

How I Made Office Managing Partner: 'Take the Time to Help Your Colleagues When They Ask,' Says Agustin Orozco of Crowell & Moring

By ALM Staff

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Agustin D. Orozco, 42, Office Managing Partner at Crowell & Moring, Los Angeles, California

Practice area(s): White collar and regulatory enforcement, government contracts

Law school and year of graduation: Loyola Law School, 2010

The following has been edited for style.

How long have you been at the firm?

2013-2016; 2022-2025 – six years

What year were you promoted/elected to your current role?

March 2025

Were you a partner at another firm before joining your present firm? If so, which one, how long were you there and when did you leave?

No. I was an assistant U.S. attorney in the criminal division of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Central District of California.

How would you describe your career trajectory (was it organic or an active pursuit)?

My practice involves representing entities in civil and criminal government enforcement actions and internal investigations. This includes white collar criminal matters and investigations involving government contractors, usually related to allegations of a violation of the civil False Claims



Courtesy photo

Agustin Orozco of Crowell & Moring

Act. My path to representing government contractors started with my father. He was an aerospace machinist and, because of that, before becoming a lawyer, I was also an aerospace machinist. I helped manage a machine shop that manufactured aerospace parts for two years before attending law school. That manufacturing experience helped me obtain my first job as a government contracts lawyer, representing aerospace and defense companies in claims, disputes, and other government contracting matters. As my career progressed, I began working on more white-collar criminal investigations.

Because I enjoyed leading investigations and criminal law, in 2016, I applied for and accepted

a job to work at the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Central District of California. I spent most of my time in the Public Corruption & Civil Rights Section. I represented the U.S. in criminal investigations, prosecutions, an appeals involving public corruption, bribery (both domestic and abroad), conflicts of interest, fraud, obstruction of justice, money laundering, tax, and civil rights crimes. I worked on hundreds of criminal cases, served as lead counsel in federal trials, and briefed and argued multiple cases before the Ninth Circuit. Then, in 2022, I rejoined Crowell & Moring as a partner in both the white collar and the government contracts groups.

What do you think was the deciding point for the firm in electing/promoting you to your current role? Was it your performance on a specific case? A personality trait? Making connections with the right people?

I am big fan of Crowell & Moring's Los Angeles office. It has great people, and I am proud of the culture we have built. We don't differentiate between the members of our office who bill hours and those that do not. When we hold events, the entire office is invited. We have office-wide lunches every Wednesday and, again, the entire office is included. I would not work anywhere that didn't have a similar culture. I suspect I was promoted to managing partner because the passion I share for the Los Angeles office comes across in my everyday interactions with my colleagues. Even before I was the office managing partner, I was always concerned with ensuring that everyone in the office was happy and felt valued. Now, I consider that a part of my job.

What unique challenges do you face as it relates to your role?

Whenever you step into a new leadership position, you need to decide how you are going to get everyone on the same page, including those that

are more senior to you. I expect everyone in the office to work together and to be willing to step in and help a colleague who could use assistance. I would not ask that of others if I was not willing to do that myself. For that reason, I always try to lead by example and support my colleagues any way that I can. That approach has earned me the trust of my colleagues.

What's the best piece of advice you give to someone who wants to rise up the ranks to lead an office?

You need to have a good understanding of what your colleagues want from those in leadership positions. And you need to have that understanding well before you are promoted into those positions. The only way to do that is to be willing to take the time to help your colleagues when they ask for help and listen to them when they want to discuss an issue. We are all busy and it is very easy to say you will call someone back or that you do not have time to talk at that moment. However, people recognize when you take the time to listen and help them through any issue.

Who had the greatest influence in your career that helped propel you to your current role?

I am fortunate to have the support of a lot of great people at my firm. I would not be able to narrow it to just one person. Firm leadership, the practice group leaders for the white collar and government contracts groups, and the attorneys that managed the Los Angeles office before me have all been extremely supportive of me and my practice since I returned to Crowell from government service. I am forever grateful for their trust and support.

How do you utilize technology to benefit the firm/practice and/or business development?

It is always important to leverage technology to best serve clients. Obviously, the hot topic is AI. Crowell has done a great job of rolling out internal

AI platforms aimed at ensuring we strike the right balance between keeping up with technology and using that technology responsibly. I leverage the available technology, when appropriate, to assist with everyday tasks such as time management, communications, and brainstorming ideas. I encouraged everyone in the Los Angeles office to do the same.

Knowing what you know now, what advice would you give to your younger self and/or what would you do differently?

I would tell my younger self to invest earlier in establishing an effective business development skillset. I joined Crowell as a partner right after leaving the government and had to build a practice from the ground up, which is very challenging. When I worked for the government, I always had what felt like an insurmountable amount of work. It was a drastic change to go into private practice and for the first time in my career, needing to engage in business development efforts to build my client base. I eventually found the business development efforts that work best for me. Thankfully, Crowell has a great track record of bringing in partners out of government and a fantastic business development team.

Do you have a prediction on how the legal industry will evolve over the next several years?

Even though we are a few years removed from the pandemic, law firms are still trying to figure out how to manage their offices in this post-pandemic world. From my perspective, the pandemic

has taught us that many of us can work very productively from home and the days of needing to be in the office five days a week is a thing of the past. With that said, it is still very important for people to come into the office and interact in person. I think our younger attorneys really enjoy the in-person mentorship and it is an important part of their development. As we continue to move forward, I think we will see that most law firms will continue to search for the right balance between remote work and being in the office, this includes uniform office sizes, office hoteling, and allowing people to individually find the right balance between working from home and coming into the office.

Please share with us any firm or industry initiatives that you are working on as well as the impact you hope to achieve.

I am currently working on expanding the firm's footprint in Latin America. I've helped several clients with white collar issues arising out of the region. My ability to speak Spanish has been a big benefit for our clients as we review documents, conduct interviews, and communicate with employees in the region. And it is not just me. We have a growing number of attorneys at Crowell that are fluent in Spanish and can help our clients with respect to a wide range of practice areas including government and internal investigations, antitrust, international trade, and international dispute resolution.