

ROBIN FREDRICKSON

Partner, Latham & Watkins LLP, Houston

You might say attorney Robin Fredrickson has two sides: the chatty, jovial side who regularly plays ping pong with associates, and the serious side who's mastered the art of striking a deal.

When combined, the various components of her personality create an unstoppable force in the legal world.

In the past year, she's represented clients in numerous multimillion-dollar—and occasional multibillion-dollar—deals. She was part of the legal team representing Global Infrastructure Partners in its \$3.12 billion acquisition of Devon Energy Corp.'s interests in EnLink Midstream Manager LLC, EnLink Midstream Partners LP, and EnLink Midstream LLC. Fredrickson also served as one of the lawyers for Riverstone Holdings in its \$1.6 billion acquisition of Lucid Energy Group II LLC.

Fredrickson joined Latham & Watkins LLP as a partner in 2012, and represents E&P companies, midstream companies and private-equity clients in various transactions. Each deal brings with it a unique set of obstacles that she and her team must find a way to overcome.

"Almost every deal is a challenge," she says. "Really, every deal is different; there are different personalities and different ideas of how it should be done. There's no such thing as a cookie-cutter deal."

The unpredictability and fast pace of each day keeps Fredrickson overloaded with work; she's sometimes expected to turn around a 100-page document in a day.

But the stress and chaos that comes with being a leader in a law firm is nothing Fredrickson can't handle. After all, before pursuing a legal career, she worked as an ICU nurse.

"This [current job] is not life and death," she says. "It's a hard job, but you're not going to kill anybody. I don't react when someone says something has to be done right away. In my prior world, when someone said that, it meant something—somebody might die if I didn't do it right away."

Fredrickson grew up in a family of doctors, and initially planned to follow them into the medical field. But once she got there, she realized it wasn't for her.

"I became a nurse and I immediately hated it. I didn't like people telling me what to do. It's a hard industry. I thought: 'I can't do this for the rest of my life.'"



And so, Fredrickson switched gears and studied law at the University of Houston.

She joined Vinson & Elkins LLP in 1988 and immediately began working toward her goal of making partner. She regularly worked until 10 p.m. six days a week and would sleep all day Sunday to recover.

"I frankly didn't think of anything but making partner," she says. "That was what I wanted to be; I wanted to be partner at a big law firm."

She made partner in 1996, and ultimately spent 24 years with the firm before joining Latham & Watkins.

Fredrickson continues to be respected within the industry for her dedication and strong work ethic, but she also has a lighter side. She plays ping pong with younger associates daily, and tries to keep a sense of humor when dealing with stressful situations.

"You really have to try to relieve some of the tension," she says. "We try to have fun with our associates and we make friends with them and go out with them—but we don't stay out as late as we used to, because that's too much."

Fredrickson's warm personality helps make her approachable among colleagues, but when she's negotiating a deal, she can pull an impressive poker face.

She says the value of silence cannot be underestimated.

"When people are negotiating, people find that they cannot stand this silence and then they start filling it with talking, and then they'll just get themselves in trouble," she says. "The ability to sit there and stare at people while saying nothing is the one of the best pieces of advice for a lawyer."

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