



David H. Brill

Goodrich, Riquelme and Associates Senior Partner

David H. Brill is one of five senior partners at Goodrich, Riquelme and Associates law firm, established 70 years ago in Mexico. The firm is one of Mexico's largest law firms and currently employs over 200 professionals, including legal and administrative staff.

Although it might be easy to assume that David H. Brill was born in Mexico or another Latin American city, he was, in fact, born in Chicago. His journey from his native USA to one of the most cosmopolitan and densely populated cities in the world was as courageous as it is intriguing.

After graduating from Harvard Law School, he worked for the American Diplomatic Service in Paraguay, where he became fluent in Spanish. Even though he did not have any established connections in Mexico, he decided to further his career there and joined Goodrich, Riquelme and Associates as a lawyer.

Becoming a partner at the firm was a big achievement for him; he went to some length to validate his law degree from the Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León and worked tirelessly for 12 years at the firm to accomplish and develop his partnership position.

Aside from his work at the firm, Brill is also a confident conference speaker and is multilingual - he is fluent in four languages: English, French, Spanish and Portuguese. He speaks enthusiastically about promoting foreign investments in Mexico at an average of six or so international conferences a year. He is also frequently invited by many organisations, such as the Banco Nacional de Comercio Exterior (Bancomext) and various Chambers of Commerce, to speak at their conferences.

Brill is an advocate for Mexico's high potential for investors, which has increased over the years as a result of the many trade agreements signed by the country. Most of his lectures are dedicated to the possible combination of the North American Free Trade Agreement and the European Union Free Trade Agreement, as well as the economical development of Mexico.

Practice Areas

Business Law; International Trade; Commercial Law; Commercial Arbitration; Government Contracts; Hostile Takeovers; Real Estate; Finance; Banks and Banking; Admiralty and Maritime Law; Transportation; Agrarian Reform; International Commercial Contracts; Breach of Contract; Energy; Company Law; Free Trade Agreements; North American Free Trade Agreement; International Mergers and Acquisitions; Leveraged Acquisitions; Concessions

Languages

English, Spanish, Portuguese and French

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CURRENT ROLE

Since he joined Goodrich, Riquelme and Associates, Brill has played an influential role in the firm's international expansion strategy, which he championed by opening the Paris office 30 years ago. Throughout his career he has practised the full breadth of corporate law, from International Commerce, Real Estate, Finance and Transport to Free Trade Treaties, which he continues to practise today.

Seize the opportunity

Brill joined the firm by chance – at the time he was considering joining another firm; however, Goodrich, Riquelme and Associates attracted his attention because it was founded by Americans. Once he joined the firm as an associate, he started to work with people of various nationalities,

Effective advice

He has advised companies such as Gaz de France and Dopplemayr Cablecar in successful public bids. He has also advised dozens of companies on sales of shares, assets, real estate and factories. Amongst his clients are companies such as Essilor International, GKN, Union Miniere, SGS Société Générale de Surveillance, Industrias Kores, Mitsubishi, Aida Dayton Corporation, Gerald Metals, Crowley Maritime and Cap Gemini.

He also discovered a niche for Goodrich, Riquelme and Associates (the only Mexican law firm with an office in Europe), assisting European clients with their cases in Mexico.

In 1971, with the support of his senior partner, he was instrumental in the

immigration, transport, shipping, administration and litigation services.

The non-litigation approach He says that, "Although we have a strong litigation department, my strategy is to prevent litigation: one has to do things right in order to prevent it." Brill explains that, throughout his career, he has never had to attend a French, Mexican or American court (countries where he can carry out his work as a lawyer) because he practises his "non-litigation" approach. Instead of considering litigation he prefers to use his time to design the way in which he can aid investments by taking into account tax implications, relationships with trade unions, etc.

Goodrich, Riquelme and Associates is one of the leading corporate law firms in Mexico. Brill himself is one of the most well-known lawyers in this field in Mexico. Several years of experience has enabled him to study many interesting and innovative cases. One of his recent cases involved providing legal advice to Titan Maritime (Florida, USA), the company in charge of relaunching a 235-metre-long ship weighing 52 tons that ran aground in December 2005 in Ensenada.

"Our work consisted of negotiating with various authorities, such as the Federal Office for Environmental Protection, Marine Offices, Transport and Communications Office and Customs authorities, with the aim to coordinate the rescue operation in compliance with legal requirements and aiding in the effort to avoid an ecological disaster," says Brill.

In 2005, Brill assisted GKN with the 90-million-dollar purchase of a factory from the Mexican company Desc. Previously, he helped another client, Gaz de France, win the public bid for the right to provide natural gas in the Valle de Mexico and other Mexican cities, as well as in the purchase of gas pipes from TransCanada.

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which fulfilled his desire to work in a firm with a broad international focus.

Within the firm's structure, there are several associates, 13 partners and 5 senior partners. As one of the senior partners he supervises young lawyers specialising in corporate law and working with foreign clients. He has designed the commercial structure of companies such as Amway Corporation, Greyhound Lines and Magna International Inc - the biggest car manufacturer in Canada, which currently has 15 factories throughout Mexico.

creation of Grupo Bomchil, the Latin American Law Firms Association, the only group of its kind to this date. Its members include all the countries in the region, with the exception of Cuba.

EXPERTISE AND EXPERIENCE

David H. Brill enjoys corporate law because it enables him to aid investment processes in Mexico. He has advised companies from various industries on acquisitions, mergers, construction of factories, acquisition and sale of real estate and international commerce. His offices, which he calls "full service", provide tax, employment, copyright, foreign trade, telecommunications,

A new legal framework

30 years ago, Brill devised the legal strategy for the launch of Amway Corporation in Mexico. "I spent 8 or 9 months studying various alternatives and advising the directors of Amway Corporation on all aspects of launching their operations in Mexico, from the company set-up to its location, etc. This

"We are international lawyers. Almost all our transactions are operations between foreign and Mexican companies."

case was particularly interesting because Amway Corporation was the first multilevel company in Mexico."

Brill has also provided the same level of services to Mary Kay (a multilevel cosmetics company), Bristol Myers, Avon Cosmetics, Goleen Neo-Life Diamite International, Usana Inc and others. When considering all the obstacles he has had to overcome, he clearly states: "I think that obstacles can stimulate professional creativity. In Amway's case there were no obstacles. However, a creative approach to work was necessary to ensure that the sales people, who were independent contractors, were not wrongly considered as employees."

Becoming the creator of the first legal framework for several multilevel sales systems in Mexico was a result of successfully adapting the interested companies' policies to meet Mexican practices and legislation, which has given Brill a great sense of achievement.

MANAGEMENT STYLE

This senior partner of Goodrich, Riquelme and Associates describes himself as a "professional" and "unbiased lawyer," to the extent of gaining the trust of his clients and opponents. "In many instances I have inspired their confidence and they have even decided to drop the case or not to

hire their own lawyers, because they realised that I am fair and I would not allow my clients to take advantage of others or anybody to take advantage of them. I consider myself a professional with a strong sense of justice, not like a court, but within the business sphere. This has given me a great sense of achievement," he says.

Brill emphasises that in his law firm the clients are not allowed to bribe lawyers or, in general, to behave in a criminal way.

Within the firm, the clients are 90% foreign – among them 70% from North America and almost 20% from Europe – therefore he has gained great international experience.

"We are international lawyers. Almost all our transactions are operations between foreign and Mexican companies," he points out.

With regard to his working style, he describes himself as a flexible lawyer, who permits his team to work from home when required and who encourages them all to speak English.

Management style

He emphasises that his team members are talented lawyers with many years of experience. Brill's style is to delegate: "I am their mentor, I train them. I revise their work and usually do not charge the client for my time. I interview and communicate with clients at the initial stages and then work out a plan of action together with my colleagues. After that I delegate as much as possible," he says. A second lawyer, who manages the day-to-day work, is then assigned as the client's main contact.

The lawyers in his team constantly come to him for advice on professional and career development matters, which he appreciates because he is able to share his experience with the next generation of lawyers. This open approach is extended to his clients:

"I endeavour to fully inform my clients of the realities of their situation."

Sound business advice

"Many young lawyers have great potential, but they are afraid of the moment when they have to advise the client: they outline advantages and disadvantages of one path or another, but because of their lack of experience, they are reluctant to decide which one their client ought to take. Finally, the client asks: 'What path do I chose?' When the clients ask me, I determine the strategy or, by default, I have to tell them that what they would like to do is wrong. In some of our advertisements we say: 'We recognise your legal problems before you do.'"

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Education	University of Chicago (Ph. B.); University of Wisconsin (B.A.); Harvard Law School (J.D.) Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León, Monterrey, N.L., Mexico
Admitted	1974, Mexico 1991, Avocat Inscrit au Barreau de Paris, France
Employment	1976 – Present, Goodrich, Riquelme y Asociados
Memberships	Mexican Bar Association; American Bar Association; International Bar Association; Transportation Lawyer Association

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