



JAMES GOODNOW

*The new wave of millennial management is coming, and **Goodnow** is at the vanguard. At 37 years old, Phoenix-born and Harvard-educated Goodnow, who was named one of “America’s Tchiest Lawyers,” is the newly-elected **president and managing partner of Fennemore Craig, P.C.**, Arizona’s oldest law firm and one of the largest firms in the Southwest.*

WHY DO YOU THINK YOU HAVE BEEN SO SUCCESSFUL IN YOUR CAREER?

I had fantastic role models when I was a child. My father was a lawyer, but he was a family man first. My mom got her Ph.D. when my brother and I were young—she jokes that she wrote her dissertation in the only place she could get some peace with two wild kids running around, the bathroom. They were always driven, but they had their priorities straight. They set a high bar I strive for. I started working at Fennemore Craig as a summer file clerk when I was 18. I was assigned to sit at a work station outside of the office of one of the members of the firm’s management committee. One day, following a big win he had on a case, he took his entire team out to a celebratory lunch. On his way out the door, he invited me to join. I told him I hadn’t worked on the matter, but he said, “You’re here, James; you’re part of the team.”

That moment had a profound impact on my life, inspiring me to come back to Fennemore Craig after law school, and teaching me that successful lawyers can be good people, too. I believe that even more today.

WHAT IS THE MOST REWARDING PART OF YOUR CAREER?

I love the culture we’ve built at Fennemore Craig, and how we’ve evolved into a modern-day law firm. We wear jeans to work but are still professional. We’re proud of our 130-year heritage, but we’re always looking ahead and trying to innovate to deliver the best results for our clients. I approach my day-to-day work with the same type of energy, taking cues from my mentors. That’s not just inspiring and leading our team at Fennemore Craig, but it’s also learning more about our clients and finding new ways of delivering solutions for them.

YOUR BOOK “MOTIVATING

MILLENNIALS” SOLD OUT ITS FIRST PRINTING WITHIN HOURS OF ITS RELEASE. WHY DO YOU THINK THERE WAS SO MUCH INTEREST?

It’s a ubiquitous topic—no matter the industry or the location, millennials are impacting the workplace. They also happen to be among the most reviled generations—we’re the generation everyone loves to hate. It was time to not just address that reality but also do some myth busting.

Every generation takes joy in bashing younger generations; it’s gone on for as long as history has been recorded. The truth is that millennials are not going to ruin your workplace. And, if you harness their talents, they can make it better. Although it’s hard to generalize about 80 million people, millennials as a group tend to be collaborative, inclusive and creative—all while understanding technology in ways that those who didn’t grow up with it generally cannot.

YOU TRY TO MAKE IT HOME TO TUCK IN YOUR TWO YOUNG KIDS EVERY NIGHT. WHY IS THAT IMPORTANT TO YOU?

My wife, Erin, and I made a commitment to one another that, no matter what’s happening with work, our family is the foundation. My kiddos, Kelly, 6, and Brody, 4, mean everything to me, and those hugs and giggles and boo-boo fixes are what fuel me during long days. As a child, I was fortunate to have a supportive family that was always there. My parents showed me that you could have a successful, rewarding career while also raising a family. Family isn’t negotiable.

IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU GIVE BACK TO THE COMMUNITY?

I serve on the board of directors for Make-A-Wish of Arizona and the National Kidney Foundation of Arizona. My family also volunteers time with Boys Hope Girls Hope of Arizona.