



John T. Reed

Partner

Management Committee, Family Business Practice Chair

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OVERVIEW:

John is a member of the firm's [Business](#) Practice Group and chair of the [Family Owned Business](#) Group. John's primary practice comprises two separate but related areas: (i) counseling family-owned and closely held businesses and (ii) buying and selling businesses and, in many cases, acting as a general counselor for the business on an ongoing basis after the transaction is completed.

Counseling Family Owned and Closely Held Businesses

John's work in this area is extremely varied and from the broadest standpoint, John acts as a virtual in-house counsel to these businesses. In this "in-house counsel" role, John learns about the business, the owners, the objectives, and the outlook of the owners, and then combines this information with his legal knowledge and the expertise of his colleagues at Barley Snyder to provide comprehensive counsel to the business on legal and business-related issues.

John has been involved in specific family-related matters such as succession planning, developing both advisory boards and boards of directors with outside directors, developing family councils, facilitating family meetings, mediating owner disputes, and negotiating and implementing Shareholder Agreements (Buy-Sell Agreements). With nearly 30 years of experience working with family businesses, John has a deep understanding of the unique dynamics that come into play and how to effectively navigate them with care and expertise. Of course, John also advises on general business issues such as contract review and negotiation, real estate purchases or sales, employment issues, strategic planning, and general business strategy.

Barley Snyder is one of the founding members and a corporate sponsor of the [S. Dale High Family Business Center at Elizabethtown College](#) - a cornerstone for family and privately held businesses in the region, offering executive peer groups, leadership development, succession planning, and best practice education. John leads the firm's efforts at the Center and is a frequent speaker and a regular resource for the Center, currently serving as the lead facilitator for a CEO Peer Group and previously as a member of the Sponsors Advisory Group. His dedication and leadership at the Center underscores his commitment to the long-term

success of family enterprises throughout the region.

Buying and Selling Businesses

John regularly represents clients buying or selling businesses. This representation can include very complicated transactions involving mergers of entities, multi-level financing and equity arrangements, earn-out provisions, and floating purchase prices or straightforward deals. Further, he advises clients on the proper entity to form for a purchase, negotiating and drafting letters of intent and term sheets, guiding the due diligence portion of the investigation, negotiating and securing financing, analyzing financing options, determining value, and leading the team of advisors in the negotiation of the deal. His practical, business-minded approach helps clients navigate the complexities of transactions while positioning them for long-term success.

Outlook

John finds working with family businesses and their owners extremely rewarding. Barley Snyder has a tradition of representing generation after generation of family businesses. Family business owners have a very different outlook and approach to business than the Fortune 500s. The family business owner does not base his or her decisions on what will maximize profits for the next month (and his or her bonus) but rather makes decisions keeping in mind that he or she is merely holding the business in trust for the generations to follow. These owners view themselves as stewards of a legacy, making decisions with future generations in mind to ensure the business's longevity and continuity. John understands this approach and acts as a partner and strategic advisor with his family business clients.

In addition to his legal work and when he is not spending time with his family, John is actively involved in the community. Since settling in Lancaster many years ago, he has made community involvement a high priority. He believes the community is made stronger through dedicated volunteers and that a stronger community results in a stronger and more stable business environment. The central Pennsylvania region is proof of that reasoning. John's long-standing commitment to civic engagement reflects the same values he champions in his legal practice: responsibility, sustainability and leadership.

EDUCATION:

- Duquesne University School of Law, J.D., cum laude, Executive Editor of the Duquesne Law Review
- University of Wyoming, MBA
- Penn State University, B.S.
- U.S. Air Force Officer Training School

ADMISSIONS:

- Pennsylvania

PRACTICE AREAS:

- Business
- Family Owned Businesses
- Real Estate
- Mergers & Acquisitions

INDUSTRY GROUPS:

- Manufacturing

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:

The Wenger Group

Board member; Chair, Corporate Risk Management Committee; Member, Audit Committee; Member, Corporate Governance and Nominating Committee

Lancaster City Revitalization & Improvement Zone (CRIZ) Authority

Chair

Lancaster City Alliance

Member, Advocacy Executive Leadership Team; Founding director and former chair

Beyond the Horizons Peer Group

Facilitator

S. Dale High Center for Family Business

Member of sponsors advisory group, facilitator for the CEO group and the emerging lenders group

30th Distinguished Citizen Award Committee of PA Dutch Council of Boy Scouts of America

Former member

American Cancer Society

Former member, Board of Ambassadors

Literacy Council of Lancaster-Lebanon

Former board president

Leadership Lancaster

1999 graduate

YMCA of Lancaster

Former board member and officer

Lampeter Strasburg YMCA

Former board member

Center City Community Neighborhood Enhancement Corporation

Founding member and former board member

Family of Funds Committee of First United Methodist Church

Former chair and board member

RECOGNITIONS:

- Best Lawyers "Lawyer of the Year" in Harrisburg metro area, Closely Held Companies and Family Business Law (2020, 2025)
- The Best Lawyers in America, Closely Held Companies and Family Business Law (2013-2026)
- Lancaster Family YMCA "Volunteer of the Year" (2004)
- Pennsylvania Rising Stars
- Inaugural recipient of "Wall of Fame" of The High Center for Family Business

MEMBERSHIP:

- American, Pennsylvania and Lancaster County Bar Associations

PUBLICATION:

- Family Business Center Webcast - Succession Planning for Family Businesses

PRESENTATIONS:

- "Succession Planning Insights," Panel Discussion Moderator, Barley Snyder Business Seminar (October 2024)
- "Looking at the Future of the Business Climate," Panel Discussion Moderator, Barley Snyder Business Seminar (May 2022)
- "Choose Your Direction," The High Center's On the Road Series (September 2021)
- "The Expected Impact of COVID-19 on M&A: A Look at the 'New Normal'," Barley Snyder Webinar Series (June 2020)
- "Recent Developments in the M&A Market," Barley Snyder Business Seminar (October 2016)
- "Succession Planning," The High Center for Family Business (May 2016)
- "Business Succession & Wealth Transfer: Considerations of Death, Taxes and Achieving Family Harmony," Barley Snyder Business Seminar (October 2014)
- "Diamonds in the Rough: Working With Troubled Borrowers," Barley Snyder LendiCon Seminar (May 2014)
- "Is an M&A the Right Course for Your Business?," Mergers and Acquisitions Panel, The High Center for Family Business (January 2013)
- "Guiding Wealth through Generations - Keeping it in the Family," The High Center for Family Business (November 2011)
- "Succession Planning: Today's Planning, Tomorrow's Success," Barley Snyder Business Seminar (October 2011)
- "Who's in Charge Here: Succession Planning for Business," Barley Snyder Business Seminar (May 2006)

OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

- Director, The Wenger Group Board of Directors
- Captain, U.S. Air Force (1986-1992)

RELATED NEWS:

- Reevaluating Succession Plans That Rely on Life Insurance in Closely Held Businesses
September 22, 2025
- Barley Snyder Celebrates 30 Years of Support for The High Center at 2025 Business Forum
April 29, 2025
- Barley Snyder Partner John T. Reed Named Lawyer of the Year by Best Lawyers for Second Time
September 23, 2024
- Barley Snyder Announces 2024 Leadership Changes
January 9, 2024
- Best Lawyers Honors 30 Barley Attorneys
August 25, 2021
- Whats Next For Your Family Business?: 2020 Smart Business Dealmakers Conference
October 27, 2020
- Barley Snyder Partner John Reed Named Chair of Authority Board
April 7, 2020
- Barley Snyder Places 21 Attorneys on Best Lawyers List
August 15, 2019
- Sixteen Barley Snyder Attorneys Named to Best Lawyers List; Werner Named a Lawyer of the Year
August 16, 2018
- Eleven Barley Snyder Attorneys Named Best Lawyers
August 15, 2017
- Eight from Barley Snyder Named to Best Lawyers list
November 3, 2016
- Lancaster City Alliance Names Attorney John Reed New Chairman
November 1, 2015
- Eight Barley Snyder Attorneys Listed in The Best Lawyers in America 2015
August 21, 2014

RELATED RESOURCES:

- 2022 Lancaster Business Seminar Recordings
May 3, 2022
- The High Centers Choose Your Direction On the Road Series Presentation Recording
September 13, 2021
- The Expected Impact of COVID-19 on M&A: A Look at the New Normal Webinar Replay
June 19, 2020