

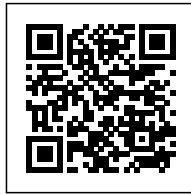
PEOPLE FIRST

Posted on 17/10/2023



Category: [Background](#)

Tags: [Linklaters Portugal](#), [Marcos Sousa Monteiro](#), [People first](#), [slider](#)



"To me, success looks like growing at the top end of our market, having the right people, making the right people partner, offering great career opportunities and Linklaters being a memorable experience for everyone who chooses us and works with us, either our clients or our people" says Linklaters Portugal' national managing partner and head of corporate **Marcos Sousa Monteiro** (pictured) in an interview with Iberian Lawyer.

Six months into his new role, we caught up with the lawyer to find out what happens behind closed doors at Av. Fontes Pereira de Melo 14.

He shares the way he has focused his time on the mental well-being of his team in a way that comes across with a lot of credibility and not just something a lot of managing partners like to talk about but very few implement. If we were to sum up the first six months of his tenure as national managing partner, it can be encompassed into one short phrase: "People first."

The Lisbon office of Linklaters opened in 2002, You joined in 2003, 20 years ago. Did it feel like an international firm back then?

That is a very good question Michael and thank you for allowing me to go back down memory lane. One

of the main reasons I decided to join Linklaters was because of the international appeal. The moment I set my foot in the door it felt right. The fact that there was a plaque with the values written down of the firm in every room in the office, knowing that these same values were on the walls of all the offices across the world, and that from day one I was communicating with associates from the firm either one floor up or 5,000 kms away, and it felt the same, tells you everything. The human interaction and the way we communicate with clients felt international from day one, and very different from the Portuguese independent firms I knew at the time.

I am curious to understand whether it was a conscious decision for Linklaters to found your office by headhunting a team of lawyers in 2002, as opposed to integrating an already established independent Portuguese firm? As country managing partner, when you communicate with your colleagues across the globe, is this strategy discussed as intentional?

Indeed it is, and Linklaters' decision making process when growing internationally is based on risk management, business growth analysis and profitability. The cultural fit is critical. However, Linklaters has integrated already established firms when the opportunity fits, this happened in Germany for instance.

You have been in the role for six months now. How has it been, what has changed in the relationship with your partners and was there a leadership race?

We are a very tight partnership, we don't do lateral hiring at the partnership level in Portugal and we have really grown and developed as a team during the last 21 years. When António Soares' mandate was coming to an end it was a soft transition. I put my hat in the ring for the role, there was no leadership contest, and I was very proud and happy to be considered. I feel that in this short time there have been some new initiatives implemented which have garnered positive results.

[CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD THE MAGAZINE AND CONTINUE READING THE ARTICLE](#)