

🖨 [Click to print](#) or Select 'Print' in your browser menu to print this document.

Page printed from: <https://www.law.com/2022/2022/01/19/law-firm-culture-is-crucial-so-what-the-heck-is-it-the-morning-minute/>

Law Firm Culture Is Crucial—So What the Heck Is It?: The Morning Minute

The news and analysis you need to start your day.

By Zack Needles | January 19, 2022



*Want to get this daily news briefing by email? Here's the sign-up.
(<https://store.law.com/Registration/Default.aspx?promoCode=NWMANWALERTS>)*

WHAT WE'RE WATCHING

CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE - In law school, they don't teach you how to run a law firm. But if they did, the first lesson on the first day would be "how to use 'culture' in a sentence." Ask law firm leaders about the future of work and/or the war for talent and they'll inevitably expound on the importance of preserving their "culture." But the word means different things (and, let's face it, sometimes doesn't mean anything) depending on the firm. Most law firm leaders, asked to define their own culture, will string together alliterative sentences that also feature the words "collaboration" and/or "collegiality." But, as [Law.com's Dylan Jackson reports](https://link.law.com/click/26409889.0/aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cubGF3LmNvbS8yMDlyLzAxLzE4L2xhdy1maXJtcy1sb) (<https://link.law.com/click/26409889.0/aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cubGF3LmNvbS8yMDlyLzAxLzE4L2xhdy1maXJtcy1sb>) law firm culture isn't just something that can be espoused by leadership and willed into existence. Instead, as legal sector analyst Jordan Furlong noted in a recent roundtable discussion, culture is an "outcome, it's a result." And, Jackson notes, that result is often influenced by factors that fall outside the direct control of leadership, including how a firm is perceived by its people.

FROM WORST TO FIRST? - It may feel like we're reliving January 2021 all over again as COVID thwarts yet another attempt by courts across the country to move forward in a meaningful way. But, in Philadelphia, a year has made quite a difference. Last January, the city's court system was forced to postpone its planned restart (<https://link.law.com/click/26409889.0/aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cubGF3LmNvbS8yMDIxLzAxLzIxL2xhdy1jb20tbGl0aW>) in-person civil and criminal jury trials to March, stoking frustration that had already been building for months over what some local litigators viewed as a lack of urgency on the part of court administrators. "I have cases in surrounding counties where judges are trying cases in movie theaters. Whether that's appropriate or not, they're trying," Philadelphia litigator Clifford Haines said around that time. "But here I see no evidence of that [in Philadelphia]. I don't know what to tell my clients or creditors or anybody." But now, even as courts in other parts of the state pull back on in-person proceedings amid the rise of the omicron variant, the recent spike in COVID infections hasn't stopped Philadelphia's jury trials, and observers told [Law.com's Aleeza Furman](https://link.law.com/click/26409889.0/aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cubGF3LmNvbS8yMDlyLzAxLzE4L25vLXNlcmIvdXMt) (<https://link.law.com/click/26409889.0/aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cubGF3LmNvbS8yMDlyLzAxLzE4L25vLXNlcmIvdXMt>) a slowdown is not expected anytime soon. "I think the Philadelphia Courts of Common Pleas have emerged as the leaders in adapting to the challenges posed by the pandemic," said Mark Tanner of Feldman Shepherd Wohlgelernter Tanner Weinstock Dodig.

PILLOW TALK - Robins Kaplan and Benesch, Friedlander, Coplan & Aronoff filed a defamation lawsuit against My Pillow Inc. and its CEO Michael J. Lindell (<https://link.law.com/click/26409889.0/aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cubGF3LmNvbS9yYWRhci9jYXJkL3NtYXJ0bWFOaWMt>) Tuesday in Minnesota District Court on behalf of Smartmatic and its parent company SGO Corporation Limited. The suit accuses Lindell of spreading disinformation about the Smartmatic voting machines used in the 2020 presidential election in Los Angeles county. Counsel have not yet appeared for the defendants. The case is 0:22-cv-00098, *Smartmatic USA Corp. et al v. Lindell et al*. ***Stay up on the latest deals and litigation with the new [Law.com Radar](#)*** (<https://link.law.com/click/23912577.20835/aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cubGF3LmNvbS9yYWRhci9pbnRybz91dG>):

EDITOR'S PICKS

Penn Law Dean Announces Plan to Pursue Sanctions Against Professor Amy Wax

(<https://link.law.com/click/26409889.0/aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cubGF3LmNvbS8yMDIyLzAxLzE4L3B1bm4tbGF3LV>)

By Christine Charnosky

Appeals Court: SCOTUS Campaign Finance Decision Applies to Elected Officials in Quasi-Judicial Proceedings

(<https://link.law.com/click/26409889.0/aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cubGF3LmNvbS8yMDIyLzAxLzE4L2FwcGVhbHMtY>)

By Allison Dunn

Gaming Company That Microsoft Is Buying for \$68.7B Facing Plenty of Action on Legal Front

(<https://link.law.com/click/26409889.0/aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cubGF3LmNvbS8yMDIyLzAxLzE4L2dhdWluZy1jb21wYW>)

By Jessica Mach

'Where Was the Danger?': State High Court Says Woman's Driveway DWI Arrest by Volunteer Deputy Was Unauthorized

(<https://link.law.com/click/26409889.0/aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cubGF3LmNvbS8yMDIyLzAxLzE4L3doZXJILXdr>)

By Allison Dunn

David Boies Has COVID-19, Argues Remotely at Supreme Court

(<https://link.law.com/click/26409889.0/aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cubGF3LmNvbS8yMDIyLzAxLzE4L2RhdmlkLWJval>)

By Marcia Coyle

WHILE YOU WERE SLEEPING

BIG MISUNDERSTANDING - From the outside, it can be hard to tell exactly what the Big Four do when it comes to law. Despite being on the scene for nearly three decades, their teams are still relatively small, their revenues modest and they don't usually have big-name partners in their ranks. Because of this, many law firms dismiss the threat the Big Four pose. But, as Law.com International's Becky Pritchard reports (<https://link.law.com/click/26409889.0/aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cubGF3LmNvbS8yMDIyLzAxLzE4L3lvdXZILWJlZW4tdc>) that's a mistake. The accounting giants have been quietly changing strategy in recent years. Instead of simply offering legal advice, they are betting that consulting services, technology and linking up professionals from across their businesses will mean they can finally start making big money from legal departments. "We see that the best way of ensuring that the [legal] business is successful is having someone like me who can connect up with all the different parts of the business," said Teresa Owusu-Adjei, PwC's U.K. head of legal who told Pritchard that she only very recently revealed to her team that she's not a lawyer.

WHAT YOU SAID

"If someone presented that to me, I'd say 'Elon Musk, stick your head in the Tesla car and drive away.'"

— **Abe Reich**, Fox Rothschild chairman emeritus, on what he described as Elon Musk's attempt at "strong-arming" Cooley
(<https://link.law.com/click/26409889.0/aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cubGF3LmNvbS8yMDIyLzAxLzE4L2Nvb2xleS1hcHBs>) firing an associate who helped investigate the Tesla founder while working at the SEC.

▶▶ Sign up here

(<https://store.law.com/Registration/Default.aspx?promoCode=NWMANWALERTS>) to receive the Morning Minute straight to your inbox.
