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Five minutes with ... Ozofu Latunde Ogiemudia, Udo Udoma & Belo-Osagie

By *Karry Lai* January 15, 2025



The Lagos-based PE lawyer reflects on her love for fashion, why pro bono work remains close to her heart and her leadership role at the

Nigerian Bar Association

Welcome to the latest instalment of IFLR's 'Five minutes with' series, where we learn more about lawyers on a personal as well as a professional level. This time we have Ozofu Latunde Ogiemudia, partner at [Udo Udoma & Belo-Osagie](#) in Lagos.

Someone asks you at a party what you do for a living. What do you say?

My day job is being a commercial lawyer and partner at Udo Udoma & Belo-Osagie leading the general corporate advisory and pro bono teams, while practising in the PE, M&A, and employment teams, where I supervise some of the most interesting investment deals in Nigeria. I also play a significant role in professional leadership, governance, advocacy and policy advisory through my role as chairperson of the Nigerian Bar Association's section on business law (NBA-SBL). The best part of what I do, however, is unpaid – being the best daughter, sister, wife, mom and aunt in a wonderful family that I love dearly.

Talk us through a typical working day.

It depends really, some days are similar to others, and some are not – it depends on which of my responsibilities gets the bulk of my focus and energy for the day. On some days, I typically structure deals and negotiate deal terms, supervise the drafting of agreements, and meet with clients to discuss everything from corporate and investment strategy to compliance. On other days, I spend hours on strategy, project management, policy discussions, and professional development activities aimed at advancing the NBA-SBL's mission. Regardless of the day I have, at the end of it though, I am most excited to get home to unwind with my husband, my dog, Luna, (and when they're back from boarding school, my kids).

What are you working on at the moment?

Right now, I'm immersed in domestic and cross-border equity and assets investments, acquisitions, divestment, restructuring and other corporate compliance matters across the PE, sustainable energy and fast-moving consumer goods sectors. Pro bono work remains close to my heart—it's about giving back meaningfully. In this respect, I am currently engaged in initiatives aimed at supporting under-represented persons and communities, advocating for legal reforms that advance access to justice, and empowering small businesses through legal guidance.

What is the most exciting aspect of your role, and what is the most stressful?

The thrill for me comes from knowing my work influences market practices and contributes to building a more robust Nigerian economy. Aside from my fee-earning work, the work I do on pro bono engagements, legislative and regulatory advocacy, and as the chair of the NBA-SBL are all very fulfilling for me. On the flip side, corporate law can be intense. The long hours, night shifts, mental and physical pressure to ensure each deal is not just legally sound, but also commercially viable and profitable, can take its toll.

Tell us the key characteristics that make a successful PE lawyer.

You need to be adaptable, innovative, and genuinely invested in your client success. It's also crucial to stay updated on global trends and local laws and policies, and how these shape the investment climate for your client and their investors. PE, being relatively short term, is very sensitive to adverse macroeconomic winds, and in an economy such as Nigeria, there are times that investors would rather wait in the wings for the dust to settle before making any further capital commitments in the market. Helping them carry out diligent investigations, and guiding them (truthfully and knowledgeably) through the uncertainties, while maintaining strong relationships will go a long way to win the heart of clients.

What is the most common misconception about being a corporate commercial lawyer?

People often think it's all about drafting contracts, but corporate and commercial law is deeply strategic. Half the hard work is getting the structure and funds flow right, while the rest is documentation and implementation. You need to know a little bit of everything, including regulatory compliance, debt financing, litigation and governance, in order to be the well-rounded trusted advisor that your clients need you to be.

What or who inspires you?

God – He is my everything and the fountain from which I draw all my inspiration. So many things have happened in my life's journey that let me know that it is not just my smarts or skills that have brought me this far – put simply, I am blessed. My husband inspires me to be deliberate and temperate in all I say and do. I am also inspired by my parents – now retired, but who were for most of their lives hardworking public servants – my sisters, and the partners in UUBO that showed me the ropes as I built my own career.

If you weren't a PE lawyer, what would you be doing?

I really loved fashion when I was younger (still do), so perhaps I'd be working in the fashion industry. Closer to what I do presently would be working in the development space; there is such a great need on the African continent and in Nigeria specifically and I would like the energy I exert every day to go directly into shaping and funding a better future for the African youth.

Any advice you would give your younger self?

It will be fine, even if not perfect, and by the way, you are better than you think or will ever know, so be a little kinder to yourself.

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Karry is managing editor of IFLR. She manages the team and is responsible for IFLR's content. She also sits on the editorial judging panels of IFLR's global awards and the Women in Business Law Awards. Before joining the legal media industry, she was project manager at a startup focused on sustainable lifestyle media and events.
