

New lawyers need to be encouraged and empowered

Preparing the next generation of lawyers is, without doubt, one of my most important responsibilities as a leader. I benefited enormously from mentors who trusted me early in my career, and I believe young lawyers deserve the same opportunities to grow.

From my earliest days in practice, I learned that real responsibility is the fastest route to professional development. I was only seven or eight years out of law school when a major client asked me to serve as lead counsel on one of the first environmental coverage trials in the country. That moment changed the trajectory of my career. That's why I push young lawyers to challenge themselves—taking depositions, arguing motions, standing up in court. I encourage associates, especially women, to be fearless in advocating for themselves and making their talents known.

Supporting the next generation also means building a culture where every lawyer feels empowered. At my firm, we put women and diverse attorneys in genuine leadership positions because diversity has immense value at the top of the org chart. When lawyers see people who look like them shaping strategy, making decisions, and leading cases, it helps them see that future for themselves and feel inspired to work toward it.

I also believe that diverse teams and styles make us better trial lawyers. Juries are diverse, and teams that reflect that reality connect more authentically in the courtroom. I teach young lawyers that the most powerful thing they can bring into a courtroom is their own voice. I've never tried to imitate anyone else, and I urge them not to imitate me. Authenticity builds credibility. Emotional intelligence and the ability to relate to people can matter as much as raw intellect, and often those qualities are what separate extraordinary advocates from merely competent ones.

Finally, preparing the next generation requires genuine teamwork and collaborative thinking. When we take on a major case, we gather as a group—partners, associates, paralegals—and build our strategy together. Our young lawyers are not just observing; they are shaping cases. That collaborative approach helps them develop judgment earlier in their careers.

To prepare the next generation of lawyers, leaders must trust them, challenge them, and create environments where they can meaningfully contribute. That's the environment that allowed me to grow, and it's the one I'm committed to creating for the next generation.



Education: JD, University of Pennsylvania Law School; BA, University of Pennsylvania

Company Name:
Cohen Ziffer Frenchman & McKenna

Industry: Legal

Company Headquarters Location:
New York, NY

Number of Employees: 41

Words you live by: The climb is where character is forged. Every misstep is just a chance to rise stronger.

Who is your personal hero? Golda Meir

What book(s) are you reading? Lately I have been immersed in books about the aftermath of October 7th. They capture the profound human costs of trauma and the courage of those who endure and rebuild.

What was your first job?
Bartender at Friday's restaurant

Favorite charity:
Center for Reproductive Rights

Interests/Hobbies:
Biking, exercise and hiking

Family: Husband and two children (ages 23 and 26)