

Eduardo (Ed) Suarez-Solar



Shareholder

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Practice & Industry Areas

- Corporate Law
- Labor & Employment Law
- Executive & Organizational Coaching
- Emerging Companies
- Alternative Dispute Resolution
- Business Litigation

Education

- University of South Florida, D.B.A., 2023
- Mercer University, J.D., 1991
- Georgia College and State University, M.P.A., cum laude, 1991
- St. Louis University, M.S.M., cum laude, 1988
- St. Louis University, B.S., cum laude, 1987

Bar & Court Admissions

- Florida, 1992
- United States District Courts, Northern, Middle and Southern Districts of Florida
- Certified Circuit Court Mediator, 2013
- Supreme Court Qualified Arbitrator, 2015

Overview

Dr. Eduardo A. Suarez-Solar has represented, legally advised, coached and consulted with business owners, executives, and leadership teams across multiple industry sectors for over three decades. Along with earning his J.D., Ed earned a Doctorate in Business Administration from the University of South Florida, MUMA School of Business as well as a certification as an external coach [Executive & Business] from Columbia University in New York.

Ed serves his clients as a legal adviser and a management consultant and counselor. He protects his clients' legal interests and at the same time assists them in reaching their

business and strategic objectives. He utilizes a unique integration of legal advice, operational experience, executive coaching, and leadership development.

The dynamic, diverse, and fluid world of business doesn't obediently sort itself out into the abstract categories of legal practice. A labor and employment legal issue is often also a communication and relationship issue with a human dimension that can be dispositive. Ed operates the same way. His role, as he sees it, is to solve the problem at hand, and law is only one of the many tools at his disposal for accomplishing that goal.

Ed's real-life business experience spans a large part of the business life cycle. In 2002, Ed purchased a failing manufacturing company with over 225 employees with \$30 million in sales as well as ownership of service organizations. In addition, he has served as interim plant director for a mid-sized business in the northeast, and interim V.P. of Human Resources for a restaurant chain with over 1500 employees. His advice, in short, incorporates personal knowledge of how businesses operate acquired as a business owner and executive.

Ed also has a deep understanding of relationships. His counsel is informed by this capability, and as a result, clients receive actionable, pragmatic advice. A former union member, Ed has seen the negative impact unions and a poorly trained and developed management team can have on an organization. He has advised clients on improving employee relations and increasing productivity through the design of employee programs, streamlined systems development of well-defined processes, policies, and procedures. He has also negotiated hundreds of union contracts on behalf of management in a wide range of industries. He is often able to arrive at resolution between parties who had seemed hopelessly deadlocked, transforming what was an adversarial undertaking into a cooperative and mutually productive one.

As a consultant and coach, Ed is dedicated to the improvement of leadership and management, focusing on measurably enhancing both individual and overall organizational performance. As he sees it, many of the management challenges his clients face are unknowingly self-created. The solution lies with effective leadership, built on a foundation of integrity. While the word "integrity" is thrown around a lot, it's the essence of effective leadership, and the core of what Ed works with his clients to deliver.

He encourages self-discovery and accountability that not only achieves short-term objectives but drives sustained personal and professional development. Bilingual in English and Spanish, he also assists executives of foreign companies seeking to expand to the U.S. Ed also advises U.S. companies looking to expand abroad, facilitating their business, legal and cultural transition. He is particularly skilled at helping executives, often from disparate cultures and/or with differing deliverables, to work together as harmonious and effective teams.

Ed is an invited speaker at national, state, and local events and has written extensively on various aspects of labor, safety, and employment law as well as in management accountability and organization leadership. Before joining Gunster, Ed practiced with two nationally prominent labor and employment boutique firms before purchasing the West Coast Employers Association, now known as Integrated Employer Resources and his other business ventures.

Honors

- *The Best Lawyers in America*®, Employment Law – Management, 2023-25
- Pewter Partner, awarded by Bank of America and the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, 2002
- The Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce, Small Business of the Year, Nominee, 2009

Publications & Presentations

- “Strategically Overseeing Your Business During COVID: A Financial, Operational, and Legal Outlook,” presenter, Financial Executives International Tampa Bay Chapter Webinar, July 24, 2020
- “Culture, Compensation and Governance: Critical Components to Every Company’s DNA, Whether Public, Private, or Nonprofit,” speaker, Gunster, April 26, 2017
- “Bank Executive Compensation and Employee Retention: Get It Right or Forget Doing a Bank Merger,” Florida Bankers’ Association annual meeting, Miami Beach, FL, June 2016
- HR Florida State Conference and Expo- repeat presenter annually, 2004-present
- Trial Advocacy Institute (Name of presentation)
- Labor Law Training Conference- NLRB
- FLSA – Wage and Hour Master Class – M. Lee Smith 2006, 2007
- Union Avoidance Master Class – 2008
- Americans with Disability Master Class – M. Lee Smith 2007, 2008
- Title V-Air Permitting Certification, Instructor
- Professional Human Resource Certification, Instructor
- Senior Professional of Human Resource Certification, Instructor
- Primary contributor to “THE ADVISOR”, a human resources compliance newsletter, with monthly distribution to over 1000 recipients over a period of 15 years

Professional Associations & Memberships

- HBA Labor and Employment
- Bay Area Manufacturers Association (BAMA), Environmental Committee
- St. Louis “Counts” Association (philanthropic B2B)
- Ybor City Chamber of Commerce

- Tampa Port Authority Advisory Committee
- Hispanic Business Initiative Fund
- Society of Human Resources, 2006-Present
- Small Business of the Year-Finalist Judge
- Florida Bar, Alternative Dispute Resolution Section
- Hillsborough Bar Association
- American Society of Human Resources Management, Environmental Section
- American Compensation Association
- Greater Tampa Bay Latin Chamber of Commerce
- Hispanic Business Institute
- Labor and Industrial Relations Association
- Marion County Manufacturer Association

Civic & Community Service

- Catholic Charities, Board of Directors
- Incarnation Catholic Church and School, Advisory Board
- Bishop McLaughlin Catholic High School, Advisory Board
- Pro bono work:
 - St. Vincent de Paul
 - Catholic Charities