

Recap: “From Big Law to Big Business”

By Feifei He, LL.M. Candidate 2018 | October 26, 2017

On October 18, 2017, the Berkeley Center for Law, Business and the Economy ([BCLBE](#)) welcomed Aylin Oncel, a lawyer at Stripe, for a Q&A discussion about her career from a big law firm associate and a start-up entrepreneur to an in-house lawyer at a big company, and about the issues she thinks were important during her career.

Aylin received her J.D. from UC Berkeley School of Law in 2012. Passionate about global women’s issues, she once served on U.S. National Committee for UN Women. After graduation, she worked as a corporate attorney at [Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati](#), specializing in mergers and acquisitions (M&A). She also co-founded a boutique wine gifting company in San Francisco named Vinkind. Now she is an in-house lawyer at Stripe, a US technology company that provides an online payment platform for private individuals and businesses.

“Don't feel scared to do different things,” Aylin told us through her own experience. She realized that big law was not for her after two-years of M&A work and she wanted to make a change. Then she met her co-founder and decided to run a start-up. After experiencing all these different jobs, she found that an in-house position was the fit for her. Trying different things can help people figure out what they really want.

For her, [Stripe](#) is also a completely different world. She had no background in engineering before. “Just learn about a new industry,” she said. However, previous work experience did help in her career like negotiation skills gained through daily interaction with lawyers and clients.

Aylin told us several considerations that are important for a start-up. First, you need money that is a revenue source, like savings or a family sponsorship. Second, you have to choose a partner wisely. For example, personality match and skills are key points to take into consideration. Third, be nice and people will appreciate that. Last but not least, get some basic knowledge such as learning the framework of businesses.

When asked about how she feels working in-house, Aylin said it was an amazing work. People on the team are really smart, efficient and energetic and they respect your time. Everyone is nice and it is a great experience.