

QUESTIONS Answered

Gary Gilbert

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What did you wake up thinking about this morning? I have this involuntary mechanism: I go to bed very relaxed, then usually I wake up around 3 or so with my mind racing, processing stuff. I came up with a solution to a problem that I had no idea how I would solve when I went to bed. It was how I was going to frame an email to someone. I have no idea how that happens.

What will define your career in the coming year? I became co-chair not that long ago [in March], and I have to see that this department stays at the forefront, building and expanding by looking for new opportunities. From an internal standpoint, at the same time, we're involving all the related departments in what we're doing, finding new ways to synergize parts of the firm and serve clients. All of that helps me serve the client, which is the most important thing. Technology moves so fast that we're always lagging behind [in contracts]. My job is to maximize benefits for talent, and that's changing all the time.

Describe a lesson you've learned from a failure. In my third or fourth year as a lawyer, I was a corporate lawyer and I wasn't very happy with what I was doing and [the firm] didn't like what I was doing. I had a yearly review where a guy told me I sucked. I went home that night and stood in the shower for about two hours trying to figure out what I should do about that. Should I tell these guys to pound sand? Should I show them I was good? Then I thought, "Should I leave?" I finally had the resilience to show them I was good and it worked out, so I was fine. But the bad review definitely gave me a huge kick in the ass—a lesson I never forgot.

Name a project that you're not affiliated with that has most impressed you in the last year. The Kings of Leon. They were huge, had their issues and were away for a while, and came back better than ever. It was impressive and a great job by [Vector Management's] Ken Levitan and Andy Mendelsohn.

Who's your most important mentor, and what did you learn? My father [Herbert]. He taught me, basically, three principles that I will probably never forget. No. 1, there's no such thing as "can't." No. 2 was "If you don't know, learn." And No. 3 was "Keep moving."

Name a desert island album. Generally speaking, it would be any of my clients' albums. If it has to be a non-client, I would say the Cars' *Candy-O* because it came out when I was breaking into the music business and I thought that album defined that era. Not to mention the [Alberto] Vargas cover. —Phil Gallo



Gary Gilbert photographed at the Manatt Phelps & Phillips offices in Los Angeles.



1 **First job:** "Copy boy at the Long Beach Independent Telegram. [In music], associate at a law firm in Century City."

Memorable moment: "The time that I was negotiating a major record deal for a big client and he had a farm, and I was negotiating with the record company guy outside at the farm. We could hardly hear each other because there were geese honking in the background. That was a truly memorable negotiation."

Advice for young lawyers in the music business: "Never give up. And for people who do what I do for a living, make sure you assess the leverage of your deal correctly."

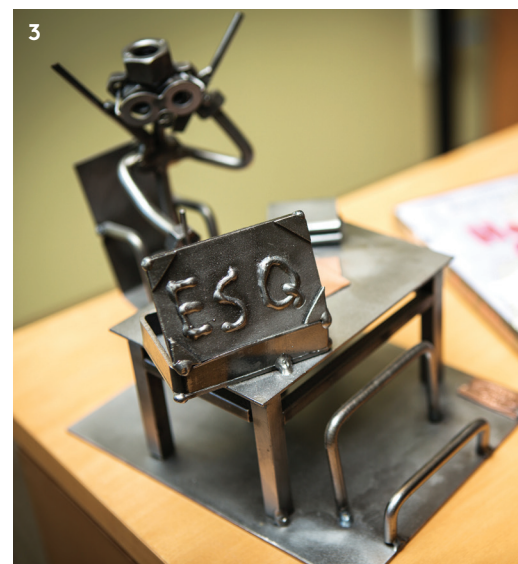
1 The ring is a facsimile of the Los Angeles Lakers' championship ring from 2009, presented to longtime season ticket holders.

2 "I've been a Lakers ticket holder since college, back when the team played at the Sports Arena. This shot in the final sixth of a second represents my mantra: 'It's never too late.'"

3 "This was a birthday gift from my mother, summarizing how she views lawyers."

4 Gilbert's office.

5 "Luke Lewis, president of Mercury Nashville, gave this to me in celebration of the launch of the first Sugarland album."



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