

Mike Stein Quoted in Article, "Law Firm Leaders Take 'The Mindset of an Endurance Athlete' As Pandemic Persists"

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Michael S. Stein

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Mike Stein, Managing Partner at Pashman Stein Walder Hayden, was quoted in New Jersey Law Journal article, "Law Firm Leaders Take 'The Mindset of an Endurance Athlete' As Pandemic Persists." The article is the second part in a two-part series and focuses on the potential long-term effects of changes in law firm management styles and methods as a result of COVID-19.

Michael Stein, managing partner of Pashman Stein Walder Hayden in Hackensack, New Jersey, said, as an active practitioner, "there was an element of wanting to lead by example" early on.

The extra time he's spending on management duties hasn't impacted his litigation practice, he said, but that's at least in part because of the administrative and business professionals the firm added over the years. That means not every management issue falls to him, he said. "Fifteen years ago, I was it—there was not an executive committee."

....Stein of Pashman Stein used terms similar to [Graciela Gomez] Cowger's. As the remote environment "has become routine," it's also become fatiguing, and "we're entering a new phase where I think you have to have the mindset of an endurance athlete."

In the spring, there was "a greater sense of panic" and "a sense of utter disorientation ... but coupled with a sense that, 'OK, we need to stay home a month or two,'" he said.

Now, in talking with other managing partners in New Jersey and New York, the sense of panic is far less, and the sense that employees feel supported by their firms has taken hold, he said. But "there's also this fatigue—this 'I have to get back to the office' mentality, and that's what I'm grappling with now," Stein added.

“It’s very important to hold onto the absolute fact that this will end,” he said.

Lawyers also must remember that they’re “almost embarrassingly fortunate that we’re able to stay safe, that we’re able to work,” he added.

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