

## DRINKS WITH THE DEAL: CRAVATH'S PERKINS DISCUSSES MILITARY SERVICE

*Dave Perkins, the co-head of PE at Cravath, talks about being called up from the U.S. Army Reserve to serve in Afghanistan as a young associate and how he approached building a PE practice at his law firm.*

BY DAVID MARCUS

After spending two years as an associate at [Cravath, Swaine & Moore LLP](#), [David J. Perkins](#) was summoned to active duty in the U.S. Army in Afghanistan in fall 2007. Because of his background as an infantry officer, he was suited for a role leading a small team of Americans who “lived and worked and partnered with our Afghan allies,” Perkins said on this week’s Drinks With The Deal podcast.

“They were mostly a police force — at least that’s what they were called — but in reality there was very little difference between our local militias and the police force other than our guys sometimes wore uniforms.”

The experience, he said, “used a lot of the skills I had already started to develop as a young lawyer,” and it was “was one of my most formative.” Perkins had graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1997 and remained in the Army Reserve after going to law school in 2002.

When he returned to Cravath at the start of 2009, he came back to a New York and a practice very different from the one he had left because of the financial crisis of 2008.

“Going from the Army to law school seemed easy, going from law school to a law firm seemed easy, but coming back from the Army to a law firm again was hard. It felt very foreign,” Perkins said. But, he added, “Our firm was very busy in 2009, and so I didn’t have a lot of time to think about it.”



Cravath’s David Perkins

Perkins became a partner at Cravath in 2013, and he’s helped build the firm’s private equity practice, which he co-heads.

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