

Jeremy Gordon

Regional Head of Legal, Americas

Thoughtworks, Inc.

In current position for: 17 years

Years in-house: 19 years

Law School: DePaul University College of Law

Undergrad: University of Maryland, Baltimore County (B.A., Psychology)

An overview of my role is:

I lead a team of nine lawyers and paraprofessionals supporting sales, business operations and compliance for Thoughtworks' operations in Brazil, Canada, Ecuador, Peru and the United States. My team counsels executives and cross-functional teams (finance, product, tax, recruiting, HR and compliance) responsible for scaling Thoughtworks' global business. I also act as a primary resource for our Corporate Development and Strategic Partnerships teams, while managing our global IP portfolio and trade controls compliance.

How I wound up working in-house:

I didn't want to work in-house at first. I wanted to be a prosecutor. But I started working at Thoughtworks as an interim step to something else, and the more I learned about the business, the more interested I became. Ultimately, the reason I pursued the in-house path was the incredible variety of experience it has to offer. I've worked on five continents, started and shut down multiple businesses, done multijurisdictional M&A, built a US Government and Public Sector consulting practice, and made lifelong friendships with people in a wide range of industries around the world.

The best thing about my current job is:

The people. The team I manage is diligent, curious and hungry. They volunteer for initiatives that have huge visibility across the company with the same intensity as they pick up and complete the everyday tasks required of a generalist in-house legal team. We're building a team that delivers exceptional service to our stakeholders and having fun doing it.

The most challenging thing about my current job is:

Keeping track of all the things people want to do with AI; learning enough about how the technology works to be able to understand what we are doing and then giving well-considered advice to the folks who need to set strategy and deliver to our clients.

What I've accomplished as an in-house lawyer of which I'm most proud:

Two things: Building the team I have right now and creating a negotiation training called Communicating for Connection (the latter hopefully coming to a CLE session near you soon)...

What I like most about ACC's Chicago Chapter:

The huge number of opportunities for continuing education, connection and service that you can find every year. There is at least one thing every month that I wish I was going to (and sometimes I can even get there).

Most valuable life lesson that I still apply:

Everything I do is based on three main concepts: Viktor Frankl's book: *Man's Search for Meaning*, Paolo Freire's book: *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, and cultivating flow. This boils down to the following: seek meaning in unavoidable suffering, learn how to learn, and organize your life so you can access flow states often and with ease.

How I achieve work-life balance:

We spend most of our waking life working, which leads me to conclude that ... our work *is* our life. So, I try not to think about work/life balance as much as I think about the importance of working at something I find meaningful, with people who share my values that I can trust and rely on. And when I'm not working, I try to be grateful for all the privilege and blessings I have, and to take the time to savor them with the people I love.

How COVID-19 impacted my life:

It gave me some great stories. Like the time I let my kids cut my hair. Ask me about that if we meet in person and I guarantee you a good laugh.

If I were not practicing law, I would probably be:

Acting

My favorite movie:

Grosse Pointe Blank.

My favorite vacation spot:

Costa Brava, Spain