

# Communications Coordinator

## Dominic

When I completed my legal studies, I knew a lot about law but almost nothing about the legal profession. In those days, it wasn't easy to find information about lawyers and law firms. There was no internet, no trade press and no legal directories.

Don't be fooled: ignorance is not bliss. As a result of my naivety, I began my legal career at a tiny high-street law firm in Greenwich, south-east London, where I did a mixture of low-grade criminal work, litigation and domestic conveyancing (buying and selling homes). However, with time, hard work and a lot of luck, I eventually ended up at one of the best law firms in the City, Slaughter and May.

I loved my time there. The people were great, and I did big work for big clients. Best of all, I got the chance to set up and manage the firm's football team. To get people interested in the team, I started writing short articles. To my surprise, my efforts were well received.

After I left Slaughter and May, however, I gradually became disillusioned. I disliked the work I was doing and I disliked the people I was working for even more. To make matters worse, I now harboured ideas about becoming a writer.

I don't mind admitting that I was scared at the prospect. I knew that I would be taking a huge risk and that, once I left my legal career behind, there would be no going back. And, of course, I couldn't be sure that I'd be successful as a writer.

Following another piece of luck, I managed to get a job with a monthly magazine called *Legal Business*. There, with support from a wonderful editor, I taught myself to write.

I discovered that the key to writing well is to read well. I read and read and read. And the more I read, the better I wrote.

After leaving *Legal Business*, I became a freelance journalist and wrote for a number of national newspapers, including *The Times*, *Financial Times*, and *Daily Express*. I wrote for some leading law firms and one of the world's top accounting firms, PricewaterhouseCoopers. I even had a book published.

Following the global financial crisis in 2008, however, many businesses could no longer afford to employ freelance writers on a regular basis, with the result that my workflow dried up. Fortunately for me, I was offered a job at Cleary Gottlieb.

Just like Slaughter and May, the best thing about Cleary is the people. They're smart, friendly and good-hearted. I do a wide range of work for the firm, including writing and editing communications for internal and external audiences, managing our directory and award submissions, and helping with public relations work.

The best thing about my work is that I get to use my writing and editing skills. Almost three decades after becoming a writer, I still think that playing with words is the best game in town.