

Spotlight On – Simon Bond, Founder of Bond Legal

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Simon Bond

Simon Bond is the Founder of Bond Legal, a boutique employment law consultancy which advises businesses on a range of issues relating to HR and people management.

Simon has nearly 30 years' experience as an employment lawyer, having held several senior roles with solicitors' firms in the West Midlands.

1. Tell us a little bit about your business...

I established Bond Legal in 2020 after many years working in private practice. We advise small to medium sized businesses, from a range of sectors, on all aspects of employment law. This can include setting a HR strategy, developing and updating contracts of employment, managing redundancies, handling sickness absence and navigating disciplinary issues.

We also specialise in conducting independent workplace investigations which can include investigating employee grievances or allegations of harassment and bullying.

2. How did you get into the industry?

I qualified as a solicitor in 1995 after completing my legal education and training. I joined a firm in the West Midlands as an Assistant Solicitor, specialising in employment law, and was promoted to a Partner in 2000. Since then, I've held several senior roles in other law firms in the West Midlands, before relocating to the East Midlands and setting up Bond Legal.

3. What are the biggest opportunities and challenges in your industry?

The biggest opportunity is the fact that most, if not all, businesses at some stage of their development will need advice on employment law and HR issues. Employing staff can be a real

challenge and that is where we can really help to ensure they are getting the right advice and guidance for their business needs.

The main challenge is always ensuring that clients are kept up to date with the ever-changing requirements of employment law. We also understand that when you run a small business and don't have a dedicated HR team in house, you don't necessarily have the skills or experience to handle employee issues that inevitably crop up from time to time. This is where we can help by protecting organisations and their employees with employment law and HR consultancy.

4. How would you describe your leadership style?

Open, relaxed and enabling (or at least that is what I would like to think it is!).

I'm not really one for blowing my own trumpet, but a client recently gave some feedback which said: "Simon is easy to deal with, he makes complex things simple and makes things happen. He's brilliant!", so I'm pretty happy about that.

5. How do you get the most out of the people who work for you?

By being clear on our values and by being transparent about our expectations. We provide specialist advice on all kinds of HR issues, from contracts and HR policies to employee exits and defending employment tribunal claims, so simplicity, clarity and transparency are essential to get the best outcomes.

6. What are the most crucial elements to your business running smoothly and being successful?

Striving to keep our clients delighted with the services we provide and by remaining focused on our core values: clarity of communication, excellent service, integrity and community.

7. How has the past 12 months been for you?

Really exciting. We have worked with some amazing new clients and achieved great results. In addition, we have rebranded to better align our image with our values and, in addition, we launched a great new website which brings real clarity to our proposition and clearly outlines our core services; HR Advice, Workplace Investigations, HR Training and Instant Access Legal/HR Retainers.

8. What will the next 12 months look like for your business?

In 2025 we will have been in business for five years, so if we continue on the same trajectory, it will be time for a celebration and to thank those who have helped us get this far.

Apart from that, we'll continue to focus on service excellence for our clients by providing cost-efficient HR management solutions that give them the freedom to run and grow their businesses, with peace of mind.

9. What are the highlights of your career so far?

After 20+ years as a Solicitor in private practice there have been lots of highlights.

Receiving the pro bono lawyer of the year award for my work with the Citizens Advice Bureaux was a high. It was really nice to be recognised for supporting people going through tricky times. It was really rewarding being able to help people and I got a lot out of personally too.

Until 2020, I spent 10 years as a member of the Law Society's Employment Law Committee. During that time there was a large focus on Government responses to changes in employment law. It was interesting to get to contribute to shaping future legislation.

During a decade as a member of the regional Chartered Institute of Personal Development (CIPD) Committee and a Director of the Black Country Chamber of Commerce I've been lucky enough to meet business leaders from all sectors navigating many different workplace scenarios. This has helped shaped what we offer now at Bond Legal.

Since 2019 I've also been a legally qualified chair of the Medical Practitioners Tribunal Service, run by the General Medical Council (GMC), overseeing cases where doctors' fitness to practise is called into question. To be trusted to take on such a role was a real highlight and not a responsibility I take lightly!

The ultimate highlight is definitely setting up Bond Legal and supporting the businesses and organisations we're fortunate enough to work with every day.

10. What's the biggest business mistake that you've learnt from?

The biggest mistake I made when setting up Bond Legal was trying to do everything myself! Its an impossible task, so I've realised that it's essential to delegate and to hire people who are really great at what they do.

11. What's the best piece of business advice you've been given?

To invest in myself and believe in myself. That means continuing to learn and grow both professionally and personally, celebrating successes but also embracing mistakes and failures as learning opportunities.