

DAY IN THE LIFE

CURATED BY PATRICIA D. CAFFERATA, ESQ.

The Ups & Downs of Running a Large Office

By Jorge Ramirez, Esq.

A day in the life of any Nevada lawyer varies as wildly as the lawyers themselves. This column gives us a glimpse of how our colleagues in different practices spend their day, and I'm happy to share mine.

My family moved to Las Vegas when I was 3 years old back in 1973, so I consider myself a native because I was raised in Nevada. The only time I have lived outside of Nevada was during law school when I attended Saint Louis University. The cold Missouri winters made me realize that Las Vegas is where I wanted to live and practice. I started practicing in 1998. For the last 11 years, I have been a partner with Wilson Elser, a 900-plus lawyer firm with 38 offices nationwide. I serve as the deputy managing partner of the firm's Las Vegas office. We generally have approximately 30 lawyers, who all practice in various forms of litigation.

My daily life is about balancing my practice with the administrative tasks of helping run an office in a large firm. This balance is something that seems to get glossed over for newer lawyers. The more you advance in an organization, or if you decide to go solo, the more administrative responsibilities you have. The more you need to administer, the less you get to lawyer, because there are only so many hours in a day. One advantage of larger firms is that there are usually processes in place to help complete those administrative responsibilities.

But my administrative responsibilities also permit me to participate in some exciting work. For



instance, I co-lead our office's recent partnership with the William S. Boyd School of Law to create an internship program for law students. The law students intern with us for one semester. This opportunity gives them a snapshot of what one type of private practice looks like and provides them with tangible job skills that they could use after graduation. The program has been a great addition for us.

Another unique part of my job recently has been a new office. As I write this in March 2020, we are building a new office at Town Square. The new office's concept is radically different from what we currently have and will be a first within our firm. No lawyer will have a permanently assigned office, not even me. We are instead switching to a hoteling concept that will allow attorneys to work wherever is best for their day. For instance, if I need to be in

the office for meetings, I can log onto an app and reserve one of the private offices for that day. If I am working from home or on the road the rest of the week, that office is available for others to reserve and use. The era of drab individualized offices for attorneys is behind us.

The new office is also focused on helping lawyers and staff balance their professional and personal lives. The design has many windows and glass walls to allow as much natural light into the office as reasonably possible. We also chose Town Square because we hope it will reduce the need to drive all over town to complete the daily errands we all have.

Finally, I am writing this amid the COVID-19 pandemic. It has vastly affected my professional and personal life, just like so many others. Our focus as an office has been on doing what we can to minimize the risk to our employees, colleagues and clients while also keeping our business going, so we can minimize or avoid the layoffs that have decimated other industries. It is no easy task. Becoming a large virtual law firm overnight was hard, but the spirit, professionalism and comradery I saw throughout the firm was inspiring and made the impossible possible. It made me proud to be a part of Wilson Elser as we face this challenge together.

JORGE RAMIREZ is a partner with Wilson Elser, practicing in Nevada and Arizona. His practice is primarily litigation based.