

Practice Leader Insights From Covington's Louise Freeman

By **Louise Freeman** (July 27, 2026, 3:40 PM BST)

In this Law360 U.K. Expert Analysis series, practice group leaders share thoughts on keeping the pulse on legal trends, tackling difficult cases and what it takes to make a mark in their area.

In this installment, Louise Freeman, Covington's co-chair of commercial litigation, discusses how she combines a longer-term outlook with a fast-paced approach, the challenges of representing clients from six different jurisdictions, and why junior lawyers need to be ready to adapt and pivot to where the work is.

The Experiences That Have Shaped My Approach to Leadership

My formative years were spent at two very different firms: a large, institutional firm with hundreds of litigators, Herbert Smith, then without Freehills or Kramer, followed by a smaller, more entrepreneurial firm with a lean but incredibly busy and varied litigation team, SJ Berwin LLP.

In my role now with Covington & Burling LLP, leading teams of varying sizes on major class action defenses, through to smaller contractual or business tort claims, I draw on those early experiences.

I'd like to think that I now combine the calm, longer-term outlook of leadership needed on complex, long-running litigation, with the lean-team, fast-paced approach that I developed working on smaller, often expedited, cases.

The Most Challenging Matter I've Worked On

In one case, I was representing five sets of tire manufacturers from six different jurisdictions: France, Germany, Italy, the U.K., the U.S. and Belgium — each of which came with their own approach to the litigation.

They also each had their own factual witnesses, such that we ended up calling over 20 such witnesses at trial. Making sure that each client and witness felt supported and ready to give evidence required a real team effort.



Louise Freeman

Current Developments Shaping My Work

I would be remiss not to mention artificial intelligence as a major development affecting the practice of law. Like all law firms, we are exploring the use cases where it can add most value. My current focus is on how AI can support our team with administrative tasks, freeing up lawyer time to focus on supporting our clients with their most challenging issues.

A Lawyer Who Has Impressed Me

I have worked closely with Kristina Lukacova, junior counsel at Monckton Chambers, for a couple of years, and she is excellent. I appreciate not only her legal acumen and incredible work ethic, but also her commercial and strategic abilities, which mean she is always three steps ahead.

My Advice to Junior Lawyers as the Profession Evolves

Try to keep an open mind about where your practice might take you. You won't know what you enjoy until you try it. I thought I would hate real estate as a trainee, and then nearly chose to qualify there, but litigation just pipped it!

It is also very hard to predict the next big thing in your area — when I was promoted to the partnership at SJ Berwin, my business plan had a real focus on structured financial products, but that work then promptly dried up. You need to be ready to adapt and pivot to where the work is, and embrace new challenges.

Louise Freeman is a partner and co-chair of the commercial litigation and EMEA dispute resolution practice groups at Covington & Burling LLP.

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