

How I Made Office Managing Partner: 'Be Someone Others Can Confide In,' Says Anjali Downs of Epstein Becker Green

By ALM Staff

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Anjali Downs, Office Managing Partner at Epstein Becker Green, Washington, D.C.

Practice area: Health care fraud and abuse

Law school and year of graduation: University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law, 2008

How long have you been at the firm?

I have been at the firm for almost 17 years (as of April 2025).

What year were you promoted/elected to your current role?

I was promoted in 2024.

Were you a partner at another firm before joining your present firm? If so, which one, how long were you there, and when did you leave?

I started my legal career at Epstein Becker Green.

How would you describe your career trajectory (was it organic or an active pursuit)?

Both! While I didn't set out to be a lawyer right after completing my undergraduate degree, my path to partnership and office managing partner required great thought and active pursuit. I initially pursued my master's in public health and was a health educator. The skills I built—learning how to communicate effectively, listen actively, and make people feel heard—have all made it easier for me to have those difficult conversations. This is the foundation on which I built my leadership style. I later pursued my J.D. with a concentration in

health care law and started my career at Epstein Becker Green as a summer associate. The skills I built prior to law school have served me well—learning how to advocate for others taught me how to advocate for myself—so I've consistently been involved with firm initiatives since the beginning of my career at Epstein Becker Green. I was previously chair of our hiring committee, served on our associate committee, and have served as both an associate and partner mentor, all of which gave me a 360-degree look at the firm's culture and operations, which I now draw on in my position as an office managing partner.

What do you think was the deciding point for the firm in electing/promoting you to your current role? Was it your performance on a specific case? A personality trait? Making connections with the right people?

I am a huge proponent of open, effective communication, and I believe that being able to have hard conversations is a key to succeeding in this role, as is recognizing when I am wrong. I was very fortunate to have mentors, including fellow Epstein Becker Green attorneys David Matyas and Carrie Valiant, among many others who supported



Anjali N.C. Downs of Epstein Becker Green

Courtesy photo

and advocated for me, and who valued these traits. When I first expressed an interest in firm management roles, David and Carrie helped me identify broader firm needs I could support, and encouraged me to share my opinions in these various roles, in an effort to engage colleagues and build relationships across the firm.

This was all instrumental in building the skills and network necessary to lead our office and positioned me as someone who could take on the role of office managing partner.

What unique challenges do you face as it relates to your role?

The role of an office managing partner can take so many forms and take on so many responsibilities. It's something anyone in the role can and will continue to learn about as they work the position and as their unique leadership style continues to evolve. While my practice is focused primarily on fraud and abuse, the day-to-day responsibilities of an office managing partner can be less clear.

With the transition to a more virtual environment over the last several years, I continuously try to develop creative solutions to engage colleagues and encourage new ways to be present both in person and virtually. To me, presence is not just about where you are physically. It is establishing yourself and your professional identity regardless of your physical location.

What's the best piece of advice you give to someone who wants to rise in the ranks to lead an office?

Be someone that others can confide in, and learn how to use the information you receive to try to achieve common goals. You are privy to a wide array of information daily and must learn how to navigate it to be an advocate, not only for clients but for the firm as well.

When you see an issue that needs to be addressed, raise it to the managing partner or go to the source. It's vital to your professional devel-

opment to do this so you can be seen as part of the solution. As I've grown into leadership roles, I find that most of my time is spent on listening to others' needs and finding solutions proactively. One way I try to do this is to point out where there are commonalities among the various positions.

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

I've had many mentors throughout my career, and I do not want to diminish any of their contributions by not naming them all, but David Matyas, a member of the firm who sits on Epstein Becker Green's Board of Directors, and Carrie Valiant, a fellow member of the firm who previously sat on the Board of Directors, stand out as two who have pushed me to deliver my best work and exceed expectations. They created a tremendous amount of opportunity for me, including a chance to co-author a fraud and abuse book they created. At an early stage in my career, they pushed me to lead matters and develop strategies. They challenged me to be part of firm solutions. As they offered these opportunities, I built a relationship where I could voice my opinions and wishes confidently. But good mentors also push you and challenge you to grow. They have always been open about telling me where I'm finding success, but where I should stretch. Carrie and David often knew I was ready before I did.

How do you utilize technology to benefit the firm/practice and/or business development?

As roles have become increasingly virtual, I've found that technology can be a powerful tool in achieving your professional and personal balance and connecting with others throughout the day. I've been able to better balance my own time and responsibilities as my practice has gone a bit more mobile. Technology also connects me to broader teams that I might not engage with in-person daily, but I also use this along with in-person activities to further develop strong relationships.

While I can't rely solely on technology to be successful in my role, I can use it as a tool to connect on my own time, so that time in the office and in person is better managed.

Knowing what you know now, what advice would you give to your younger self, and/or what would you do differently?

Be proactive in your approach to leadership and growth. Though you may accomplish a lot in your role, you still are expected to express your interest in leadership roles as you move along in your career. Find those in the roles you hope to achieve and learn from them. Proactivity is necessary for leadership, so expressing this before you pursue anything further is essential. If you surround yourself with those who are invested in your growth, they will hear your interest and help you to achieve your goals.

Do you have a prediction on how the legal industry will evolve over the next several years?

Leaders must take the time to establish themselves both in the office and online if they want their names to be recognized and their experience to be trusted within the firm. Legal work will be increasingly virtual, even from an office desk, and we can no longer rely on a simple message to feel like we are connecting with one another. Firms must take a more active approach to building connections.

Please share with us any firm or industry initiatives that you are working on as well as the impact you hope to achieve.

As it relates to my practice, I recently co-authored the Fraud and Abuse chapter of the AHLA *Fundamentals of Health Law* book, providing insights on the federal health care program's Anti-Kickback Statute and Anti-Kickback Safe Harbor Regulations.

In terms of my work as office managing partner, I am always trying to find ways to engage our office in broader Epstein Becker Green initiatives. It's one of my primary goals in this position to connect members of the firm together so office life feels cohesive and collaborative. A lot of this involves creating in-person opportunities and in-office activities that are meaningful. For example, we are actively working on developing team building opportunities that serve a broader purpose by also helping the community. We already make sandwiches yearly for Martha's Table, a local D.C. non-profit, and we are looking for other similar activities.

I believe that increasing opportunities for volunteering through our pro-bono work helps our attorneys and staff feel like they are a part of a bigger team and a bigger mission, which is critical for workplace satisfaction. As the modern workplace's hybrid office model evolves, I prioritize encouraging brainstorming, sharing ideas, and cross-collaboration.

What career advice do you wish more people would ask you? (e.g., "if you just listened to me, you could have...")

I wish more people would ask me how to approach providing feedback. My own feedback strategy has changed throughout the years and in many instances, I've learned to soften my approach, but providing effective feedback across the board is a crucial skill for leaders to have. As a leader, it's so important to know not only how to listen to others and find solutions, but also how to give them feedback to help lead them to the best path. You have to be considerate of their unique journey and career trajectory and communicate in a way that they are able to hear you.