

Elaine Aarons

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Elaine is a partner in the employment team specialising in advising senior executives.

With over 25 years' experience acting mainly for large, institutional employers and setting up what became, under her leadership, one of the leading employment law teams in the City, for the last 17 years Elaine has acted mainly for senior executives, partners and entrepreneurs giving employment and partnership law advice and providing them with the advice they need in related areas. Elaine is an acknowledged leader in her field.

Over 95% of her client base is therefore made up of senior individuals and includes: senior executives in FTSE 100 and 250 companies, largely main board directors and members of executive committees; senior bankers - she has acted for 23 Bank Chief Executives (some more than once as they have returned for further advice); principals and senior management in private equity houses, private equity backed firms, hedge funds, law firms, accountancy firms and other financial services boutiques.

In addition to financial services, she has clients in senior management roles in all sectors of the economy - most recently in energy, health, pharmaceuticals, technology, publishing, management consultancy and real estate. She also has a particular interest in advising senior academics, having acted for a significant number of Vice-Chancellors of universities.

Listed in Chambers UK and the Legal 500 Hall of Fame which recognises individuals who have received constant praise from their clients for continued excellence, she has been described by the directories as 'a class act', and 'enormously tough and strong, drawing on a wealth of past experience', 'outstanding in her knowledge, experience and logical problem solving'. Clients commented that 'she comes up with excellent solutions, is responsive at all times and knows when to push and when not to.' She has also been recognised in Spear's ranking of the best employment lawyers for senior executives, wealth managers and family offices.

Elaine is always focused on delivering her client's objectives. She advises on a wide range of issues, across the lifespan of the employment relationship. She therefore advises:

- Before the executive takes a role: advising on service agreements, sweet equity, carry arrangements and other incentive schemes, LLP agreements, non-executive appointments (including negotiating corporate indemnities)
- During the relationship: advising on investigations and disciplinary proceedings (particularly in FCA/PRA regulated businesses), bonus claims and discrimination and whistleblowing issues
- At the end of the relationship: advising on termination of employment, resignation/removal from partnerships, team moves and restrictive covenants (drafting and enforcement) and career loss claims (including discrimination and whistleblowing). Often involving litigation (or threats of litigation), but just as often resolved without having to even raise the prospect of legal proceedings at all.
- She is regularly instructed to lead multi-disciplinary teams and is therefore a natural choice where employment, regulatory and reputation management issues are paramount. She is also used as team leader on matters involving corporate, litigation and wealth planning advice. Her project management also regularly involves leading and multi-jurisdictional teams.

Elaine is also involved in a number of organisations that support women in the workplace. Nearly half of Elaine's clients are senior women and she is very active and involved as a champion of diversity. For 10 years she sat on a New York based task force, then called the Hidden Brain Drain. She is a long standing member of the International Women's Forum where having been a member of the UK Board for over 4 years, she has continued to be involved with their Ethical Leadership Committee. She is also the founder of One Loud Voice for Women, a registered charity that focusses on women at all levels in the workplace and she is a member of the Women in Finance Advisory Panel.

Elaine is a long-standing member of the City of London Society and she was the Vice-Chair on the City of London Law Society Employment Sub-Committee from 2007 - present. Elaine was also a founder member of the Employment Lawyers Association, which was set up in 1992 and she sat on its Management Committee for 11 years.

Track record

Directors and Officers liability insurance

Negotiated gold-plated indemnities to supplement Directors and Officers liability insurance so that employers provide her clients with much needed financial support when they are facing investigations, claims, adverse PR etc - something that is increasingly important as personal liability for office holders and senior managers becomes more of an issue.

Private equity businesses

Advised executives who are joining or exiting businesses backed by private equity. She is very concerned by the one-sided documentation that is prevalent in private equity deals. This can result in executives not realising the gains they hoped for and she is used to negotiating improvements and ensuring clients are aware of the risks and opportunities that private equity presents.

FCA, PRA and other regulatory investigations

Acts for individuals having to respond to internal investigations and disciplinary proceedings where allegations and related regulatory notifications could potentially prevent them continuing with their current career, particularly where they are dependant on approval from the FCA and the PRA (and other regulators) in order to continue working. There can also be the risk of a FCA Enforcement investigation and regulatory proceedings to mitigate.

Parliamentary and other public enquiries

Advised CEOs on how to respond to Parliamentary and other public enquiries into their businesses and their management.

Public Accounts Committee

Advised on matters in which the Public Accounts Committee has taken an interest.

Talks

- Appeared on TV and radio numerous times.
- Lectured to business and professional audiences on almost all aspects of employment law.

External publications

Elaine is General Editor of Tottel's 'Termination of Employment'.

Admissions

England and Wales, 1982

Education

University of London, LL.B (Hons) Law

Languages

English

Memberships

The International Womens' Forum UK, Company Secretary

The Center for Talent Innovation

City of London Law Society, Vice Chair Employment Law Sub-Committee

The Opportunity Now Awards in 2006 and 2009, Judge

Employment Lawyers Association, Founder Member

Key dates

Year joined: 2006

Year became partner: 2006

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