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. MENTORS CATEGORY .

**Beth Rose on Mentoring: ‘Make It a Priority. Be Accessible.’**

Beth S. Rose, a Member of Sills Cummis & Gross, is a Law Journal Mentor honoree. The below responses were lightly edited for clarity and style.

**Is the role of mentor one that you set out to take or one you happened into?**

My role as a mentor evolved over time. As more women joined Sills Cummis, I realized that I was uniquely positioned to provide guidance with respect to various challenges facing women in the legal profession.

**Why are mentors so important in the legal profession?**

Law is a demanding profession, and with the advent of technology, lawyers are often expected to respond to inquiries 24/7. This is daunting task for any lawyer, let alone for women lawyers, who may be trying to balance their professional and family commitments. It can be comforting to be able to talk through issues with a more senior lawyer, who has also faced the same hurdles and figured out ways to tackle them. To be sure, there is no one-size-fits-all solution, but having someone to brainstorm with certainly helps.

**Good mentors often have learned from good examples. Who are some people who have mentored you?**

I have been fortunate to have had several mentors, too many to name here. The late Honorable Charles J. Walsh was my first mentor. He taught me how to be a lawyer, whether the task was brief writing, taking a deposition or cross-examining a witness at trial. He stressed the importance of preparation and hard work.

He also advocated for the promotion of women in the profession (including me) before it was in vogue to do so. My now-retired partner, Peg Black, also mentored me, though she probably did not realize it at the time. When I joined the Firm in the late 1980s, Peg was already a full-time partner with three children. She was the quintessential role model, who provided encouragement and support to me throughout my legal career. Finally, to those women rainmakers, who schooled me in the art of rainmaking, I am extremely grateful, and doing my best to “pay it forward.”

**Law is, for many, more than a full-time job. How does one create time for mentorship?**

Make it a priority. Be accessible. Take junior lawyers to depositions and hearings even if the time cannot be billed. Let your colleagues know you are available to talk through professional or personal problems if they need it. Making time for mentoring has been especially challenging during COVID-19 when lawyers are working remotely, and not physically able to sit down in the same room to catch up. When possible, schedule time with your mentor/mentee via calls, Zoom or otherwise to reconnect. Hopefully, as pandemic restrictions lighten up, there will be more opportunities to be together and for more informal spontaneous mentoring to flow again.



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