

Job Title: Partner**Education:** JD, Pepperdine University School of Law; Graduate Management Degree, North East London Polytechnic; BA, University of California—Los Angeles**Company Name:** Wilson Turner Kosmo**Industry:** Legal**Company CEO:** Joel L. DeVos**Company Headquarters Location:** San Diego, California**Number of Employees:** 59**Words you live by:** Be anxious for nothing and grateful for all things.**Personal Philosophy:** Realize that everyone you meet has value, and if you treat them with honesty, respect and kindness, you will allow them to meet their potential and make this world a better place.**What book are you reading:** *The Speed of Trust: The One Thing that Changes Everything* by Stephen M. R. Covey**What was your first job:** Newspaper delivery girl**Favorite charity:** Shatterproof**Interests:** Sports, travel and reading**Family:** Husband, Don, and 2 children, Morgan and Michael

It Is Not Your Gender that Matters, but Your Ability to Ignore Stereotypes and Be You

After 31 years of practicing law, managing a law firm, working on various boards, and raising two children, I have finally realized the secret to success. Ignore stereotypes—they create fear and hesitation. Stop thinking there are things men can do better than women, or women can do better than men, and just do what you want to do. Stop thinking women should behave in a certain way, dress a certain way, and speak with a certain tone. Instead, cancel out all the noise society brings, be confident in yourself, and ask two very simple questions: Who do I want to be, and how can I achieve that while always helping others?

All my life, I have been called different, but I never understood why. When I was in high school and college, I never thought of myself as a woman trying to get into a man's world. I was just me. I have always been filled with energy, grateful for life, and interested in people. What I now realize, after speaking with my 27-year-old daughter, is that I was different because I was confident enough in

myself not to conform to other people's views of what I should be, how I should act, or who I should associate with.

Rather, I decided what I wanted to be, who I wanted to help, how I could lead, and then, I just did it. I did it without thinking about whether I would ruffle feathers, upset the men, or make my girlfriends envious. I did not think of myself as a woman who needed to break through the glass ceiling, but rather as a talented, caring human being, striving to achieve something, ignoring stereotypes, and overcoming the barriers that held me back. I succeeded because I never considered being a woman an impediment. It was not always easy, but I was blessed with a support system of family, friends, and colleagues who encouraged me to believe in myself.

So, my words of wisdom on fear of failure and overcoming that fear are these: We are all created equal, and when you believe in yourself and the goodness in others, you will find fulfillment and success.