

C&S PARTNERS IS PRESENTING ITS CHIEF OF STAFF

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Mélanie Doux has been Chief of Staff at C&S Partners since January 2021. After studying Literature and Law, the youngest recruit tells us about her entrepreneurial adventure at the multinational.

TELL US A BIT ABOUT YOUR PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE THUS FAR

Mélanie. After obtaining an undergraduate degree in literature (*DEUG en lettres modernes*), I decided to specialize in law. Once I had secured my LLM, I decided to challenge myself by crossing the Channel for 2 months in an Anglo-Saxon environment. The time I spent in England and Scotland gave me valuable insight on what I wanted to do in the professional world.

I started in a law firm specialized in banking and finance law, where I had the opportunity to accompany the founder on every client, in several matters. I did administrative work, research on his behalf, but more in-depth work on certain cases. This allowed me to gain valuable experience, notably in the area of arbitration, an aspect of which I found to be fascinating.

WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO JOIN C&S PARTNERS?

I met Gérald Bouhourd while I was studying for my masters at university in Paris. Entrepreneurship was a significant part of my masters. It is a multi-faceted discipline that I was eager to discover. During my studies, Gérald really appreciated an entrepreneurial project I was working on as part of my degree and asked me if I would like to join his company.

From my perspective, joining a startup was the logical next step for me after graduating, as I wanted to work with people who had an international background who had experience working in different countries. In addition, I was fascinated by the energy sector. I came to realize that, even if the oil and gas industry sometimes struggles to counter negative perceptions, it really is making an effort to become greener. Of course, there are a lot of issues that remain to be addressed, but the same goes for most sectors.

Every day I learn something new and that is a real pleasure. I appreciate the coaching aspect of our consultants: getting the best out of a director and their teams.

HOW DID YOU MANAGE TO TAKE UP A NEW POSITION IN THE MIDDLE OF A GLOBAL PANDEMIC?

It worked out just fine. I was lucky enough to have several onboarding sessions, through which I learnt the essential elements of the job. My training was handled 50% by Gerald and 50% by another partner, Marcel Lieberman. My colleague Florentine Chauve, for her part, was taken under the wing of Brice Bouffard.

A great thing about C&S Partners is that senior management go out of their way to make new arrivals feel welcome. In addition, each week we get together to discuss ongoing issues raised during cases. The teams at C&S Partners are ready and willing to help whenever you have a question that needs addressing. I have always taken pride in my ability to work autonomously, so working from home was not a big adjustment for me. I did, however, try to recreate office conditions at home, buying a proper desk and setting myself office hours etc.

That said, I am delighted that the Paris office – which I will share with Olivier Mainguet of our legal offshoot, CSP Legal – will open soon, so I can spend part of the working week in the office. As regards members of the team based in different parts of the world, we always manage to find a timeslot for meetings that works for everyone, even if it does involve some adjustments, notably for Jean-Marie Rousset, who is based in Houston. There have been occasions when using English has been challenging, but I have worked to ensure that I am au fait with, for example the specific technical vocabulary used in C&S Partners' domains of activity.

WHAT DOES THE C&S PARTNERS SLOGAN “MATERIALIZING LEADERSHIP” MEAN TO YOU?

For me, being a leader is both an acquired art and something that comes from within. What I mean by that is each person comes with their own innate set of skills but also qualities and faults that can be worked on to create the best leader possible. We discussed about it during mentored classes with Gérald Bouhourd.

As my grandfather said, “In business, you need to be more of a shepherd than a sheep,” an expression that really resonates with me. At the end of the day there are several types of leaders, in business, in sport etc... but regardless of the activity, we all have the capacity to become a leader and C&S Partners helps materialize this.

WHAT IS YOUR ROLE AT C&S PARTNERS?

My role is in a state of constant evolution. The position was specifically created with me and, in fact, I am a link between the partners. It's up to me to know who does what, who wants to do what and think about how I can help the company make that happen. In this capacity, I take part in a meeting with the partners every two weeks.

I particularly admire the staff at C&S Partners for their alacrity and the fact that they have their finger on the pulse of what their clients need.

I am heavily involved in things like invitations, email campaigns and scheduling, and have gotten to work more with Michel Ingenbleek on communication follow-up. I take part in meetings with the board as regards the future direction of the company, although not yet at a strategic-decision-making level. That is set to change however, and I will soon be playing a full part in

examining where C&S Partners wants to be and how we can get there. There are also plans for me to become an autonomous consultant.



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