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Day in the Life: Ricardo Cortés-Monroy

Interviews and Profiles





Ricardo Cortés-Monroy
Chief Legal Officer, Nestlé
Vevey, Switzerland

6:00 am

Alarm goes off. Joey — our blond **Havanese family dog** — eagerly waits for his brisk morning walk.

7:00 am

A copious breakfast with my wife — kiwi fruits ‘by the ton’, Nestlé’s **Fitness** cereals, and Argentinean dulce de leche. Then it’s time to organize my working day, make some decisions, and answer relevant emails on my iPad. This is my best time of the day because I am at home with no interruptions. I read strategic papers, dossiers, and documents while enjoying at least two more of our **Nespresso** coffees — what else?

9:00 am

First meeting with one of our expert or **business legal teams**. We have 70 lawyers at our headquarters, and another 330 worldwide. Typically we discuss progress with a big cross border M&A transaction, a big litigation case, or a functional initiative at Nestlé Legal.

10:00 am

A call from the **CEO**: He wants to understand the extent of a recent US Supreme Court decision. The call becomes a meeting and we ask corporate communications to join. It is important to work as a team to preserve and enhance our most valuable asset: trust from all stakeholders.

11:00 am

The intellectual property team needs my approval for a proposed way forward regarding a blatant imitation case affecting our **Kit-Kat wafer**. We decide to sue.

12:00 pm

Business lunch at our **private dining rooms**, usually with a senior partner from a law firm, or an ambassador, or another special guest. In both the French and Latin cultures the business lunch is an art where important agreements are reached. And yes, we do enjoy good wines at lunch.

1:00 pm

I try and dedicate some quality time every day to my **four mentees**. All are young, female Swiss lawyers. They deserve the best from us; they represent the future of our profession. Some work at Nestlé, and some at our preferred law firms. They reverse mentor me as well, and it is fascinating.

2:00 pm

The **Employment & Labor** Law team wishes to discuss a difficult case. We find a pragmatic approach: People first!

3:00 pm

The next executive board of directors meeting is approaching fast. We accelerate the final version of the **annual group legal strategy**. There is so much we want to say and share. How to fit this into two pages?

4:00 pm

Time to work with our executive assistant from the **European General Counsel Association**, members of which are from the largest European multinationals. I have just been appointed chairman and I need everyone's help for the next plenary session. It reminds me how much we all love our profession.

5:00 pm

A quick **Nestlé Legal Leadership meeting**. This collegial body is composed of the 12 most senior lawyers in the group.

6:00 pm

Not my favorite activity, but a must as a CLO: My assistant brings me around **20 corporate documents per day** to sign. They tend to come from all corners of the world. Proper governance is always a must.

7:00 pm

Indulgence time for the daily session at the gym, usually a high intensity workout with heavy free weights and machines. The perfect time as well to plug in the headphones and listen to good music

shared by good friends; I am now exploring *Elements*, **Ludovico Einaudi's** new album.

8:00 pm

The blessing of living in the Geneva Lake Riviera area: Home is just 10 minutes away from the office, so I have plenty of **quality time with the family**. As we say at Nestlé "Good Food, Good Life," which at home means having a collective culinary experience enjoying the best Cabernet Sauvignons, Chilean of course. Yesterday my wife and daughters cooked an amazing risotto with truffles. I just admire people who can cook. One day I will learn!

10:00 pm

Some additional time to catch up with **urgent emails** and mainly, to prepare my academic activities as a Master in Law professor at the University of Lausanne, or the one or two presentations I have to give every week at professional associations, or at the Nestlé training facilities.

11:00 pm

More indulgence time, reading either a **medieval history essay** (right now B. Reilly's biography of the King of Castile don Alphonse VI) or some creative literature.

12:00 am

Switch off the lights.

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