

## US EMPLOYMENT LAW FIRM OF THE YEAR

(United States)



Darren Gardner

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**DARREN GARDNER IS A PARTNER AT SEYFARTH SHAW LLP. HE CHAIRS THE FIRM'S INTERNATIONAL PRACTICE AND LEADS ITS INTERNATIONAL EMPLOYMENT LAW TEAM. DARREN SPECIALISES IN INTERNATIONAL EMPLOYMENT LAW.**

*How did you feel when your firm won the US Employment Law Firm of the Year Award?*

“This is a very prestigious award that arises from a readership vote so it is really flattering. I am always extremely proud when we receive this kind of recognition and support for what we do.”

*This award is recognition of you and your team's successes in the market place, which has been very difficult with the current market conditions. How have you had to adapt in terms of the services you provide?*

*“We have really been focused on building a team that strives to be the best in the practice area and that is filled with people who work well together for our clients. We have an unusual model in that our team is focused entirely on complex cross-border employment work. It is a demanding area of practice and we are particularly driven to making sure we always produce the highest-quality work and achieve the best commercial results for our clients. We really concentrate on how we interact with each other and with our clients. We want to be great lawyers who are easy for our clients to work with and who our clients know will go the extra mile for them every time.”*

*A Happy team is a productive team, so how much emphasis do you place on team culture? Which elements stand out as helping you achieve this award?*

“I think teamwork is critical to the success of any practice. In our case, this may be more true than ever. I don't believe you can do the kind of high pressure, complicated work that we do, covering the diverse geographies that we cover (over 150 different countries) if you don't have a strong team ethic and confidence in the people you work with.

*“You also have to enjoy what you do to consistently produce the very best results. We are very fortunate in that regard as we have a close team of people with a deep expertise and a common approach and goals. I think this stands out and our clients notice and appreciate this.”*

*What strategies have you developed personally to deal with the recognised stresses of transactions and cross-border employment law?*

“To be able to perform at the highest level year after year you really have to enjoy what you do. I am very lucky in that I practice in an area that I really enjoy and I am very passionate about. Having a strong team of extremely capable people that you know well and trust helps me a great deal. I also try and go surfing whenever I can...”

*So how would you say you differentiate yourselves from the rest of the competition?*

“Where do I start? Our team really prides itself on being different. International employment law did not even exist when I started practising in the area nearly 15 years ago. My understanding is that we now have the largest and most experienced team of partners in the world dedicated solely to this practice area. We all very much enjoy doing things around the world for clients that have not been done before. We are all internationally trained and we practice cross-border employment law with a truly global focus. We have consistently demonstrated that we are able to deliver complex global employment projects and transactions from a single central location – there are not many other firms that can say, let alone repeatedly do, that.”

*How do you see the legal market changing and how will it affect you over the next 12 months?*

“Clients are recognising, with the globalisation of their businesses, how important it is to have advisors that have proven experience around the world - rather than necessarily having to deal with multiple lawyers in multiple locations who may not all actually be experts in local employment law. We have grown year on year for a long time and our expertise is becoming better known. I am expecting us to be even busier next year.

*If you could offer one piece of advice to other nominees for your award, what would it be?*

“Always do the best job you possibly can – clients notice it”

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