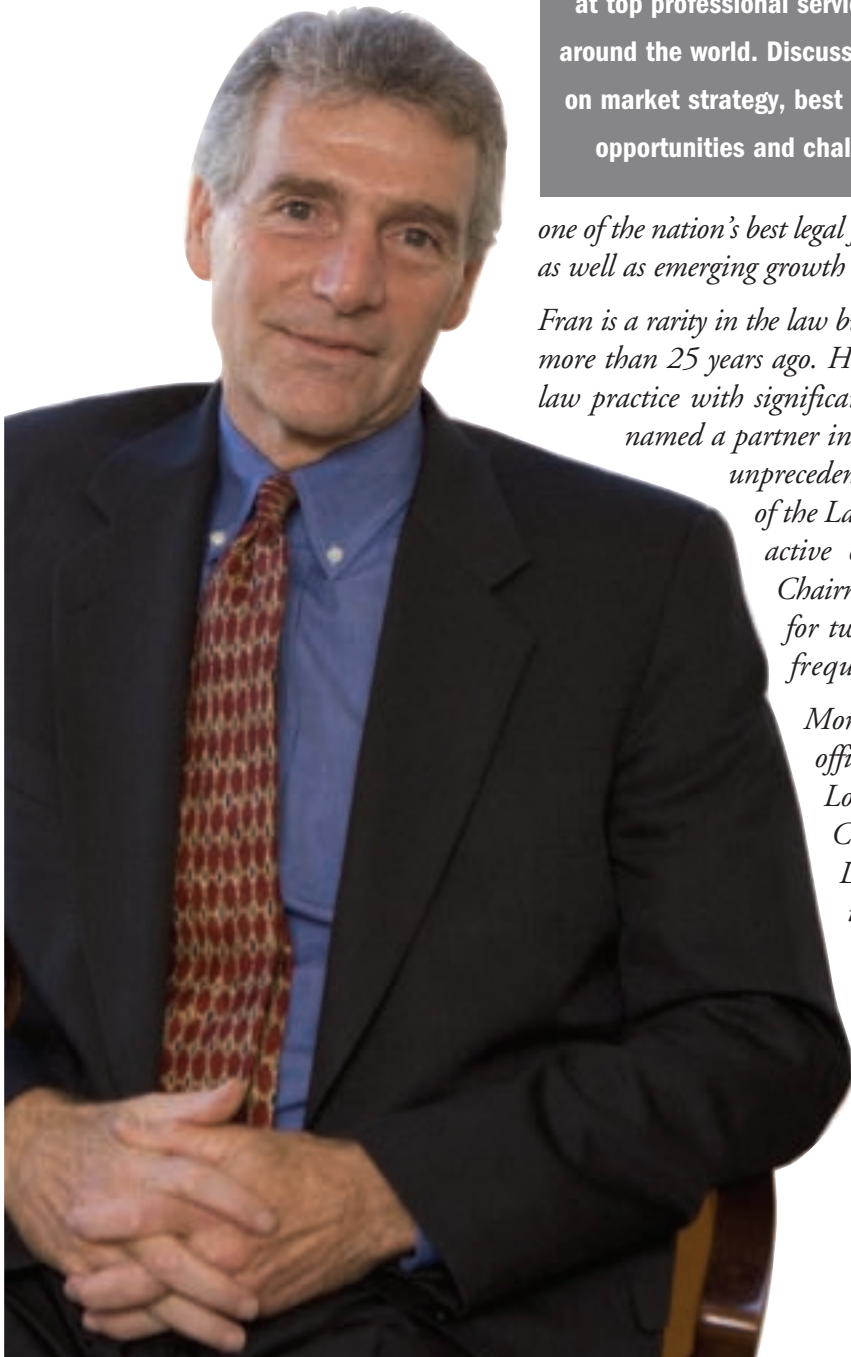


One · on · One

with **Fran Milone** of **Morgan Lewis & Bockius LLP**

Broderick's "One-on-One" series features interviews with leaders at top professional services firms around the world. Discussions focus on market strategy, best practices, opportunities and challenges.



As the Chair of one of the most prominent law firms in the country, Francis M. Milone has led Morgan Lewis through an unprecedented era of growth. Since becoming chairman five years ago, the firm has expanded into new practice areas and regions, opening offices in San Francisco, Palo Alto, Boston, Chicago, Dallas and Paris. His relentless commitment to service excellence has set the firm apart as one of the nation's best legal firms, representing both established Global 1000 corporations, as well as emerging growth businesses.

Fran is a rarity in the law business today—he now leads the firm he joined as an associate more than 25 years ago. He has developed a nationally known labor and employment law practice with significant experience handling jury and non-jury trials. Fran was named a partner in the firm's Labor and Employment Law Practice Group an unprecedented four years after joining the firm. He served as Manager of the Labor and Employment Law Practice from 1995 to 1997, was active on the firm's governing board, and prior to becoming Chairman in 1999 served as Morgan Lewis' Managing Partner for two years. Listed in Best Lawyers in America, Fran lectures frequently on various labor and employment topics.

Morgan Lewis is a global law firm with 1,200 lawyers in 19 offices located in Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Miami, Pittsburgh, Princeton, Chicago, Palo Alto, Dallas, Harrisburg, Irvine, Boston, London, Paris, Brussels, Frankfurt and Tokyo. For more information about Morgan Lewis, please visit its Web site, www.morganlewis.com.

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“Client relationships are built one partner or one team at a time.”

an interview with **Fran Milone of Morgan Lewis & Bockius LLP**

What does brand mean for law firms?

Brand in the business of law is the promise that clients associate with the services we deliver. Building a strong brand is a cycle of setting expectations, delivering—or better yet, exceeding on those expectations again and again.

In the legal business, firms offer very similar services. To compete, you must have superior legal talent. But I think it is a firm’s ability to execute on the fundamentals that can truly distinguish the firm as a superior brand. To differentiate your firm, execution on ordinary things, from billing procedures to daily client communications helps set you apart.

How does Morgan Lewis build brand awareness?

For us, branding begins by starting with manageable units. We leverage our strengths by building recognition around our strongest practice areas. Like other global law firms, we provide services across a broad spectrum of areas. However, we have several practice areas where we have particularly strong

capabilities. These practice areas have significant groups of very talented attorneys, sophisticated experience and a strong base of clients to leverage. These are the areas that we strategically grow to differentiate our firm, build brand recognition, generate business, and establish our initial working relationships with clients.

How does Morgan Lewis strengthen and deepen its client relationships?

Client relationships are built one partner or one team at a time. If one of our partners or our teams, through great work and great service, achieves a trusted advisor status with a client, it is much easier to expand services and grow relationships. It’s the ‘halo effect’—without the trust or belief that Morgan Lewis will deliver, the relationship cannot grow.

Does Morgan Lewis have a formal process for managing client growth?

To better serve our clients and continually strengthen our relationships,

we have launched a key client initiative program. The initiative focuses on three levels of client relationships. On one level are clients we serve across many practices; on the next are clients who primarily work with a single practice group; and on the next are clients who have relationships with individual partners. We have formed teams of partners for clients at each of these levels that meet monthly to discuss areas where we can add value, identify specific action areas, and set deadlines to achieve goals. The status of action items is reviewed monthly and client work is monitored and tracked rigorously on an ongoing basis.

How do you manage marketing at Morgan Lewis?

Marketing for law firms is often an Achilles’ heel. It’s difficult to define and it’s challenging to implement. We recently reorganized our marketing team into three focused areas; including marketing support, business development and communications. Marketing support professionals are focused on infrastructure issues—producing



promotional materials, creating pitch packages, organizing events, etc. Our business development team, including former attorneys and a former venture capitalist, are our eyes and ears in the market. We have these professionals working with our practice groups to identify new trends that will impact our services and business development efforts. The final area of focus is on communications, which includes both external and internal communications. These professionals are a critical part of the team, ensuring that our brand promise and good work are clearly and consistently communicated internally and to clients and prospects.

What are some of the most significant things the firm has done to facilitate business development?

One of the most significant things we did was to shift from a local office focus to a firm-wide practice group and industry group matrix. Our clients are global, they don't operate by offices. What they care about is the depth of our

“We have never been an ‘eat what you kill’ firm. We have a long-term culture that shares clients.”

capabilities and ability to serve them across geographies. Firm-wide practice and industry leaders were selected and are empowered to grow profitable businesses and build long-term client relationships for the firm. Partners and staff have been energized to come together across offices to work together more effectively.

A critical component of our business development strategy is Morgan Lewis' overall culture. We have never been an 'eat what you kill' firm. We have a long-term culture that shares clients and rewards and compensates attorneys for participating in pitches, whether or not they perform the service. Oftentimes, organizational issues, such as compensation, work against a firm's long-term objectives. We have worked hard to identify and overcome these "barriers to execution" to ensure that the Morgan

Lewis environment is fertile for market growth as well as the continued professional growth of our staff and attorneys.

What are the keys to growing a profitable and successful global law firm?

It's easy to understand how law firms are successful from a financial perspective. The main levers are rates, utilization, leverage and realization. The hard part is execution; including attracting the clients and work necessary to get high rates, keeping lawyers busy, leveraging partners, and collecting a high percentage of what you bill. Everything a law firm does, or fails to do, has an effect on its ability to attract clients and work, hence my belief that executing effectively on all things is the key, not grand plans or strategies.

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continued from inside

As the Chairman of a major professional services firm, what are the two or three things that are always at the top of your agenda in managing your firm?

Prudent and successful financial management is a given, but it pervades virtually everything one does in managing a law firm. You have to get that right. But the single most important leadership responsibility is

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communication. Communication means not only informing the people in your organization of what is going on, where the organization is going, what the values of the organization are, it also

includes listening to what they have to say. Lawyers are smart, practical, meticulous people. Hearing what they have to say can only make your firm better. Making them feel like they are listened to and are participants in the decisions affecting the organization brings them closer to, and more invested in, the firm. **ton1**

ABOUT BRODERICK

Broderick works exclusively with professional services firms to develop and implement market strategies that build brand awareness and generate business. Our clients include some of the world's leading professional services firms. For more information, please visit our website at www.broderickco.com.

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