



The Law Society

The Law Society Interview

Julia is the Chief Strategy Officer for Baker McKenzie, prior to which she was a solicitor who moved into the business of law following an MBA and subsequently working as management consultant. At Baker McKenzie she sits on the Global Executive Committee, reporting to the Chair, and is responsible for development, evaluation and implementation of global strategy.

1. You're talking to a friend of a friend at a party. How do you describe what you do?

Help shape and build a global legal business and profession of the future.

2. What are you working on at the moment?

As a global Firm, understanding where markets and clients are at on globalisation is critical. So thinking through and planning for future markets and industries we need to strengthen and potentially enter into. Interestingly this can be a virtual presence and has as much to do with knowing how to marshal existing talent in teams, increasingly by industry sector. Utilising innovation, AI and technology to deliver services differently to meet clients' changing needs.

3. What was your first job?

A newspaper round, come rain or shine and a dishwasher in a restaurant. Given these dying trades, I wonder what my 10 year old son will do to earn his early keep!

4. Career highlight?

Legally - pursuing a medical negligence claim successfully and compassionately, for a lady who lost her legs to gangrene due to medical neglect and arrogance.

Commercially - being part of a team shaping the future of the Firm and wider profession.

5. Share some great advice you've been given.

Stay true to your values

6. What's in your desk drawers?

Apart from the usual stationary rubble, flyers for theatre productions I haven't yet got to, and shoes due to my walk to work in trainers.

7. Can you recommend a local lunch or coffee spot?

The Lalit hotel London, recently beautifully and sensitively

restored derelict former school. A wonderful mix of Edwardian architecture, Arts & Crafts interiors and spectacular blue Hyderabad-style chandeliers.

8. How do you relax?

It's a work in progress! But I find pottering in the garden, walking and time with family and friends helps.

9. What's your pet hate?

Littering and more significantly bullying.

10. Sum up working as a solicitor in one word.

Opportunity.

11. Favourite city?

Right now - London - and a London that is open to all.

12. What book is on your bedside table?

Too many! Prisoners of Geography -Tim Marshall; Where India meets China: Burma Asia's New Crossroads - Thant Myint-U; The Enemy Within - Sayeeda Warsi; Just so Stories - Kipling.

13. What needs to happen to get more women into leadership roles?

For sure, proper policy and structural change (Notably: 3-5 year talent pipelines, thoughtful sponsorship programmes, 'unconscious bias' training, agile working)and leadership role modelling and accountability. Though probably most significantly and within everyone's control, is if we all feel responsible and take action at the individual level.

This is equally important for wider inclusion and diversity: LGBT+, Ethnicity and Social Mobility too.

14. If you hadn't become a solicitor, what would you have done?

Ultimately building and running some form of business.