

IWD: 60 SECONDS WITH SIMONE PEARLMAN

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60 SECOND Q&A WITH SIMONE PEARLMAN



WHAT WAS YOUR CAREER PATH LIKE? DID YOU ALWAYS WANT TO WORK IN THIS FIELD?

When I was 14 years old I went to the Old Bailey (the Central Criminal Court in London) to watch cases from the public gallery and decided then that I wanted to study law at university. After two summers working in a local criminal law practice, I knew that criminal law wasn't for me and became a trainee at Herbert Smith (as it then was). I loved litigation from my first few months as a trainee and became a litigation associate and then professional support lawyer (PSL) in the firm's Disputes Division for many years before working in the central knowledge team and then becoming Head of Legal Knowledge.

WHAT DO YOU WISH SOMEONE HAD TOLD YOU EARLY IN YOUR CAREER?

A successful and rewarding career path can take many forms and if the one you originally thought you were going to take changes, other opportunities come up which can lead to success and fulfillment in unexpected ways.

WHAT TIPS DO YOU HAVE FOR ALL THE WOMEN COMING UP BEHIND YOU?

Work hard, build good relationships and networks and don't ever think there is something you cannot do. Stretch yourself and have a go. Remember to praise yourself to others if no one else does. That might sound strange, but it is so easy to think that your hard work and successes are being noticed when they may not be, unless you make a point of showcasing them.

WHAT WOMAN INSPIRES YOU AND WHY?

Every day in the office, I am inspired by many amazing women I work with in all sorts of roles, not just those in senior positions in the firms but many others in all different parts of the firm. They work, enjoy their fulfilling and busy jobs, whilst juggling a full home life dealing with family problems, children, elderly relatives and sometimes illness or disabilities (their own or those of family members). They come to work, throw themselves into their roles and keep a smile on their faces. If I had to pick one current well known woman, I would choose Helena Morrissey, who spoke at our Women Lawyers' Network Event in the office a couple of years ago, and founded The 30% Club (of which the firm is a member). The organisation's goal is to have 30% women on FTSE-100 Boards. She juggles her nine children (yes nine) with being at the helm of a large investments fund and founding one of the most important and innovative women's organisations that has been set up in recent years.

WHERE DO YOU SEE THE FUTURE TAKING YOU?

I think I will be finding ways to accommodate and maybe fight off the robots who will be beating a path to our doors and trying to improve, or take away, our jobs. I hope to be involved in leading the change.