



Next Gen



This week's Q&A with

Michael Wolak

Atlanta Business Litigation and Dispute Resolution Partner [Michael Wolak](#) works to advance and protect the interests of domestic and international companies in complex business and commercial disputes, torts and civil litigation — from counseling through trial and appeal. Mike's practice has a strong emphasis on serving Asian companies and their U.S. subsidiaries, helping them navigate regulatory and compliance issues as they expand in the United States.



More About Mike

What has helped you to become successful in your field?

Learning each client's business objectives and, most importantly, putting their interests above all else. Clients look to us for strategic solutions to solve legal issues and achieve their business objectives. To effectively counsel them, we must always support and understand their business and be attentive to their needs and concerns.

What drives or motivates you on your hardest days/during your most difficult matters?

Whether large or small, litigation matters are almost always complex and challenging. Knowing my clients need our help to navigate difficult matters drives me to find innovative solutions that will get them where they want to be.

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.

My father. He is not a lawyer (having spent nearly 40 years working in a Kodak factory), and his professional advice and guidance are golden: keep your emotions in check; always be the calmest person in the room; and, above all else, act with integrity.

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

That's easy — play drums! I've been a drummer since I was 7 years old (also played alto and tenor saxophone) and love to release built-up energy with intense jam sessions. Plus, the weekends are easier for drumming because my wife and daughter might be out of the house. (I play really hard and loud!)

Tell us your favorite book, TV show, movie or podcast and why you like it.

My all-time favorite movie is *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*. I thought it was brilliant, and it was the second movie I saw at a drive-in. (*Star Wars* was the first.) I'm clearly dating myself here!

What would be your fantasy career if you weren't a lawyer?

A film director. I love cinema and thought really hard about going to film school. My father manufactured the film that Hollywood previously used, so we were always watching movies as a family and it really influenced me. I'm happy how it all ended up, though!



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