

Innovation in Tax

An Interview with Marna Ricker, Americas Vice Chair – Tax, EY

EDITORS' NOTE *An EY veteran of more than 25 years, Marna Ricker oversees overall tax strategy, offerings and all client services for the 17,000-person EY Americas Tax practice. Prior to her current role, Ricker held various client serving and leadership roles in the organization, including most recently as the EY US Central Tax Leader. Ricker's experience includes assisting multinational companies in global business transformation efforts as well as tax compliance and reporting. She remains active in client service alongside her fellow partners in the market. Ricker has a keen interest in driving the future of tax through innovation and the exploration and application of technology. She earned a J.D. from the University of Cincinnati College of Law and a B.S. from The Ohio State University.*



Marna Ricker

FIRM BRIEF *The global EY organization (ey.com) is a leader in assurance, tax, transaction, and advisory services. In the Americas – EY's largest area – member firms employ more than 75,000 people across 32 countries and generate \$16.7 billion in revenues. Globally, EY member firms employ more than 280,000 people and generate \$36.4 billion in revenue.*

Will you discuss your current role and what has made EY a place where you have wanted to spend your career?

I lead the Americas Tax practice with 17,000 exceptional tax professionals serving clients in the U.S., Central and South America, Canada and Israel. Our firm's ambition is to create long-term value for our people and our clients as the world's most trusted, distinctive professional services organization. My job is to engage and inspire all 17,000 professionals to deliver first-class client service and create digitally-enabled solutions that address our clients' most complex business challenges.

When it comes to my 25-year tenure with EY, I never could have imagined the possibilities that I've experienced at the firm. I initially chose EY because of the warmth of the people with whom I interviewed and its breadth and scale. I believed EY would give me the opportunity to learn and grow and that is exactly what happened. I have had the opportunity to serve so many clients globally and to do many

different jobs during my time at EY. The dynamic landscape inside the organization has kept me engaged and invigorated which has made for a very fulfilling career.

Will you highlight EY's focus on innovation within the tax practice?

We have at least three areas of innovation to highlight. We have developed the America's Innovation Council. This is a forum for tax professionals to bring forward ideas from the field and scale them throughout

the process.

We also have what's called the Foundry. The EY Foundry is a group of technology entrepreneurs that we brought into the firm. They're out there looking at ways to disrupt our traditional businesses and finding new or related

ways to transform them into digital businesses. For instance, one business we are proud of is EY TaxChat, our on-demand mobile tax preparation service that connects individual filers with EY tax professionals.

Third, the EY Advanced Technology Lab is based in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The lab is focused on solving complex tax issues through the application of advanced technologies (i.e., advanced analytics, artificial intelligence, and blockchain) in collaboration with MIT and our clients. Innovation is in everything we do and we're constantly disrupting ourselves and our services to be better and to be in a continuous improvement mindset.

EY has a major commitment to diversity and inclusion. Will you discuss this focus at the firm?

This is a deep part of our culture and is a non-negotiable at EY. We have a long history around diversity and inclusion. We are also very focused on creating an even stronger culture of belonging. It's a for all concept. It's one that harnesses our unique differences and allows you and I to bring those differences to work every day and to be valued for exactly who we are. That is the culture that we are focused on always strengthening and protecting. Those differences allow us to bring unique perspectives and better outcomes to our work.

EY is a purpose-driven firm with a stated mission of Building a Better Working World. What does this mean for the firm and how is it ingrained in EY's culture?

We were early to focus on purpose at EY asking ourselves and others, "What is a better working world and how does that translate in the lives of our EY family, our clients, our stakeholders and the market?" Our people believe in this mission and work every day to achieve this goal.

We have been encouraging and guiding our people in finding their own purpose and how they express that to inspire their teams and realize their higher calling and ambitions on a personal and professional level. I am a tax accountant at heart. I like the numbers. When I was considering what I wanted to do in college and then later in law school, I was attracted to tax because at its origin are societal benefits.

Tax has a prominent place in our country, states, and communities to do good. It is a privilege to serve corporations and individuals in that responsibility. ●

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