

New Law Journal

— Leading on debate, litigation and dispute resolution —

M & S PROFILE: Charles Gordon

Date: 17 February 2014

The JAMS International recruit talks dinner with Denning & the difficulties of relaxation



The [DLA Piper](#) head of practice has joined [JAMS International](#) as a fulltime mediator and arbitrator.

What was your route into the profession?

Through my father who was a dedicated trade union lawyer and I worked with him between school and university. My grandfather had also been a barrister, so law was a frequent dinner table conversation. I initially went to the Bar but then joined Clifford Turner, now [Clifford Chance](#), to do advocacy in employment cases. I enjoyed working closely with the clients and so re-qualified as a solicitor.

What has been your biggest career challenge so far?

I think probably acting for several hundred former employees of the failed bank, BCCI, and seeking compensation for them. Not only did we have to coordinate instructions from hundreds of legally aided clients but we took a case to the House of Lords to establish a right to compensation for damage to reputation through the fraudulent activities of your employer

Which person within the legal profession inspires you most?

This would have to be [Lord Denning](#). When I was a law student, he was our hero. I had the privilege to meet him, and indeed to sit next to him at dinner, when he came to the 50th Anniversary of our College Law Society. He put the justice of the case before precedent and upset a lot of other judges in the process!

If you weren't a lawyer, what would you choose as an alternate career?

Definitely an actor. I had the chance to go to drama school but chose law. In another life, I might well go in the other direction

Who is your favourite fictional lawyer?

Can I cheat and name a fictional detective instead? I have loved the [Montalbano](#) stories from Sicily. I know the island very well and the stories and characters in the books are so true to life in the South of Italy.

What change would you make to the profession?

Where to start! I still believe that a fused profession would serve the interest of clients better and encourage more of us to try advocacy

How do you relax?

With difficulty! However my greatest relaxation is now to play with my 2-year-old granddaughter. Apart from that, on the tennis court, travelling with my wife, Ann, or cooking a meal for friends.

To feature in [Movers & Shakers](#) in NLJ please contact newlaw.journal@lexisnexis.co.uk