



Next Gen



This week's Q&A with

Laura L. Ferguson

***Laura L. Ferguson** is a Houston-based Partner in Locke Lord's Employee Benefits Practice Group who focuses on two areas that require learning far too many acronyms, such as ERISA, IRC, ACA, HIPAA, CCPA, GDPR, GLBA and more! She helps clients keep their employees happy by advising on regulatory and transactional issues that impact the tax treatment of their benefits and compensation. She also helps clients navigate the rapidly changing area of privacy and cybersecurity law.*



More About Laura

What has helped you to become successful in your field?

I've been given great opportunities to learn as much as possible not only through exposure to challenging projects but also by attending conferences on the up-and-coming critical issues in my practice areas. These learning opportunities have enabled me to serve clients better by explaining trends in the market and discussing practical solutions that may work for them.

How did you know that you wanted to practice law? // What inspired you to become a lawyer?

I am a very analytical person, and many friends told me over the years that I should consider going to law school. When I quit my government job in Canada to take time to explore what I wanted to do with my life, which I knew was not working for the government, a friend of mine was going to take the LSAT and suggested I take it as well. We both went to law school in the U.S. and never looked back!

Who has had the biggest professional influence in your life? // Did you have a mentor? If so, tell us the most important things you learned from them.

I try to learn from everyone I interact with professionally — attorneys at our Firm, clients and contacts I meet while networking. One of the most important things I have learned is how to write for the target audience. For example, a busy executive does not have time to get into the nerdy details, so it is important to put the point of the communication in the first paragraph and leave the lengthy "why" explanation later in the document.

What do you do to give back to the community?

Lately, I have been spending my time volunteering at a retirement community, helping individuals in assisted living get to and from activities, participating in activities with them (who doesn't love bingo?) and spending time getting to know them. I'm a member of the United Way's Women's Initiative and regularly volunteer for events with that group, such as filling backpacks with school supplies to give to kids. Also through the United Way, I participate in the school reading program, where I'm paired with a kid and visit weekly to read with him or her.

What do you do to relax and reset after a long week?

Aside from going out with friends, I enjoy rock climbing to decompress from work. Rock climbing challenges me physically and mentally. Climbing a route is like solving a puzzle — you need to figure out the best way to move through the holds to finish it successfully.

What is your favorite thing about, or to do in, Houston?

I love that Houston has so many great restaurants with every type of cuisine. I always jump at the opportunity to try a new restaurant and catch up with a friend.



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