

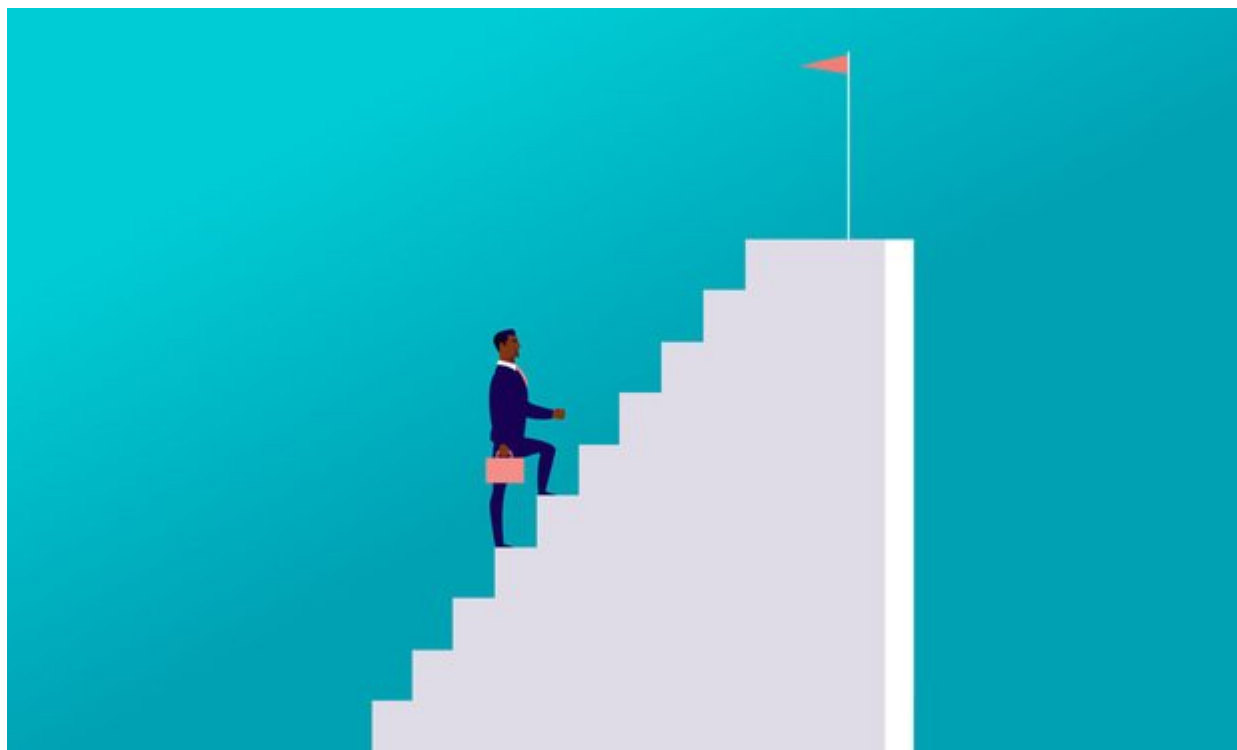
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How I Made Partner: "I Have Been Able to Stay True to Myself and My Values," Says David A. Moreno Jr. of Brown Rudnick

"If your goal is to make partner, speak to your partner mentor about the things that he or she did right and more importantly the things they did wrong and the lessons they learned from these missteps."

By Tasha Norman | April 27, 2021



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David A. Moreno Jr. (<http://brownrudnick.com/people/david-a-moreno-jr/>), 34, Brown Rudnick, New York.

Practice area: Litigation, White-Collar Defense, Sports and Entertainment.

Law school and year of graduation: The University of Miami School of Law, 2011.

How long have you been at the firm? I have been at my current Firm for three months. I joined the firm as a lateral partner.



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David A. Moreno, Jr. Courtesy photo.

Where did you practice before joining your present firm? I

joined my previous firm, Spar & Bernstein, after leaving the Manhattan District Attorney's Office in 2015. Upon joining that firm, I was the managing attorney of the criminal defense department and later became partner/managing attorney. I left Spar & Bernstein in the beginning of January 2021.

What year did you make partner at your current firm? I made

partner at my previous Firm, Spar & Bernstein, in 2017 and made the lateral move to my current firm as a partner in January 2021.

What's the biggest surprise you experienced in becoming partner? The biggest surprise upon making partner at my firm has

been the amount of resources and support available to partners. Throughout my career I have been able to consistently provide exceptional legal service to my clients and continually grow my book of business with much less at my disposal. The wide-ranging possibilities and different types of engagements that I am now better suited to handle is exhilarating.

What do you think was the deciding point for the firm in making you partner? The lateral process for partners in Big Law is

thorough and comprehensive, which truly creates a level of transparency when evaluating lateral partners. Performance, your mobile book of business and reputation will get you in the door. I have prided myself on being humble, willing to work collaboratively with others, and I have focused on fostering meaningful and

mutually beneficial relationships over the years. Those things helped me stand out in a pool of equally suited candidates. I have also mastered my craft as a trial attorney and have used that credibility to open doors into other practice areas. I think my firm values most that I am exceptional at my core competency, can work well with others, and open the door to new and varied opportunities for the Firm.

Describe how you feel now about your career now that you've made partner. While making partner is certainly a tremendous milestone, I am grateful for the opportunities that I have gotten along the way to help people and to impact their lives in a positive way. Even more paramount to me is that I have been able to stay true to myself and my values during this journey.

What's the key to successful business development in your opinion, and how do you grow professionally while everyone is working remotely?

- The key to business development is to be genuine and generous. Those that look at business development and are laser-focused on how they can benefit from a particular relationship will likely not be successful. I have had a great deal of success by truly getting to know people, following up with them consistently and, most importantly, asking them how I could be of service.
- It is more memorable to give with no expectation of receiving than to consistently have an ask.
- Another tip on business development is to not overthink it. I have seen countless people look at their professional networks only as the people they may meet at a specific conference, or charitable outing, but have no idea what their closest personal friends and family members are up to.

- It is also very important to think outside the box. If your approach is the same as dozens of others, it can become stale. Find new enjoyable ways to expand your sphere of influence.

Daily growth is paramount to success. The way to grow during the pandemic is the same as it is during normal times. Find CLEs, and other programs, that allow you to continue to expand your knowledge base. For most people, especially in the NYC Metro area, working remotely has freed up between one to three hours in time spent commuting daily. Even if you commit 30% of that time to thinking critically about business development and growth you will be light-years ahead of where you are presently.

Joining my new firm as a lateral partner provides me a completely new platform. *I have enjoyed spending time studying my firm daily. That studying includes learning more about Brown Rudnick and its capabilities, and, more importantly, learning and connecting daily with the other partners and associates at the firm. At the big firm level, you are truly the sum of all your parts. The more information I learn about the capacities of my peers and the firm itself, the more I am able to enhance what I alone can offer when making new connections or strengthening preexisting ones.*



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Who had the greatest influence in your career that helped propel you to partner?

My greatest influence has not been one single person. So many important people have taught me so many valuable lessons that I incorporate every single day into my life. My Mother, Adrienne Edward, who as a single mother and solo practitioner, taught me by example, hard work, how to go above and beyond for my clients and to treat each one of their matters with the care, dedication and zeal required. My wife, Mira, who is in the mental health field, consistently encouraged me to take calculated risks, and always let me know that she had my back if things didn't work out. Having that confidence is invaluable. My close friend and mentor, David Meltzer, an attorney and entrepreneur who helped me build my personal brand and taught me the art of being of service, gratitude and how to close. My grandmother, who came to this country speaking a different language, shattered daily race, gender and language obstacles and dedicated her entire life to serving others. I will just take this opportunity as I think critically about this to thank everyone that has had a positive impact on my career over the years—friends, family members, colleagues, past supervisors and many others.

What advice you could give an associate who wants to make partner?

- Detach yourself from the outcome. It is important to set goals, and making partner is a great one to have as an associate. The problem with that approach is that often times we set goals and prioritize that goal when what we should be prioritizing daily is the incremental and exponential growth that will make us better and thus enhance our chances of making partner.
- Find great mentors within your firm community, within your practice area, outside of your firm, outside your practice area, outside the profession, altogether, and ideally have one mentor that serves in the role that you desire.
- Speak to these individuals consistently about your goals and create a plan with them that outlines the steps it will take to reach that goal.

- If your goal is to make partner, speak to your partner mentor about the things that he or she did right and more importantly the things they did wrong and the lessons they learned from these missteps.

How do you network at a time like this? I try and maintain contact by scheduling calls virtually or just picking up the phone to see what people are up to. This time is unlike any other, but with the advancements in technology it is easier than ever to stay connected to people around the world.

Knowing what you know now about your career path, what advice would you give to your younger self. Stay the course, great things are on the horizon!

Find more career development insights from our 'How I Made It' Q&A series on law.com (<https://www.law.com/special-reports/how-i-made-it/#home>).



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