

# THE LAWYER

HORIZON DAILY NEWSLETTER | WEIL GOTSHAL & MANGES

## Weil gets the band back together

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Written by Matt Byrne, Director of Insight

Here's a spectacular, if unusual, bit of laterals-related data courtesy of Weil Gotshal. Over the past two years, no fewer than 15 of the firm's current partners have returned to it after a stint away at a rival. This number doesn't include lawyers who've travelled that well-trodden path, particularly in the US, to government and back. This is senior folk that have left Weil for a competitor, or occasionally a client, and then decided to return to what they know best.

It's become a recurring theme among some managing partners over recent years that a firm's success shouldn't be measured solely by profit. Certainly, there are other metrics, and not necessarily ones that are virtually impossible to stick in a spreadsheet, such as 'purpose'. Revenue per lawyer is a stalwart, ditto profit per lawyer. So why not the number of partners at a firm who have left and then decided to return? It is an interesting yardstick by which to measure that most indefinable of things: a firm's culture. The grass isn't always greener, but sometimes you need to quit to learn this.

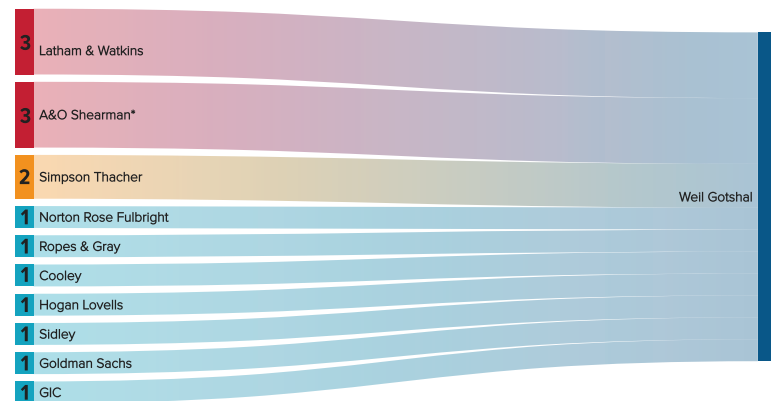
Weil's total partnership stands at around 280, not including the 17 new partners it elected this week, effective 1 January 2026. This means that the number of returners over the past two years represents around 6 per cent of

its current crop. This might not sound massive, but a quick and unscientific straw poll conducted by *The Lawyer* (i.e. phoning a few contacts) suggests this number of rejoiners is highly unusual.

Weil recently include Simpson Thacher, Ropes & Gray, GIC and Goldman Sachs.

Obviously, over the same period Weil has also seen a significant number of partner exits, so this trend is

Weil has attracted returning partners from a range of firms and organisations



Partners returning to Weil Gotshal, 2023-2025  
Source: The Lawyer

\*Includes one legacy A&O returning partner

Of course, there are many reasons why people leave or indeed rejoin a firm (not least, filthy lucre). Likewise, when it comes to laterals much can be read into which firm a partner joined – or rejoined – from. In the latter case, Weil scores well in terms of its most recent rehires. Three hail from Latham & Watkins – Joseph Lee, Doug Lumish and Jeff Homrig – while another trio – Phil Baynes, Tom Mastoras and Jean-Christophe David – rejoined from A&O Shearman. Other marquee names that have gifted partner talent back to

anything but one way. But on paper at least, it does appear to suggest a certain stickiness, a cultural glue and an understanding of the power of alumni. It also says much about the apparently grown-up and positive way in which these 15 lawyers exited Weil in the first place. That's not always the case, of course, with Mike Francies unlikely to make a surprise return to Weil in any capacity. But still, at a time when partners have never been more mobile, it's a metric to be celebrated.