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## How I Made Partner: 'Be Ready, Willing and Able to Undertake Difficult Tasks,' Says Kyle Tucker of Eastman & Smith

"I would encourage all younger attorneys to keep networking a top priority, as it will help with rapid advancement and pay dividends in the long term."

By Tasha Norman | November 12, 2021



(Photo: Shutterstock)

### Kyle D. Tucker, 37, Eastman & Smith, Toledo, Ohio.

**Practice Area:** Real estate.

**Law school and year of graduation:** University of Toledo, College of Law, May 2013.

**How long were you an associate at the firm?** From June 1, 2015, to Dec. 31, 2020—5 years, 7 months. I made partner, effective Jan. 1, 2021.

**Were you an associate at another firm before joining your present firm?** Yes, Zoller | Biacsi Co LPA in Cleveland from Nov. 1, 2013, until start date with Eastman.



Kyle D. Tucker, (Courtesy photo)

**What's the biggest surprise you experienced in becoming partner?** The strategic planning required to manage the firm and keep it on track for long-term success.

**What do you think was the deciding point for the firm in making you partner?** A combination of factors. Eastman evaluates associates based on several different criteria. My diligence, performance and dedication to the firm were probably the main contributing factors. I assumed responsibility for matters and developed a level of trust with members throughout the firm. Ultimately, I was able to demonstrate my legal skills and ability to work effectively as a member of the team. Several mentors had much to do with my development and advocated for my advancement. I am very grateful to their contributions to my success over the years.

**Describe how you feel now about your career now that you've made partner.** Relieved that the hard work paid off and grateful that it has been recognized with invitation to membership. At the same time, motivated to develop more business and continue helping clients achieve their objectives.

**What's the key to successful business development in your opinion?** Responsiveness. With emails linked to phones, prospective clients, existing clients and team members expect prompt communication. I have always made being available and responsive a priority. Neglecting to do so is a recipe for failure, in my opinion.

**What's been the biggest change, day-to-day, in your routine since becoming partner?** More time spent on training newer associates, including delegating, monitoring and evaluating work assignments.

**Who had the greatest influence in your career that helped propel you to partner?** My father—Theodore B. Tucker III. He takes much pride in being a lawyer and motivated me to pursue the career.

#### What advice could you give an associate who wants to make partner?

- Be ready, willing and able to undertake difficult tasks and legal issues.
- Ask questions. Never assume a fact or that your solution/answer is correct.
- Always be willing to accept that you may be wrong or that there is a creative solution to a client problem.
- Write in a manner that a client can understand without the legalese.

**How do you network at a time like this?** Maintain regular outreach to referrals.

**Knowing what you know now about your career path, what advice would you give to your younger self?** I started law school later in life, after serving in the U.S. Army. At the outset of my career, I, like most beginning attorneys, was primarily focused on developing and polishing my lawyer skills. I would encourage all younger attorneys to keep networking a top priority, as it will help with rapid advancement and pay dividends in the long term.

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