



Insights: Perspectives

KTalks: 5 Questions with Steve Levitas

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Welcome to KTalks. This series reaches out to leaders in the business and legal communities with five questions to seek their insight on matters ranging from how law firms work with in-house counsel to tips on mentoring new attorneys, and advice for work/life balance.

[Steve Levitas](#) is Senior Vice President for Regulatory and Government Affairs at [Pine Gate Renewables](#) -- a utility-scale renewable energy company focused on strategic development and financing of solar and energy storage projects in the United States. He is also recently [retired partner from Kilpatrick Townsend](#) where he served clients for 20 years on the firm's Environmental & Product Regulation Team. Steve is one of the leading renewable energy lawyers in the Southeast. Over his career he has represented solar and biomass developers as well as commercial and industrial energy users. He also represented a wide range of corporate and governmental clients on environmental regulatory matters, with an emphasis on wastewater permitting and compliance, wetland and stream permitting and mitigation, water quality policy, and remediation and redevelopment of contaminated property.

1. What was the most valuable skillset that you learned working at Kilpatrick Townsend that translates to your current position?

Prior to joining Kilpatrick, I had been a litigator and regulatory lawyer. While at the firm, I learned how to represent clients in complex commercial transactions. John Livingston, who is a great transactional lawyer, was an especially good mentor.

2. How does your legal expertise help you in your current position?

I spent most of my legal career mastering complex regulatory systems. That experience is extremely valuable in my current role, where I am regularly called on to interpret complicated laws and rules applicable to renewable energy resources and to help design new regulatory programs.

3. What is the best non-legal attribute that you see in the most successful lawyers?

Humility.

4. Who had the greatest influence in your legal career that helped propel your career?

I've made a number of major changes during the course of my career. They all involved a fair amount of uncertainty and risk and required me to embark on steep learning curves. In every case, now dating back 40 years, Miles Alexander encouraged me to go for it, and in each case that turned out to be good advice.

5. Is there something you do in your personal life that contributes to your professional success?

I want to mention two things. First, I spend a good deal of time memorizing and reciting poetry, which I think strengthens my oral communication skills and also gives me a valuable sense of perspective. Second, since the most important feature of my professional success is complex problem solving, I'd like to think that the many thousands of hours I've spent working crossword puzzles has made me better at that.

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