



BELL NUNNALLY'S DAVID WEBSTER FEATURED ON LAW.COM'S "HOW I MADE PARTNER"

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Bell Nunnally Partner David G. Webster is featured in the [Law.com](https://www.law.com) recurring feature "How I Made Partner." In his Q+A titled "'As a JAG I Learned I Could Practice Law on a Folding Chair in 110-Degree Weather in a Field,'" Webster discusses his path to partnership at Bell Nunnally including his service in United States Army and Texas Army National Guard as a judge advocate general.

Excerpts:

What's the key to successful business development in your opinion?

Be reliable, honest and punctual. Much of my business comes from referrals of current clients or counsel I've been against in the past. My clients trust that I'm giving them the best advice to achieve their vision of a victory—not stir up fees or confuse my vision of a "win" with theirs. As for my opposing counsel, with few exceptions, I usually end cases on cordial terms regardless of how gritty the litigation. If you act with integrity to everyone—not just your clients—you can build a strong reputation that attracts business. You only get one reputation, and it follows you.

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

Start early with developing your business development leads. It can be frustrating to attend event after event and meeting people who, like you, are just starting in their careers. But over time, those people grow up, get promoted and get into decision-making roles. If you are genuine and have stayed in contact, they will remember you. And remember: You aren't a sleazy salesman—you're selling your skills, and you should believe your skills are a product worth buying.

It's also vitally important to push and push and push for more responsibility on cases. This aggressiveness is not just to pay lip service to the go-getter personality firms like to see; it is the only way to force yourself out of your comfort zone and grow. Do scary, new, challenging things every day.

Tell us about your experience as a JAG and if/how it helped your journey to partnership?

I treasure my time as a JAG for the U.S. Army and the Texas Army National Guard. Foremost, the people I got to meet, learn from and become friends with are of a rare caliber. And the training to become a JAG, while far from the most strenuous in the military, is formative. I learned leadership at an elevated level; attention to detail; respect for seniority; structure; and that no matter how hard I think I'm working, someone else is working harder. I learned I could practice law on a folding chair in 110-degree weather in a field—far from an air-conditioned high-rise office with a coffee machine. These lessons helped give me perspective, professionalism, poise and work ethic that helped me become a better associate and, ultimately, a partner.

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