

Rainmaker Q&A:

Sills Cummis' Beth Rose

Beth S. Rose is a member at Sills Cummis & Gross P.C. in Newark, New Jersey. She is the chair of the firm's product liability practice group and co-chairwoman of the litigation practice group. She has over 25 years of experience successfully defending complex product liability matters for a variety of regulated products including pharmaceuticals, medical devices, consumer products, food, chemicals and construction/industrial machines. She also has experience defending complex litigation, which arises from clinical trials and catastrophic workplace accidents. She has successfully tried cases to verdict in federal and state courts throughout the country.

Her experience has earned her recognition in numerous industry publications, including the *Chambers USA Guide to America's Leading Lawyers for Business*. She was also selected for inclusion in the 2014-2016 editions of *Benchmark's Top 250 Women in Litigation: The Definitive Guide to the Leading Females Attorneys in the U.S.* She has spent her entire career at Sills where she serves on the firm's management committee and leads the women's initiative.



Beth S. Rose, Esq.

Q: What skill was most important for you in becoming a rainmaker?

A: For me, it was sheer desire coupled with listening and learning. Some people say that you are born with the origination ("O") gene or you aren't, but in my experience, few people intuitively know how to make rain. Most of us mere mortals need guidance from others about how to get started, how to develop a business plan and see it through. Especially women, who have not had the benefit of role models. I am extremely fortunate to have had several excellent mentors who showed me the ropes.

Q: How do you prepare a pitch for a potential new client?

A: I gather as much information about the client and the case we are pitching. I speak to my contacts at the potential client to learn about their particular needs and then prepare a pitch that meets those needs. If the client does more of the talking than the lawyers, chances are you had a successful pitch.

Q: Share an example of a time when landing a client was especially difficult, and how you handled it.

A: Many years ago, I pitched a new client to defend a class action that had been filed in my home state of New Jersey. During the pitch, I learned that the client was looking for national counsel to handle related mass tort litigation, and we asked to be considered for that role. The challenge was to persuade the client that our firm had the capability and depth to lead and coordinate the defense. We asked the client to identify any and all reservations they had, and then addressed them head-on. It worked!

Q: What should aspiring rainmakers focus on when beginning their law careers?

A: Learn your trade — become an excellent lawyer. Pick a niche that you are interested in and become a subject matter expert. Take advantage of any opportunity that comes your way to develop credibility in the field. Build your brand, whether it is by speaking, writing or networking with family, friends and colleagues. Be patient. Rome was not built in a day or even a year.

Q: What's the most challenging aspect of remaining a rainmaker?

A: Managing the ups and downs. Bet the company litigation is episodic. Cases come and go. Client relationships can change for reasons beyond your control. Remember that if you made rain once, you can make it again. It's a marathon, not a sprint.