

How I Made Partner: 'Don't Shy Away From Requesting Feedback and Constructive Criticism,' Says Tiffany Wynn of Crowell & Moring

By ALM Staff
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Tiffany Wynn, 39, Crowell & Moring, Washington, D.C.

Job title: Partner

Practice area: White Collar & Regulatory Enforcement

Law school and year of graduation:
Georgetown Law (2011)

How long have you been at the firm?
Since October 2011

What was your criteria in selecting your current firm? I was a summer associate at the firm and joined Crowell as a first-year associate following law school. I chose to join the firm based on the caliber of work Crowell was doing (and does), and because of the firm's collegial and entrepreneurial environment.

What do you think was the deciding point for the firm in making you partner? Was it your performance on a specific case? A personality trait? Making connections with the right people? I don't think there was one single deciding point. Rather, I think my elevation to partner was an acknowledgement of my contributions in a number of areas. High quality work and contributions, to be sure, but also a recognition

of my internal efforts with firm affinity groups, and a consequence of relationships I'd built both internally and externally.

Who had or has the greatest influence in your career and why? A

number of people have shaped my career in big

and small ways. That said, I wouldn't be here without the support of my parents. But for the time and resources they poured into me, and the effort they made to expose me to opportunities and experiences that they didn't themselves have growing up, being a lawyer would have never been on my radar.

What advice would you give an associate who wants to make partner? Relationships matter.

Relationships with your former classmates, colleagues, and the professional staff that make your job easier. Relationships with your clients and others in your professional network. And of course, relationships with your friends and family. Don't take them for granted and nurture them as best you can—these are



Tiffany Wynn, with Crowell & Moring.

Courtesy photo

the people who will celebrate and amplify your successes and be your support system through trying moments.

When it comes to career planning and navigating inside a law firm, in your opinion, what's the most common mistake you see other attorneys making? Don't shy away from requesting feedback and constructive criticism. It may not always be easy to hear, but requesting and accepting feedback from your case teams, supervising attorneys, and clients shows a desire to learn and grow and is key to your professional development. And, as you get more senior and supervise others, pay it forward and provide constructive feedback to others.

What challenges, if any, did you face or had to overcome in your career path and what was the lesson learned? How did it affect or influence your career? As I know was the reality for many, the peak pandemic years were a struggle. In my case, I had only relatively

recently returned to the firm following maternity leave when the world shut down overnight. Juggling being a new parent with no child care, while still needing to manage my professional obligations was a challenge of immense proportions and involved a lot of early mornings and late nights playing catch-up (while still feeling perpetually behind). That said, I totally recognize that my family was immensely privileged in a number of ways during that time, and I'm grateful for the heavy dose of perspective that those years gave me. I think that I emerged from the pandemic with a renewed sense of purpose, and a keener focus on my personal and professional priorities.

Knowing what you know now about your career path, what advice would you give to your younger self? Be open to challenges, even if they take you out of your comfort zone. You'll grow as a lawyer (and person) in those moments and be all the better for it, and you'll probably have a bit of fun along the way.