

# WHITNEY BETTS

Attorney and Leadership Speaker on  
Power, Autonomy, and Institutional  
Accountability



## PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND



**WHITNEY BETTS** is the Co-Founder and President of Betts Law Group, where she represents survivors of sexual assault, workplace harassment, discrimination, and institutional abuse. A former defense partner at one of the nation's largest law firms, Whitney brings a rare insider perspective on how institutions respond to allegations of harm and misconduct.

Today, her work focuses on holding systems accountable and restoring agency to individuals navigating complex legal and professional environments. Known for her clear and grounded communication style, Whitney speaks nationally on leadership, power, autonomy, and institutional accountability, drawing on her experience as both a former defense attorney and a plaintiff advocate.

## MEDIA QUOTATIONS

*"When women lead, other women rise."*

*"Leadership is stronger when women stand together."*

*"Authority is often framed as something women must earn. In reality, leadership begins the moment authority is assumed and exercised."*

*"Women in leadership reshape institutions by changing who is heard, trusted, and advanced. When women hold power, they widen the path for others to lead."*

*"Power does not wait for permission."*

*"Women are frequently expected to justify authority before using it. Effective leaders operate in the opposite order."*

*"When women lead and support other women, authority stops being rare. It starts becoming expected - that shift changes who advances, who is trusted, and who is seen capable of power."*

*"As more women lead and elevate one another, institutions are forced to expand their definitions of authority, competence, and leadership presence."*

# CORE THEMES & SPEAKING FOCUS

## Power, Autonomy, and Institutional Accountability

How power operates inside institutions and workplaces, how autonomy is lost through leadership decisions, internal processes, and silence, and why accountability often fails when organizations prioritize self-protection over resolution. Grounded in experience on both the defense and plaintiff sides.

## Workplace Harassment, Discrimination, and Retaliation

Patterns of harassment and retaliation in professional environments, including quiet punishment, exclusion, and loss of opportunity. Why these behaviors are frequently overlooked, how they escalate, and what organizations misunderstand about legal and reputational risk.



## Leadership and Decision Making Under Pressure

Decision-making when complaints arise, reputations are at stake, and risk drives behavior. Communication breakdowns, avoidance, and the long-term cost of choosing short-term protection over responsibility.

## Institutional Strategy and Legal Insight

How institutions evaluate allegations of harm, manage exposure, and control narratives behind the scenes. Informed by years of experience representing organizations in high-stakes litigation.

## Sexual Assault and Institutional Abuse

Institutional responses to sexual assault, including failures in reporting, investigation, and follow-through. The consequences of delayed action, internal handling that protects the organization, and the role leadership plays in shaping outcomes for individuals and communities.

## SELECTED MEDIA & SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

### Balancing the Scales: Managing Trauma-Impacted Clients and Professional Stress

North County Bar Association feature highlighting Whitney's insights on client work, boundaries, and legal practice stress.

<https://www.northcountybar.org/?pg=events&evAction=showDetail&eid=300810&evSubAction=listMonth&calmonth=202504>

### Balancing the Scales: Identifying and Managing Vicarious Trauma

Featured discussion on protecting legal professionals from vicarious strain and building sustainable boundaries.

<https://justicehq.vids.io/videos/4491d5bb151ee3c9cd/identifying-and-managing-vicarious-trauma>

### The CEO Mindset for Lawyers: Leading Beyond the Casework

Featured speaker, WILBYBETTY Business Summit 2026, part of the six-city tour.

<https://wilbybetty.com>

### Women in Trial Travel Summit Speaker

Speaker at the Women in Trial Travel Summit, participating in the 2025 conference.

<https://www.womenintrialtravelsummit.com/>

### Power Looks Different Here: Walking Away from Success to Redefine It

Podcast episode on LawHer (Rankings.io), aired May 23, 2025.

<https://rankings.io/lawher/69-whitney-betts/>

