

Eva Davis Discusses Women in Leadership Roles on Deal Teams with *Reuters*

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Winston & Strawn Transactions Department Chair Eva Davis spoke with *Reuters* about the prevalence of women in leadership roles on deal teams. Three law professors analyzed the composition of the legal teams handling more than 10,000 deals at six firms over the past 10 years. In 2013, 42% of the deals included at least one woman among the top five lawyers on the team. By 2023, the number of deal teams including women increased to 78%.

Eva stated that when she first started practicing law 30 years ago, she “rarely saw a woman on the other side at any level.”

That started to change 20 years ago, but it was still “notable” to encounter another woman as lead deal counsel on a transaction, she said. In the last five to 10 years she’s worked on multiple deals where “on both sides the teams are all women.”

She credits not just the increased number of women entering the legal profession—women law students began outnumbering men in 2016—but also points to the Mansfield Rule aimed at increasing inclusivity and diversity in law firms, mentoring and other firm initiatives, and promoting women to leadership roles within the firms.

“Frankly, representation matters,” Eva said. When up-and-coming lawyers see women in senior positions, they “see what’s possible.”

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