

# Transitioning from Old Reality to New Reality

# Tax Innovation

**An Interview with Julie Linn Teigland,  
EY Regional Managing Partner-Germany, Switzerland, Austria (GSA)**



Julie Linn Teigland

**EDITORS' NOTE** Julie Linn Teigland is the EY Regional Managing Partner – Germany, Switzerland, Austria (GSA) and a member of the EMEA Operations Executive. She has served in different leadership roles within EY, such as EMEA Growth Markets Leader and most recently as EMEA Accounts Leader. She has more than 27 years' experience working in professional services and has been with EY for over 15 years. She became partner in 2002. Teigland has served for years as an international tax advisor, before beginning her career in assurance. She is a champion of gender parity and very much engaged in EY's Women. Fast forward programme.

## Will you discuss the strength of EY within the GSA region?

In the GSA region, we are executing our EY strategy to be the leading advisor for transformation in the new reality. We are able to offer integrated solutions, from tax to transaction advisory services, and can help our clients to succeed in their digital transformation. Therefore, we are working in diverse, high-performing teams from all our service lines, providing tailor-made, client specific solutions. This is our strongest competitive advantage, combined with the investments made on our talents. In our advisory service line, for example, we've also made some acquisitions to complement our depth of sector expertise with innovative solutions in order to offer to our clients the best new digitally based strategies and business models.

## How close is the coordination from region to region?

Many of the EY clients in GSA are global with cross border operations, and our organization needs to mirror those of our clients. In my role, I focus on ensuring that those top global clients are served in the best way. At the same time, we have a strong middle-market practice across the region, which represents the core of the business in the three countries. This means that we need to maintain our practice's face to the customer: we do that by bringing together the best local knowledge, insights, specific market trends and relationships.

## Given that focus, are you looking to attract local talent and how strong is the talent pool?

Within those three markets, we have 12,000 employees. Diversity is at the heart of EY's talent agenda. We have a strong talent pool, not just by numbers, but also looking at the range of the profiles and skills we've built in our teams. I like to bring into our local teams those people coming from abroad as I believe that the diversity of backgrounds and knowledge unlocks the best innovative solutions for our clients. English is a common language across this region, which helps support our inclusive culture.

## Will you discuss the impact of the digital transformation taking place?

I've been in professional services for 27 years and our profession has changed profoundly, and it will change even more in the future. At the current pace of evolution, we won't have to wait 10 years to see radical changes happening in the business. While no one can predict what the digital transformation is going to bring us in the future, I can say that the pace of change has disrupted every business model. Businesses are now global in nature, they have changed their currency portfolio; their distribution systems with customers are moving more toward pull-based models and their processes have been completely reviewed and sometimes roboticized. The competition that they face is no longer just brand to brand but ecosystem to ecosystem.

Our job is to make sure we're helping our clients in that transition from old reality to new reality. Our professional services firm is one of only a few that can advise companies in that new reality journey from top to bottom. ●

**An Interview with Kate Barton,  
EY Americas Vice Chair of Tax Services**



Kate Barton

**EDITORS' NOTE** Kate Barton is a member of the Americas Executive Board, the Global Management Group, and the Global Tax Executive Committee, and is a partner at Ernst & Young LLP. Prior to this, she served as the Northeast Region Tax Managing Partner and as the New York Office Managing Partner. She joined the firm in 1985 as an intern. Barton received a B.S. from Boston University, a J.D. Magna Cum Laude and Order of the Coif from Boston College Law School, and an LL.M. in Taxation from Boston University School of Law. She is a Certified Public Accountant licensed in the states of New York and Massachusetts. She is a member of the Massachusetts Society of Certified Public Accountants, the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, the American Bar Association, and the Massachusetts Bar Association.

## What has made EY so strong in its tax practice?

It's all about our culture, which comes from the top. Women and people of all cultures and backgrounds are encouraged to flourish and to develop.

It's a rich culture that supports grabbing as much opportunity as one can and paying it forward.

## When it comes to the Big Four, tax services can sound similar. How challenging is it to differentiate?

On the tax side, in order to be really successful, we have to be experts in technical knowledge, but we also need to be very relational. People want to work with those they enjoy being with.

It's an area where EY shines. Our tax brand is number one and we have a great group of people who are at the top of their field. We inspire a lot of young people to come into the profession, fueled by a strong sense of purpose to help build a better working world.

## Do those entering the profession understand the scope of the innovation taking place in the industry?

We've spent a lot of time in our tax practice making sure the innovation mindset is valued and treasured. Our existing fleet knows that well and the word is spreading. We're steps ahead in our tax innovation culture in technology, robotics and automation. Our clients are looking for us to be the compass and lead them through these changes.

## Do you worry that technology will detract from some of the human element of the business?

Relationships are critical. Many millennials are not used to using their vocal chords. Emotional quotient is so key. This is a service business and it can be enabled by technology but the human element cannot be replaced.

## For the tax practice, how valuable is it to have a broad range of clients?

We serve clients everywhere on the spectrum, but we have a fondness for the entrepreneur. At EY, an entrepreneurial culture is deep rooted and that culture resonates. We like to take the concept from the garage to a public offering and then to stardom. We have that range of capabilities to do this from a tax perspective and we're the most globally aligned firm. Even start-ups have global businesses and setting up the right structure from the beginning is critically important.

## Would you discuss EY's focus on diversity and inclusion?

At EY, we focus on the science of diversity and inclusion, and we've done a great job training our people about unconscious bias and the role that plays in the workplace starting 15 years ago. Our people who go through this indicate how the training is pivotal. Many of our clients are interested in replicating our progress in this area, so we've been ahead of the curve in this regard. ●