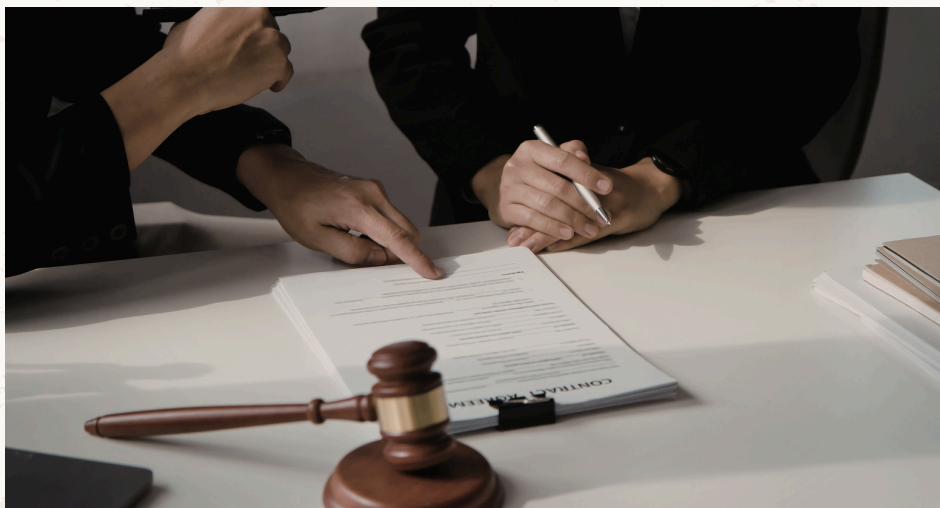


LEGAL FORUM



CAN “WORK-LIFE BALANCE,, REALLY EXIST IN THE LEGAL PROFESSION?

It's a phrase that dominates conversations.

Young graduates search for it. Mid-level associates push for it. Even senior lawyers quietly question whether it is ever truly achievable.

Many lawyers today are burning out or asking hard questions about whether the job is sustainable in the long run. Firms are scrambling to retain talent, younger lawyers are far more vocal about balance and boundaries, yet

the pressure in high-stakes work continues to rise.

The reality is this: work-life balance depends almost entirely on the nature of the legal work you do.

Not all legal work is created equal. Routine-type work offers predictability and control. Complex litigation and high-stakes corporate transactions on the other hand, operate in an

entirely different universe. In these areas:

- Deadlines are non-negotiable
- Matters evolve overnight
- Clients expect instant, precise advice
- Seniority often reduces, rather than improves, personal time!

In contrast to most industries, where hiring more people relieves pressure, high-end corporate transactions such as IPOs and M&As are best handled by lean, highly competent teams rather than large groups of observers and juniors who require constant



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guidance. As a result, the lawyers involved take on greater responsibility, which often translates into longer working hours.

Complex corporate work resembles a surgical operation more than a factory process. In an operating theatre, you do not improve outcomes by adding extra hands. You improve them by ensuring the hands you have are the very best.

At the top end of practice, legal work looks nothing like a 9-to-5 profession and more like a high-performance advisory role – where speed, judgment and excellence come at a very real personal cost.

My article takes an honest look at why work-life balance is so hard to achieve in complex practice areas, at a time when it is something every lawyer, client and firm leader is actively grappling with.



If you are a young lawyer choosing a path, a mid-level associate questioning the grind, or a senior practitioner reflecting on the profession, this may resonate.

At the highest levels of legal practice, excellence brings its own form of balance – one built on purpose and the privilege of working at the most demanding end of the profession. Are you up for it?

My gratitude to Star Media Group Berhad Biz7 for the opportunity to express my views as Managing Partner of Ong Eu Jin Partnership

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With our sincere appreciation to Mr. Ong Eu Jin of Ong Eu Jin Partnership for kindly allowing us to share his article on RHTLaw Vietnam's Legal Forum.