

A BarkerGilmore 20th Anniversary Executive Profile

In conversation with Managing Director Max Gelernter



Chris Gaskill



Vice President, General
Counsel & Secretary
**Carlisle Companies
Incorporated**

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As BarkerGilmore celebrates twenty years of serving the in-house legal and compliance community, one theme has emerged consistently through conversations with accomplished legal leaders: the most effective General Counsel create value far beyond legal advice.

Chris Gaskill is one of those leaders. BarkerGilmore partnered with Chris during his successful placement as Vice President, General Counsel & Secretary of Carlisle Companies Incorporated, where he has continued to build legal into a strategic business function. His leadership philosophy reflects many of the qualities BarkerGilmore has sought in legal executives for the past twenty years.

We recently asked Chris to reflect on the experiences that shaped his leadership philosophy and the qualities he believes will define the next generation of General Counsel.

The Best Career Decisions Begin with Shared Values

Several factors made the opportunity compelling, but Chris says the organization's culture and leadership stood out immediately.

“The business had a clear strategy, a strong leadership team, and a tremendous opportunity for growth. What impressed me most was the emphasis on people and employee safety. Those values aligned closely with what mattered to me personally.”

Beyond the professional opportunity, the move also represented the right fit for his family. As Chris explains, executive career decisions are rarely made solely on business considerations. Long-term success depends on finding an organization whose culture, leadership, and values align with both professional ambitions and personal priorities.

General Counsel Create More Value When They Think Like Business Leaders

Early in his career, Chris viewed the General Counsel role much like many lawyers do: providing sound legal advice and helping the business manage risk.

Over time, mentors challenged him to think differently.

One former CEO encouraged him to view the legal department as a business unit with measurable impact rather than simply a support function.

Another board member offered advice that has stayed with him throughout his career: “You were hired for your mind, not the amount of work you can produce.”

That perspective fundamentally changed how Chris approaches leadership. Rather than focusing solely on delivering legal opinions, he believes General Counsel must participate in business decisions, accept accountability for outcomes, and help shape organizational strategy alongside fellow executives.

Artificial Intelligence Creates More Time for the Work that Matters Most

Chris sees tremendous value in artificial intelligence for drafting documents, generating initial contract versions, and eliminating administrative work. At the same time, he believes technology will make the human side of leadership even more valuable.

“When AI handles routine work, it creates more time to build relationships across the business,” he says.

Rather than remaining behind a desk, Chris intentionally spends time with business leaders throughout the organization, believing that trust develops through consistent interaction long before legal issues arise.

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Sometimes those investments are remarkably simple. He recalls taking his CFO out for a birthday donut because genuine relationships create stronger partnerships. Those conversations make difficult business discussions easier when important decisions eventually arise.

For Chris, the future General Counsel will continue to combine legal expertise with business judgment, curiosity, and the ability to build trust throughout the enterprise.

Leadership is Built Through Everyday Relationships

Chris's experience reflects a lesson BarkerGilmore has observed over the past twenty years. Organizations hire General Counsel for legal expertise, but the leaders who create lasting impact become trusted business advisors, thoughtful collaborators, and strategic partners across the enterprise.

Those qualities extend well beyond technical legal knowledge. They are built through sound judgment, meaningful relationships, and a commitment to understanding the business as deeply as the law. As BarkerGilmore looks toward the future, leaders like Chris Gaskill demonstrate how the General Counsel role continues to evolve and why exceptional legal leadership has never been more important.

A Partner in Leadership

At BarkerGilmore, we believe the right leadership decisions shape organizations for years to come. For over twenty years, we have advised clients and candidates with a focus on fit, readiness, and enduring partnership. Learn more about our work and access additional resources on [our website](#), or reach us directly at [877.571.5047](tel:877.571.5047) or info@barkergilmore.com.