

# NEW YORK BUSINESS JOURNAL

## Women of Influence honoree: Robin Cohen, Cohen Ziffer Frenchman & McKenna

BY MARK MENSHEHA  
Director, National News Desk, American  
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**Name:** Robin Cohen

**Company:** Cohen Ziffer Frenchman &  
McKenna LLP

**Title:** Chair

**Where born:** Pennsylvania

**Education:** University of Pennsylvania  
(B.A., J.D.)

**In my job, I'm responsible for:** Overseeing a growing, close-knit team of nationally recognized trial lawyers in representing policyholders in high-profile, high-value insurance recovery disputes against insurance companies.

**The most challenging part of my job is:** What I excel at and love most about it: coming up with novel, winning strategies to secure coverage for our policyholder clients who have suffered business losses, particularly those who were hard hit by the pandemic.

**I know I've done my job well when:** We take on complex, bet-the-company cases and win them.

**A tip I've learned that's helped me with networking is:** The more genuine you are, the more people are going to be able to connect with you.

**The best advice I've received for career development is:** "If you want to be a business lawyer, you have to figure out what the business people need to accomplish." My dad offered this advice to me when I first began my career as a lawyer, and it has served me well ever since.

**The attributes I look for in a candidate when hiring are:** What make, in my opinion, an effective trial lawyer: someone who

is dynamic and well-rounded and a good public speaker who can draw in a jury. Diversity is also important, as a diverse team invites more diverse ideas, which really makes a difference, especially in the courtroom.

**Do you serve as a mentor for someone? If so, how do you try and fill that role?:** For me, mentoring is an integral part of my day-to-day leadership of our firm. When we say we give our junior trial lawyers hands-on experience, we really mean it. We have junior partners and senior associates going toe-to-toe in court against attorneys from some of the most impressive firms in the country.

**Do you have a mentor yourself? If so, what do you look for from that individual?:** Randy Paar was an important mentor of mine. She was the best person I've ever seen in a courtroom; her oral arguments were flawless. Part of why I am who I am today is from working with her and learning alongside her, especially in court.

**What has developed for you during this time of the pandemic that perhaps could pay dividends in the years to come?:** We realized during Covid that we wanted to start our own firm and that we didn't need the big infrastructure of a large firm to be successful. We launched Cohen Ziffer in January 2021, in the middle of the pandemic, and our business base really expanded – both because our clients were dealing with Covid losses and we handle a lot of coverage cases for D&O and ransomware attacks.

**Knowing what you know now: What advice would you give yourself 10 years ago?:** I've learned from experience that using the force of your personality is really important, especially in a courtroom. Being likable, having integrity, connecting with the judge, giving the court the respect of being prepared: These things are all as important as being the smartest person in the room, if not more so.

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ZIFFER  
FRENCHMAN  
& MCKENNA



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