

Lessons from the US Marines helped this lawyer rise in the military and in the law

Serving in the Marine Corps was a formative experience for me and every day as a lawyer I draw on what I learned, particularly what it means to be a leader. Like other military services, the Marine Corps is a mission-driven organization that also cares deeply about its members. A common motto is “Mission First, Marines Always.” My legal practice—representing clients in high-stakes investigations—requires similar all-consuming dedication to achieving the client’s objectives, while recognizing the importance of the larger team to accomplish that mission. Members of that team need to be trained, mentored, led, and valued.

Leadership tenets in the Marine Corps are directly applicable to the private sector, which is a major reason why I have found being a veteran so helpful in my practice.

The best leaders with whom I have worked in the private sector share many of the same qualities as leaders with whom I served in the Marines. These leaders are able to build teams that perform at a high level with minimal direction and supervision. While the leaders are often demanding, they are also fair and care deeply about their teams. The result is a virtuous cycle where the leader and the team go the extra mile for each other and do great work together.

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Without a doubt, being a veteran has made me a better lawyer.



Education (degrees & institutions): JD, Harvard Law School; BA, Political Science, Columbia University

Company Name: WilmerHale

Industry: Law

Company CEO: Managing Partner, Anjan Sahnii

Company Headquarters Location: Washington, DC

Number of Employees: 2,048

Words you live by: Nothing worth doing is ever easy.

Who is your personal hero? President Ulysses S. Grant. I highly recommend Ron Chernow’s book on Grant.

What book(s) are you reading? *Lawrence in Arabia: War, Deceit, Imperial Folly and the Making of the Modern Middle East* by Scott Anderson.

What was your first job? Infantry officer in the US Marine Corps.

Favorite charity: National Veterans Legal Services Program – I serve on the NVLSP Board of Directors.

Interests/Hobbies: Tennis, golf, and visiting Civil War battlefields with my family.

Family: I am married to Sara Swabb, who runs Storie Collective, a nationally-acclaimed interior design firm. We have two daughters – Tippi who is a fourth-grader and Minna who is a second-grader.