

Linda R. Oszust

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Drawing on her experience as an executive who managed a \$20 million portfolio in the Chicago business world, Linda R. Oszust is head of the corporate counseling and crisis group at Rossman. She is also a member of the Privately Held Business Forum, a committee of the state bar's Business Law Section.

The practice of law:

It means everything. I am the first generation in my family to obtain a college degree and of course the first to obtain a doctoral degree. I always dreamed of doing something with my life that I could consider a calling, something that integrated who I am as a person into a career. The law is that for me. I go to work with a feeling of purpose and drive every day. I learn something new every day. Moreover, I am privileged to work amongst brilliant, talented, and engaged people that inspire me endlessly.

Growing up:

I grew up in the Morningside neighborhood of Detroit. My grandfather was a Detroit Police detective and my father was a Detroit firefighter. I was raised with a strong sense of community and civic engagement was in my blood. Since I wasn't going to be running into any burning buildings any time soon, obtaining my JD and participating in the

legal system as an officer of the court seemed like the natural choice.

Accomplishments and challenges:

I recently led a trial team, including two other outstanding female attorneys, in a weeklong arbitration as plaintiff's counsel in a wrongful death/premises liability case. We obtained a substantial award on behalf of the estate benefiting the deceased's wife and son. The deceased was killed when he reached outside of his work area on the defendant's property and was electrocuted by 480 volts of electricity from a source that remains unknown to this day. Given the deceased's skill and his employer's control over the worksite, we had to overcome several defenses, 10 motions for summary disposition, and the same number of directed verdicts at the close of our proofs. This case had been in litigation for over four years and our ability to stay the course, and commitment to preparation of every element, especially the experts and cross-examination of the defense experts, won the day.

Advice:

Stay humble. There is always more to learn. Be the best authentic version of yourself, not a copycat version of someone else. Be kind. The practice of law is hard enough, being unkind only makes it harder. For all my fellow strong women with lead-



ership skills, use your voice, don't let fear hold you back. Be afraid, but do it anyway.

You don't know:

I love to garden. I have dreams of publishing a book (or multiple books) one day.

In one word:

Bold.