

Thrive Global Profiles Roger Royse on Legal Exposure

September 13, 2021 Roger Royse

PRACTICES Capital Markets and Securities, International Tax, Precision Medicine and Digital Health, Emerging Companies and Venture Capital, Corporate, Mergers and Acquisitions, FinTech Virtual Currency and Blockchain, International, Investment Management

Thrive Global interviewed Haynes Boone Partner [Roger Royse](#) for an article about what it takes to become a “top lawyer” in a particular field of law. Thrive Global is a New York-based company that provides behavior change technology. Its mission is to end stress and burnout by offering sustainable, science-based solutions to enhance both well-being and performance.

Below is an excerpt:

The legal field is known to be extremely competitive. Lawyers are often smart, ambitious, and highly educated. That being said, what does it take to stand out and become a “Top Lawyer” in your specific field of law? In this interview series called “5 Things You Need To Become A Top Lawyer In Your Specific Field of Law,” we are talking to top lawyers who share what it takes to excel and stand out in your industry.

As a part of this interview series, I had the pleasure of interviewing Roger Royse.

Roger Royse is a partner in the Palo Alto office of Haynes Boone and practices in the areas of corporate, securities and tax law. He works mostly with Silicon Valley tech startups and venture capitalists, has held leadership and honorary positions with the ABA and other organizations and universities and is a nationally recognized authority on agtech — the technology of food production.

Thank you so much for joining us in this interview series. Before we dig in, our readers would love to get to know you a bit more. What is the “backstory” that brought you to this particular career path in Law? Did you want to be an attorney “when you grew up”?

I became a lawyer because, as a kid, whenever my dad, a small business owner, had a problem, he would call a lawyer, who would solve the problem. They were like shamans, knowing the secrets of the business world that could make things happen. I started my career in a rural agricultural area, worked with western North Dakota oilmen, Wall Street investment bankers and Hollywood studios before deciding that the future belonged to tech startups. I moved to Silicon Valley in 1991 and have been working with emerging growth and venture capital since.

Q: Can you tell us a bit about the nature of your practice and what you focus on?

I work mostly with tech startups handling formation, financing and M&A. Given my tax background, my deals are more tax sensitive than those of most venture capital industry lawyers involving, for example, foreign founders or companies. I also do some fund formation and partnership and corporate tax advice and planning.

Q: You are a successful attorney. Which three character traits do you think were most instrumental to your success? What unique qualities do you have that others may not? Can you please share a story or example for each?

Three essential qualities required to succeed at law include:

- **Hard Work.** The law is a jealous mistress. Clients are demanding and deadlines don't wait. I have never known a successful lawyer who did not work hard. Top Lawyers do not aspire to a 4-hour work week and do not shirk having to roll up their sleeves and putting in the effort.
- **Expertise.** Professional knowledge and skill are fundamental to success in law. Without expertise, none of the other factors will matter. Successful lawyers acquire technical competence and never stop improving, developing and learning.
- **Value.** While the hourly rates may (or may not) be high, the value delivered must always be much higher. This is especially true for those who work by the hour since it is easy in an hourly model to focus on the effort expended rather than the value of the product, when the two factors might be unrelated.

Q: Do you think you have had luck in your success? Can you explain what you mean?

Here in the Silicon Valley, we all know that luck plays a role in startup success and the success of anyone in the ecosystem. Fortunately, conditions are right here for great things to happen. I have been very lucky to surround myself with top-tier, team-oriented professionals in complementary disciplines, including the top-notch attorneys I work with.

To read the full article, click [here](#).