

Five minutes with ... Hubert de Vauplane, Morgan Lewis

By Karry Lai June 10 2025



The Paris-based finance lawyer explains why he would want to be a historian and why finding a legal solution to a business challenge excites him

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 Hubert de Vauplane, partner at [Morgan Lewis](#) in Paris.



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

I would usually say I am a business facilitator. I help entrepreneurs and businesses navigate the regulatory landscape.

Talk us through a typical working day.

No two days are the same however they are broadly spent doing the above. A significant part of this is on the phone or on conference calls with clients, the rest of the day is usually a combination of writing or reviewing memos, emails, and contracts produced for clients by my colleagues. The fintech space is fast moving so I also like to ensure I am on top of the latest developments by reading the latest regulatory or industry updates. The firm is extremely collaborative, and the remainder of the time is checking in with global colleagues, for example I am a participant in our Europe focussed and global fintech industry group which meets to share knowledge, information and business development strategies.

What are you working on at the moment?

A significant part of my practice is working with clients on the issuance of stablecoins; these are tokens that represent money without actually being money. It is fascinating because they are a disruptor in the monetary, and even geostrategic, economy. I also look at financial digitalisation issues more generally. Banks, brokers, and stock exchanges are experiencing a revolution similar to that of the introduction of IT in the 1960s.

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

What I find most exciting is finding a legal solution to a business challenge and providing legal advice that adds value to a company. As an example, I recently worked with banking regulators to create a legal framework for start-ups, which were launching their buy now pay later or revenue-based financing schemes.

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

In my world, in particular, understanding the basics of the technological and commercial product on which you are advising is essential. Put yourself in the client's shoes and speak the same language as them. I learned this after spending six years as a derivatives trader and my PhD in law. It is difficult to provide a good legal response to a challenge if you do not understand the financial and technical aspects of the product.

What is the most common misconception about being a finance lawyer?

The tyranny of precedent! It's rarely as straight forward as using documentation from a past transaction and adapting it slightly for another deal. This can be a costly mistake. During the financial crisis when I was a banker, I saw a lot of contracts drafted which could have been better tailored.

What or who inspires you?

I am inspired by the great jurists of the 18th and 19th centuries who were capable of reasoning holistically. Being able to have a relevant opinion in constitutional law, criminal law, contract law, or family law is a wonderful thing. Today, we lawyers tend to be specialised in narrower areas of law. To name a name, I would say Portalis, the most famous of the drafters of Napoleon's civil code.

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

I would be a historian. I spend a good part of my little free time reading and writing books on the history of people or the history of my country. Making the link between history and law allows us to better understand the evolution of certain legal concepts.

Any advice you would give your younger self?

- Be curious and open towards the world and subjects beyond the law.
- Always be in a position of doubt, and not in a position of considering you have the answer.
- Never work alone, but in a team: it is from collaboration that the enrichment of points of view is born.

Topics

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Karry Lai

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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.

