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Interview with Ana Maria Yuri, Managing partner at Chilean law firm Bofill Mir & Alvarez Jana

You are the first-ever female managing partner at your firm. How do you explain your appointment?

Actually, I was part of the first group of female partners at our firm. Since then, I have been part of the management committee, which I now directly lead. My appointment to the management committee came after several years' experience both in administrative management and legal advice in business; which are strongly linked to these functions.

What are the main difficulties women face as lawyers in Chile?

I honestly have not felt any major difficulties specifically related to being a woman. Of course, I recognize that a few years ago there were fewer women who practiced corporate law. Back then, it was necessary to assume a certain attitude that would allow you to generate credibility in a group made up mostly of men. Today, it's less of an issue as you find yourself with men and women in different disciplines more often.

What are the main strategic issues you want to address as managing partner of the firm?

My approach has been a full management one, incorporating methods and procedures that allow us to correctly and efficiently allocate resources. Another relevant aspect is the development of knowledge, through learning, as well as permanently updating the systems our lawyers rely on, in addition to facilitating the comprehensive development of our lawyers' careers.

Does your firm have any particular initiatives to help or motivate women lawyers on the long road to making partner?

At BMAJ men and women are given the same opportunities to become partners. There is no gender discrimination in our attraction, retention, remuneration or in our annual performance assessment processes, for example. In fact, currently 44% of our associates are women. Moreover, we are working to improve the tools we have to help women associates reach the requirements needed to become partners, because as a firm we want to promote gender equality at all levels, and to retain talented women who are also raising families.

You are a well-known M&A lawyer. What's the secret to succeeding in the male-dominated world of M&A?

Discipline, perseverance and a sense of urgency, which are elements that allow any challenge in life to be successfully overcome, and that goes for men as well as women.

What's the most important piece of advice you can give young women intent on becoming lawyers?

I think it is very important to develop a personal strategy for your career. Having such strategy will allow you to make decisions more easily and define your goals. Also, attitude and teamwork are very important. You will definitely get better results if you are willing to work as part of a team alongside people whose skills and talents complement your own.

<https://www.leadersleague.com/en/news/we-are-working-to-improve-the-tools-we-have-to-help-women-associates-reach-the-requirements-needed-to-become-partners>