

Kluwer Arbitration Blog

2025 PAW: Navigating the Path to Arbitration Success: the DIY Arbitration Toolkit from Young ITA and Wolters Kluwer

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(Pictured (L–R): Harriet Foster, Kiran Nasir Gore, Rostislav Kats, Camille Ramos-Klee, Ali Al-Khasawneh)

Among the many highlights of [PAW 2025](#) was the session organized by [Young ITA](#) (part of the [Institute for Transnational Arbitration](#)) and [Wolters Kluwer](#), “*DIY: The Essential Toolkit for Arbitration Success.*” The interactive program brought together a diverse set of seasoned practitioners to discuss the toolkit for success in international arbitration practice.

Opening remarks were provided by [Alexis Foucard](#) (Young ITA Co-Chair for Western Europe; Counsel, Clifford Chance, Paris). The main session was moderated by [Harriet Foster](#) (Senior Associate, Orrick, London; Co-chair, Young ITA Internal Communications) and featured as speakers [Ali Al-Khasawneh](#) (Of Counsel, Orrick, Geneva); [Kiran Nasir Gore](#) (Law Offices of Kiran N Gore PLLC, Washington, DC); [Rostislav Kats](#) (Wolters Kluwer, the Hague); and [Camille Ramos-Klee](#) (Independent Arbitral Secretary, New York). This post presents some of the key pieces of advice shared by the speakers.

Critically Assessing the Definitions of Success and Achievement

A central theme of the discussion was how each of the diverse speakers aims to define and achieve success in arbitration. Harriet emphasized that success in arbitration can take many forms beyond simply “winning” a case.

Kiran compared the journey of arbitration practice to a marathon, where success is built over time through dedication and resilience. She highlighted the importance of viewing one’s career as a portfolio of experiences, skills, and accomplishments.

Rostislav agreed with her, explaining that success is not only, or even necessarily, about winning cases but also about contributing to the discourse and building trust. At a later stage in the session, Rostislav elaborated that in order to be successful, one should have a very determined personality, be fair to oneself and one’s firm’s partners, be direct but at the same time polite, and be proactive, which includes being eager to learn, develop, and ensure the interests of the client.

Ali explained that one strategy to success is to aim to become a “go-to” person. He emphasized the importance of hard work, interpersonal skills, and proactive efforts to seize opportunities. Ali illustrated this strategy by sharing several personal stories and demonstrated that success can be achieved even in cases where the overall outcome may not be favorable.

Building a Portfolio of Relevant Knowledge, Experiences, and Skills

Camille focused on skill development and visibility as key elements of success. She encouraged young lawyers to seek opportunities to develop their skills inside and outside their organizations. Opportunities for skills development may be available from many different sources. For example, law firms often offer their associates pro bono representation opportunities, which can help one gain hands-on advocacy skills and client and case management skills while still early in their career. On the other hand, third-party organizations, like Delos and the American Bar Association, offer various training programs to help participants develop practical skills, such as advocacy and cross-examination, as well as substantive knowledge about arbitration law and practice.

She also emphasized the importance of networking and building a profile so that others in the community can refer opportunities that may uniquely match that background and skillset.

Rostislav highlighted the importance of thought leadership and strategic networking to help build credibility and visibility within the community. He further emphasized the importance of balancing self-promotion with substantive contributions. He highlighted the role of platforms such as Wolters Kluwer in facilitating learning and visibility, encouraging participants to engage with the global arbitration community and contribute to the development of arbitration knowledge. Harriet echoed this sentiment and discussed strategies for finding the time and energy required to author articles and thought leadership pieces.

Kiran emphasized the need for continuous learning and expanding one’s knowledge of arbitration beyond immediate needs. She encouraged participants to think creatively and propose innovative procedural and legal solutions, making connections between different areas of expertise.

Ali described “good judgment” as a key skill for success, and one that cannot be taught. He used the German concept of “*Fingerspitzengefühl*” to illustrate the instinctive ability to process and analyze complex information and find solutions for the challenges that may arise while working on cases or navigating one’s career. Later in the session, in response to audience questions, Ali discussed the evolving nature of arbitration and the need for adaptability in a competitive and fragmented field. He encouraged participants to be involved in the broader legal community, as this may become a source of additional “backup” skills that can be leveraged in one’s case work.

Finding Support and Managing Challenges and Setbacks

Overall, the session maintained an optimistic tone; however, the speakers also acknowledged the various challenges that can emerge as one navigates their career. In the face of such setbacks, all of the speakers emphasized the importance of being adaptable and maintaining a positive attitude, even in the face of pressing workloads and imperfect outcomes.

Camille explained that mentors and sponsors can be key as one navigates their career. She encouraged participants to identify several mentors of varying seniority to serve as a “board of directors” for one’s career. That supportive network can serve as a sounding board, offer advice, help identify relevant opportunities, and provide guidance and support. Many organizations offer mentorship programs including Young ITA and Young ICCA.

Kiran discussed dealing with setbacks, emphasizing the importance of resilience and leveraging experience for long-term growth. She highlighted the competitive nature of the field and the need to develop a thick skin in order to thrive. In summary, Kiran encouraged attendees to view setbacks as opportunities for learning and growth and emphasized the importance of maintaining a positive outlook and constantly looking for ways to innovate.

Conclusion

The session underscored the importance of continuous learning, strategic networking, and resilience in achieving long-term success. The enthusiastic participation of and numerous follow-up questions from the audience underscore that as the field of international arbitration continues to evolve, programs like this one play a critical role in fostering dialogue, sharing knowledge, and inspiring innovation within the community.

This post is part of Kluwer Arbitration Blog’s coverage of Paris Arbitration Week 2025.

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