



Asked to describe his competitive edge, Glen Lerner says, “My smile.” He has a lot to smile about. He has built Glen Lerner Injury Attorneys into an organization with 35 attorneys, nearly 200 support staff, and offices in Las Vegas, Phoenix and Chicago.

In a more serious tone, he credits his success to people skills, a drive learned from overcoming significant challenges as a young man, and his personal faith.

Regarding people skills, he credits his ability to hire the right people for the right job and his willingness to delegate authority with responsibility. “I try to motivate people to make them feel like they are part of a family. I



Glen Lerner

Success Through Ups and Downs

By Dan Baldwin

don't look at my employees as expendable. I think that's very well reflected in the way my people treat our clients. I run it as a business, but I run it almost as a big family," he says.

Lerner's goal has always been to make the eight or nine hours his employees spend at work the best experience possible, believing that the attitude will be reflected in their relationships with their clients.

He defines the atmosphere of the organization as dynamic. "I'm a very high energy, larger-than-life persona and I'm able to take that and bring it into the offices. The office always has a nice electric atmosphere. When clients come here they feel that because my employees are very happy and there's no place they'd rather work."

His philosophy is to give his employees as much as he asks from them. "It's not just about how much you can get out of somebody. So many people look at life as what can I get from somebody else and I've always been the first to look at it for win/win outcomes. It has to be good for you. I'm not going to take every ounce of energy from you and beat you up and then when you can't take anymore kick you onto the streets and find someone else. I'm looking for long-term people. I want people who want to be in my employ for a career. When you do that you establish stability."

The business model he has chosen for his firm is based on the New England Patriots professional football team. (Lerner is an avid sports fan and a self-described fanatic about Boston sports.) "You get people who can play multiple positions because you

can only have a couple of stars on the team. There's one owner; the owner's in charge and I'm the owner. You have a coach who you delegate day-to-day responsibility to. Everybody else is a journeyman who buys into the culture and hopefully sticks around long term. Culture is everything in a business."

His drive for success stems in large part to childhood events that many would find challenging to overcome. At the age of five, his father went to prison and did not get out until after his second year of law

“Culture is everything in a business.”

school. "We were brought up believing our father was innocent, so it was an us against the world mindset instilled in us from day one. I grew up on welfare, but my parents instilled in me the belief that 'they are not going to beat us down.' I got into Harvard, Dartmouth, Stanford and Duke. That's not something you see everyday from the son of a guy in jail for double murder." He ended up going to Duke University and playing on the 1986 NCAA Champion soccer team.

His faith is also a driving force. "When people met me they saw me as a charismatic

guy, but I didn't have the character and integrity that God wanted. I wasn't the guy God had purposed me to be and I finally let go and let Him take control."

As an outgrowth of his faith and his commitment to the community, his firm is actively involved in community outreach through the Glen Lerner Gives Back and the Lerner and Rowe Gives Back charitable arms of the organization. "One of the things I've realized is that it ain't mine; none of this belongs to me. God blesses us. It's His and what you do with it is up to you. Ultimately, if you're not a good steward of what you get, you have nothing," he says.

Lerner also leads an active personal life. He and his wife of 15 years, Robynn, have three daughters and a son. He enjoys working out daily and just spending time with his family. As a movie buff, he and his son enjoy going to the movies practically every week, especially action and science fiction films.

He enjoys reading the Bible and religious works.

His management style, his upbringing and his faith have combined to build a personal injury firm on a national scale. He feels up to the challenge. "I don't have good days or bad days. I'm a very tough person mentally. I have a thick skin. When stuff happens, I roll with the punches. I realized it wouldn't be fair if I didn't have some ups and downs and tribulations. When stuff happens, I realize that it's God testing my character. I don't complain. I just keep moving forward – put your head down and get through it."