treated? What struggles did you encounter, and how did you overcome those roadblocks in your career?**

The biggest issue I had was my height. I'm under five feet tall, so for me, I always wore a suit or I would potentially be mistaken for other people in the firm. Even if it was a business casual situation, I still wore a suit. It gave me an exterior visual standpoint. I never wanted to have a question about it. I understand there are gender gaps, so you just have to be better, work hard and hold yourself to a higher standard. For me, it didn't matter if anyone else thought that; it was on me.

Once I became a go-to person, I started being asked for everything: Can you be on this committee? Come on this pitch? Once you start getting this reputation, you begin to wonder, if you are the person going on the pitch, who is being excluded? It's always important to pull other people in because if people are happy with your success, they won't look outside the box. So it becomes important for you to look out for other people and provide them with opportunities and exposure.

### **What has been your greatest challenge as the managing partner of the LA office? What keeps you up at night?**

As a top 100 U.S. law firm with a dominant presence in Miami and other major business centers across the country, Akerman represents clients on a national and global basis, but I still have to make sure that our reputation is acknowledged in the LA market. Akerman has one of the nation's largest real estate practices. When I explain our practice to prospective clients or laterals, it's really important to be able to convey to them that bench and tell our story to a new market. We've been lucky that the people who have joined us have done an amazing job, and our recruiters have really helped us get our name out there. My goal has been to be at an event and say I'm at Akerman and not have to include the whole background about the firm. At two recent events, I was able to do that happily.

### **How important is it to your law firm to have women in leadership?**

You have to be active in searching for women and diversity and be active in those conversations. I want to make sure we are actively talking about issues that impact women and discussing how we can fix it and what we need to do to get there. It's very important to have that conversation at the leadership and board level. If women are not in leadership positions, what's an associate supposed to think about her options? It's very important to have role models of all backgrounds so you know it's attainable.

**“It's very important to have role models of all backgrounds so you know it's attainable.”**

### **How do you or your organization help women advance in the workplace and the legal profession?**

Our firm has done a great job with our diversity committee and women's initiative. We've done a lot to be at the forefront, making sure to have innovative programs, including the OnRamp program and Women in Law Hackathon. As the result of the Women in Law Hackathon, Akerman is one of the firms piloting the Mansfield Rule, which requires a commitment that we consider 30% or more women and attorneys of color for significant leadership roles, equity partner promotions, lateral associate and lateral partner recruiting searches. We're embracing other programs that are promoting the retention of women in leadership.

For me, I'm active in our women's initiative group and work internally with the attorneys to help elevate women. I always believe in being available to people. I have a lot of mentees.

### **What advice would you give to young lawyers who desire to become a partner in a law firm?**

Work ethic, dependability and communication all go a really long way. You are going to have trouble on your path if you are not communicating with people.

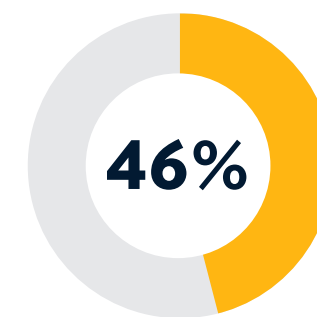
Be a good lawyer and know the trade. When the market crashed, there was a real emphasis on business development. That's important, but you also have to be really good at what you do.

Be conscious of what you are saying about other people; it impacts their reputation very quickly, so make sure you are checking yourself and not just upset in the moment.

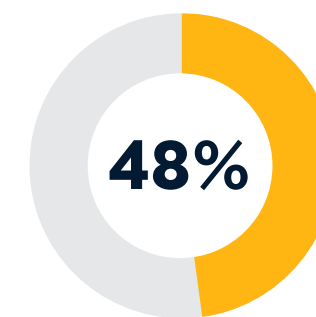
Communicate that your path is to partner, that that's something you really want. I hear a lot about people who think they will come to a law firm, get trained and moved in-house, so if you want to be a partner, express that you know this is your path because those are the people firms want to have and grow.

WE ARE COMMITTED  
**TO ADVANCING  
 WOMEN**  
 IN THE  
**LEGAL  
 PROFESSION**

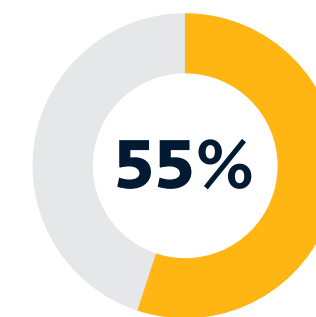
## MAJOR, LINDSEY & AFRICA BY THE NUMBERS



OF  
**SENIOR MANAGEMENT**  
 IS FEMALE



OF  
**PARTNERS**  
 ARE FEMALE



OF  
**RECRUITERS IN THE FIRM**  
 ARE FEMALE

## INTERNAL WOMEN'S INITIATIVES

### Women Mean Business! Employee Resource Group

Women Mean Business! (WMB!) exists to help women achieve their business development goals. We pledge to hold each other accountable for enforcing a zero-tolerance policy when it comes to gender discrimination, to assertively pursue new client business and to actively assist newer women employees who are similarly minded. We believe we can be successful because of who we are, not in spite of it. In this group, women never have to worry about how they are perceived amongst each other; members only have to be themselves, supportive of their colleagues and committed to bringing in new accounts.

### Mentorship Program

The mission of Major, Lindsey & Africa's Mentoring Program is to equally empower all employees to grow professionally and realize their full potential. By facilitating one-on-one mentoring relationships, the program helps employees strengthen their self-confidence, find their voice, integrate easily and thrive in their roles and within our organization.

## EVENTS FOR WOMEN LAWYERS

### Women's General Counsel High Tea

The Women's General Counsel High Tea is an annual event celebrating the accomplishments and experiences of women leading the law.

PICTURED AT LEFT Back row: Alison Helin, Judene Hylton, Miriam Frank, Barrett Avigdor, Mindy Circus / Front row: Amanda Ziemann, Heather Fine, Shannon Murphy, Sonya Som



The XX Advantage is a quarterly breakfast seminar series for senior women lawyers based in London. Each

seminar addresses a topic affecting women in the law and provides a forum for discussion and networking.



Thank you to our recruiters who assisted in making these interviews possible:

Susan Agopian  
Tanja Albers  
Paul Allen  
Deb Ben-Canaan

Andrea Bricca  
Lauren Drake  
Randi Lewis  
Melinda Wallman

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