

Patents

Five minutes with...Yasemin Kenarođlu, Kenarođlu Avukatlık Burosu

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Yasemin Kenaroğlu tells us about setting up ‘IP School’, Turkish coffee, and why IP is like an iceberg

Welcome to the latest instalment of Managing IP’s ‘Five minutes with’ series, where we learn more about IP practitioners on a personal as well as a professional level. This time we have **Yasemin Kenaroğlu**, partner at **Kenaroğlu Avukatlık Bürosu** in Turkey.

Someone asks you at a party what you do for a living. What do you say?

I usually say “I am an IP lawyer”, but many don’t know what IP stands for in the field. So, I go a bit further, such as: “I mean: intellectual property.”

If it still doesn’t ring a bell, I would say: “I help companies to protect their brands, patents, designs, copyrights ...” That always receives a “Wow!”.

Talk us through a typical working day.

I thrive on being in the office and staying closely connected with my team, so I make it a priority to work from our office three to four days a week.

Mornings start with catching up on emails, followed by brief discussions with my colleagues to align on key matters. I am aware of the significance of personal connections and inclusiveness in the team, so I focus on fostering an environment where everyone feels involved and heard.

Early afternoons are usually reserved for client meetings – mostly online. The final part of my day is dedicated to reviewing and refining draft petitions and reports.

And, of course, my day wouldn’t be complete without several cups of Turkish coffee and a lunch break filled with laughter and genuine conversation with my colleagues.

What are you working on at the moment?

I always work on multiple cases with different members of my team. We are focused on several complex trademark infringement cases and also completing our preparations for a big patent invalidation case which we need to file soon.

Also, I have projects and some HR topics to work on with our management team.

Does one big piece of work usually take priority or are you juggling multiple things?

I am a multi-tasking person. Even when I have one big piece of work on my desk, I always have many other cases to work on and I like this very much. It keeps my motivation and interest high.

What is the most exciting aspect of your role and what is the most stressful?

At this stage of my career, I’m most excited about guiding young professionals as they navigate their paths in IP, helping them find a passion that can sustain them throughout their careers.

This is why I'm deeply committed to our IP School – a social responsibility initiative at the firm.

Through this project, we share our expertise with law students, connect them with leading IP practitioners from various jurisdictions, and foster a deeper interest in IP among the next generation of lawyers.

The most stressful aspect is the widening generational gap, which has become more pronounced due to the changing world and rapid technological advancements. It's increasingly rare to meet new graduates with long-term career ambitions who are prepared to work hard to achieve them.

To address this, I strive to understand their needs and adapt my leadership style accordingly. By staying current with trends and challenges, I aim to bridge this gap and inspire young professionals to embrace the excitement of creating ideas, solving complex issues, and making a meaningful impact.

Tell us the key characteristics that make a successful IP lawyer/practitioner.

I don't know about a key for IP practitioners, but I guess the main key for everyone is to love what you do and be realistic about what you want and how to achieve it. People find the energy, patience, and capacity to achieve the things they desire sincerely.

What is the most common misconception about IP?

That it is a limited field and you cannot make a successful law career just with IP. Nope! IP is like an iceberg. What you see from outside is not even the top of the giant underwater mountain.

What or who inspires you?

I am inspired by those who challenge boundaries and drive meaningful change—whether it's a trailblazing leader, an innovative thinker, or a determined advocate for justice.

As an IP lawyer and a female leader in a dynamic market, I find motivation in stories of resilience and the courage to push forward in the face of challenges. These qualities are at the core of what fuels my commitment to protecting ideas, creativity, and innovation.

If you weren't in IP, what would you be doing?

If I weren't an IP lawyer, I'd likely be involved in the field of education. Combining my passion for teaching and helping others, I would dedicate my time to mentoring, developing educational programmes, and supporting causes that make a positive impact on people's lives.

Any advice you would give your younger self?

Learn how to better control your overthinking and anxiety so that you can enjoy what you create. Be there with all your mind when you are with your family – leave the work at work.

What is your motto in life?

Nothing desirable can be easily reached in life. Be ready to put in effort for what you want.

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Kenarođlu Avukatlık Burosu