

Re-Examining Values: Greenberg Traurig's Executive Chairman on the Lessons of the Pandemic



"For many, it has taken an unprecedented pandemic to realize there are better ways—and now is the time to act," says Greenberg's Richard A. Rosenbaum.

By Richard A. Rosenbaum | **November 2, 2020** | [Law.com International](#)

As we enter another month of global uncertainty during this pandemic, with many working remotely and still somewhat productively in the legal industry, it remains nearly impossible to escape feelings of fatigue, dissociation and isolation. And it goes beyond the sterile non-interaction of another video call.

As days, weeks, months and “waves” pass through Europe, America and beyond, there grow tests of spirit, deep personal analysis and organizational glue.

Individuals are looking more deeply at their own personal relationships and the connection between their core values and the way they have come to live.

Professionally, can lawyers feel resonance between those values—that sense of personal empowerment, trust and respect so vital to feeling most vibrantly alive, creative and free—and the law firm they happen to be associated with?

It is a time when the brevity of a healthy life seems more clear than ever, where both marriages and connections to one’s law firm and colleagues are being re-examined.

If you are a world class lawyer, you know you need a firm with a number of key geographical locations and true excellence in core practices.

For many, it has taken an unprecedented pandemic to realize there are better ways, and now is the time to act.

But is the trade-off worth accepting (i) the uniformity, bureaucracy, lack of empowerment, individual creativity and internal limits, restrictions and politics of typical “elite” big firms; (ii) a “verein” framework, trying to create the large firm impression, but without any unified business, excellence or value system or; (iii) a smaller, national or regional firm, which might provide more of the personal touch you may seek personally, but without the platform and resources you truly need to service your clients?

For those ready to take charge of their futures, the pandemic has brought to the fore a strongly emerging new choice—those very few unified global law firms that are in all the key jurisdictions, where excellence is uncompromised and

collaboration is rewarded, but a client-and-lawyer-centered culture comes first: with personal excellence, respect, trust, and nimble adjustment to change and competition on the ground at its core.

A few firms that can satisfy their personal needs and live their values, while maintaining disciplined management, will stand out in this new era.

Watch the recent major lateral moves and client choices, starting in Europe and spreading to the U.S. They are telling the story of the next great wave of law firms and answers to client needs. If you look below the surface and the numbers, you find these firms and the reasons they are successful.

Every crisis is a new opportunity. Now, fatigue, isolation and necessity will shake lawyers and clients into a new and much more empowering place, new relationships, new dreams and new levels of personal and professional freedom and satisfaction. A few firms that can satisfy their personal needs and live their values, while maintaining disciplined management, will stand out in this new era.

Money alone earned in a traditional structure was never a sufficiently satisfying reason to sacrifice so much of our lives. For many, it has taken an unprecedented pandemic to realize there are better ways and now is the time to act—wash your hands, wear your mask and maximize your personal potential and satisfaction.

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