

Entrepreneurship in law:

KETTI KVARTSKHAVA

on BLC's success and being a

woman in business



Interview by **Rusa Tchkuaseli**,
Partner at BLC Law Office

I recently had the pleasure of catching up with Ketti Kvartskhava over a coffee. Ketti is one of the few legal practitioners in Georgia who needs little, if any, introduction. As a Managing Partner at BLC Law, she has been recognized as a leading practitioner in Georgia by a number of reputable legal editorials over the last ten years. She is a true pioneer in the country's legal field, having received her legal education in the United States and then bringing U.S. law firm culture to Georgia in the early 2000s. Having further proven herself as an influential woman in business, she now sits on the panel of investors in the business reality TV show Shark Tank Georgia.

KETTI HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOURSELF: LAWYER OR ENTREPRENEUR?

I would describe myself as both. Serving the best interests of my clients and offering the highest level of legal services in Georgia requires entrepreneurship. Of course, consultancy business has its own twist; it requires full time involvement not only in the management of the firm but also in actual legal matters dealt with by the firm. It is, in fact, a business, and I cannot imagine any successful lawyer who would consider it otherwise. With increased access to good education, the legal profession has become highly competitive nowadays, and

being the best in this field is not only dependent on how well you know the law. It is about understanding the needs of your client

and developing tailor-made, solution-oriented, quality legal services. This in itself is entrepreneurship.

Since we are on the subject, what are the key selling points of your services at BLC?

It is the solution-oriented and results-driven philosophy of our services at BLC that make us different from others in the market. We have a business-centric approach to making deals. We place great emphasis on understanding our clients' business objectives and the specificities of their industries. Our clients are interested in results, and our goal is to provide them with the best legal solution to achieve those results.

We do not just bill for hours; we bill the client for the value that we create and deliver.

This is why most of the time our service fee is marginal compared to the value that we create for the client. For example, I was recently able to solve an issue that had been deadlocked for one of our clients with a ten-minute phone call.

At BLC, we also help clients in their decision-making with solid legal advice that is also pragmatic. Finally, a law firm should act as a useful source of information, contacts, and knowledge. BLC can offer all of this because of its positioning and culture as well as its valuable insights into market activities.

What is it like to be a woman in this industry? Have you ever felt prejudiced because of your gender?

This is a very sensitive subject, and I do not want any readers to generalize my experience. With this disclaimer, I must say that being a woman has never been a decisive factor, either positive or negative, throughout my career. On occasions, I perhaps had to speak louder than men in the room to make my voice heard, but for doing so, I have received only trust and respect. In hindsight, this could partly have been a virtue of my education and perhaps also my character. This once again proves the importance of education for women and the need for creating equal opportunities. I am a board member of Women for Tomorrow, an organization that strives to strengthen the role of women in the process of economic development. We are creating and empowering a network of women business leaders and providing education, development, and mentoring for female

entrepreneurs and business representatives at every level of leadership.

I cannot stress enough the necessity of bright, well-educated, and highly motivated young women who have contributed to the success of BLC. The statistics speak for themselves:

**50% of our partners are female;
50% of our senior associates are female;
75% of our associates are female;
72% of our junior staff are female;**

and 75% of our administration and financial department are female.

This is truly impressive, Ketti. My last question to you: where would you say BLC is heading in the future?

It has been 22 years since the inception of BLC, and I am truly proud of what it has become. It has grown into a sustainable company that will continue our legacy and values long after we are gone. The next generation of BLC partners, including yourself, Rusa, only serve as proof of this. We have promoted three partners during the past few years, which reflects our strong associate base.

We closed 2022 with 32% revenue growth and the largest legal team in Georgia, which is an unprecedented result.

I think BLC will continue to grow, both in terms of revenue and headcount. We have been working on developing new products that will allow us to extend our services outside Georgia, and we plan to have them launched in 2023. I think we are steering this ship in the right direction, and I am excited to see BLC explore new and untouched lands!

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