

DISTINGUISHED LEADERS



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What are some of your proudest recent achievements?

This is a time of heightened discussion about gender issues from #MeToo to pay equity. I am proud to be a very active part of this dialogue. As a feminist, “big-law” partner and an employment defense lawyer,

I have a point of view that is useful in helping my clients make properly informed decisions. It is very gratifying to be advising prominent corporations and institutions on effective responses to investigations and efforts to change culture.

What does it mean to be a leader? The job of a leader is to guide others. The skill set necessary includes good communication skills, vision, and decisiveness among other things. However, for others to happily accept leadership, it requires that they trust *you*. That in turn requires that they know who you are. Being authentic, being true to your own personality, is key to leadership. I think that authenticity is critical whether you are leading a client through a rough spot, leading a litigation, leading a department or a firm.

Name a lawyer or mentor whose leadership inspired you. There are so many I could name. As I tell junior lawyers all the time, no one gets here alone. I will single out two; one from my past and one from my present/future. I need to give a shout-out to one of our prior chairs of Proskauer, Stanley Komaroff. When I was a young partner, struggling to raise three children and build a practice, he was a calm, supportive voice. He had far more confidence in me than I had in myself. He took the time to check in with me, share stories of his own life and that made a lasting impression on me. In my present life and as I look to the future, I am inspired by my partner Elise Bloom. She is amazingly disciplined,

organized and inclusive. Her support of junior colleagues is truly impressive.

How are the business and profession of law changing, and how should lawyers adapt for the future? I can't help but say the obvious, the impact of technology has made the rate of change exponential. I'm old enough to remember when a WestLaw terminal was so new and unique that it was displayed in a law library on a pedestal surrounded by red velvet ropes. I remember as a very junior lawyer hearing a partner lament the growing use of next-day air because clients were demanding next day answers. I often wonder how he would feel about emails imploring instant responses.

Now we are facing AI which may render much of what we do obsolete. However, I'm not sure that technology can replace the human courage and judgment required to make important decisions. I think that offering experience and wisdom to inform and guide decision-making will become the essential role for most lawyers in the future.

What is the best advice for someone considering a career in law, or someone already in the profession who is seeking to make a greater impact? Ask yourself over and over again, what is my best and highest use? Ask yourself, what really energizes me? Do those things. Stop worrying and work to make it happen.