

Carol Goodman

Partner, Chair of Employment Practice,
Co-Chair of Litigation Department,
Member of Executive Committee

HERRICK

Education: JD, Fordham University School of Law, BBA, Emory University

Company Name: Herrick

Industry: Legal

Company Headquarters Location: New York

Number of Employees: 250

Words you live by: You won your argument, stop talking.

Personal Philosophy: Lean in so far you tip over.

What book are you reading? *If We Were Villains* by M.L. Rio

What was your first job? Lifeguard

Favorite charity: Lustgarten Foundation, supporting pancreatic cancer research.

Interests: Running (four-time marathoner, many-time half-marathoner) and swimming.

Family: Husband, two daughters and a Bernedoodle.



A career assessment test was wrong but a career in law has been so right

In grade school in the 1970s, we took a “career” test to predict what we would be when we grew up. The boys seemed to have a lot of choices, including being doctors, lawyers and astronauts. I was told, based on my “test results” that I should be a stewardess or a mother. It wasn’t entirely wrong.

My own path to law became clear in college when I enrolled in a business law class taught by a visiting (female) professor who was down south on sabbatical from Harvard Law. Her teaching was both engaging and inspiring, resulting in many of us in that late-1980s class applying to law school. Unlike some of my male classmates’ decisions to pursue a legal education, mine was met with initial skepticism. When I told my parents I wanted to apply to law school, my father (who already had two sons who were doctors) asked, “Why?”

I quickly discovered that I loved law school, especially the clinical work. I worked on a murder trial with our professor, mediated cases in Bronx Small Claims Court and testified in child support hearings as a process server. While these were not high-profile matters, they allowed me to help “real” clients, which I found deeply rewarding. Those

experiences confirmed that I wanted a career rooted in service and helping others—and that the career test I took in the late 1970s was not wrong, but rather reflected the limitations facing women at that time.

A law degree opened many doors for me. I was fortunate to learn commercial litigation skills from exceptional trial lawyers; winning a case remains an unmatched thrill. Equally important, however, was my ability to pivot in my career from courtroom litigation to also advising clients on strategy and day-to-day employment issues, internal investigations, training employees and becoming an expert in risk and crisis management. In recent years, I have taken on significant firm management responsibilities, including co-chairing our litigation department and serving on the firm’s Executive Committee, introducing new challenges to my career.

I am grateful to have chosen a career that allows me to work with clients and colleagues who I value, while continuing to learn and grow as a lawyer and as a person. As I often tell my daughters, true career success is finding a path that allows you to do what you love.