

Events

**SMALL LAW FIRM LUNCHEON
Business Plans for Law Firms
April 6, 2006 12:30 - 2 pm**

**The Effective Use of Business
Plans for Small Firms**

Creating a business plan is an important factor in ensuring the success of any business including the business of a law firm. But how do you prepare a business plan? What information is included in a business plan? What types of uses does a business plan have? Whether you are considering the plunge to start your own practice or have an established practice, a business plan for a law firm can be a useful tool. Our panelists will answer these questions and many others relating to the preparation and the many uses of a business plan.

Speakers:

Christopher R. Williams, Esq.
Law Office of Christopher R. Williams, PC

Robin Kravitz, Esq.
Law Office of Robin Kravitz

Registration by April 2nd is necessary. The fee, which includes lunch, is \$20 for members, \$30 for non-members. Please register online at www.nycbar.org.

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SAVE THE DATE

May 11, 2006, 12:30 - 2pm

**SMALL LAW FIRM LUNCHEON
The Necessities of Opening
Your Own Practice**

New Benefit for Members - ABA Books at a 15% Discount

The Small Law Firm Center is pleased to announce that members of the New York City Bar Association are now able to purchase any book published by the American Bar Association at a 15% discount off the regular price. This special discount allows even ABA members to receive additional savings (ABA members only receive 10% off) when ordering through NYC Bar.

Please note, that to take advantage of this offer you must place your book order through the NYC Bar. Books will be shipped to you directly. The NYC Bar will invoice you for the cost of the book plus applicable shipping charges required by ABA and NYS sales tax.

We are currently in the process of updating the website to allow online book orders. In the meantime, anyone who wishes to order an ABA book may select a book by visiting www.ababooks.net and then send an email requesting the book to aroytberg@nycbar.org.

How to Go on Vacation and Still Keep Your Clients

Lo! Men have become the tools of their tools. – Henry David Thoreau

In the world of remote access, laptops, faxes, emails, cell phones and text messages, clients, colleagues and employees often expect instant feedback to their questions. When Albert Einstein remarked, “it has become appallingly obvious that our technology has exceeded our humanity” he did not know the half of it. New York City of 2006 is full of dazed marionettes who walk the avenues, buy lattes in Starbucks or hotdogs from street vendors, all the while engrossed in business conference calls on their cellular phones, while “texting” their children about after school pick-up arrangements or responding to email invitations to networking events on their blackberries. “If it keeps up, man will atrophy all his limbs but the push-button finger”, said Frank Lloyd Wright decades ago.

One of the challenges of remaining human in our world involves the ability to get away from it all, for a week, a day, or even a lunch hour without jeopardizing one’s livelihood. This is especially true for a solo practitioner, who does not have the luxury of staff members and colleagues who are willing and able to cover, while the exhausted practitioner recuperates for a week resting in a cottage by the fireplace, sunbathing at a Caribbean Resort or strolling the streets of a random European city.

In light of the above dilemmas, I offer a few suggestions to help our small law firm practitioners plan a well-deserved short get-away:

1. Designate a Person in Charge and Select Resource People While You are on Vacation.

If you are a solo practitioner with one secretary, the answer is simple. The secretary will check the mail and faxes and take messages. Designate a time of day during which you will contact the secretary to retrieve your messages and give her instructions. Leave a memo with the list and telephone numbers of “resource” people. Once such person should be an attorney to whom the secretary can turn in case of a legal emergency – i.e. if your office is served with an Order to Show Cause or if you receive an urgent call from a court or a client.

Forms and Information

CD-ROM Forms at the Library

Just click on the desktop icon "CD-Rom Titles for Members" at any library computer terminal and you can obtain current federal tax information and forms; federal practice treatises and formbooks such as Moore's and Bender's forms; American Jurisprudence legal forms; NY Codes, Rules and Regulations; West McKinney forms; New York Supplement 2d cases; real estate transaction information and many others. Access to this online information as well as the FREE lexis and Westlaw access will make researching a snap.

Your Comments Are Welcome

If you have any comments concerning the Small Law Firm Center facilities, the Small Law Firm Center portion of the New York City Bar Website, or suggestions on how the New York City Bar could better address the needs of Small Law Firm Practitioners, please send an email to the Small Law Firm Center Director, Alla Roytberg at aroytberg@nycbar.org.

Small Law Firm Center Facilities - A Unique Benefit to Members

The Small Law Firm Center facilities operate as a free benefit to members of the Association. They include a Conference Room in which attorneys can privately meet their clients and a separate Attorney Work Space equipped with computers, printers, copier and a fax machine. Phones are now available in both conference room and attorney workspace for outgoing local calls. Lexis has sponsored the renovation of the Conference Room, which should be completed in early 2006. The Center is located on the third floor of the Association's House. While Attorney Work Space is available on a walk-in basis, members should contact the Library reference desk (212) 382-6666 to reserve the conference room. For questions about the Center, you may contact Ronald Mirvis at (212) 382-6748 or rmirvis@nycbar.org.

The attorney you select to cover emergencies should be familiar with your area(s) of practice. Another "resource" person could be a friend or a family member who can provide funding if the office runs out of petty cash or if an urgent repair is needed in your absence.

2. Assign Clear Tasks and Work Priorities for Employees

If you have several employees, you should leave a "vacation memo" outlining their responsibilities and project deadlines during your absence. You should also provide your contact information for emergency purposes. It is often a good idea to post a copy of the memo at each employee's work station.

3. Update Your Own Task List Before You Leave

Before your departure, make a "to do" list for yourself for when you return to the office. It will give you a peace of mind and a road map for your first day back to work, when you find yourself completely overwhelmed and regretting ever taking a vacation.

4. Pay Important Bills Before You Go Away

If you do this, you will avoid having to stand in the lobby of Louvre trying to make a telephone payment to your health insurance carrier. You should also leave sufficient petty cash in the office to cover emergencies.

5. Instruct Your Staff on what to tell Clients in your absence

Do you want clients to know that you are on vacation for a week? Will they expect you to speak to them directly during vacation? Can their needs be addressed in your absence? You should think of the best strategy and instruct your staff accordingly. You may also wish to contact important clients two weeks before you leave, advise them that you will be on vacation and make yourself available to answer their questions before you go away.

6. Do Not Sabotage Your Vacation – Most Important!

Do not call your office more than once a day. Do not check your email more than once a day, and when you do, do not spend more than 30 minutes in responding to emails. It is better to add a couple of hours to your days two weeks in advance than to pull all-nighters for several days before you leave on vacation and be too tired to enjoy your getaway.

CLE Programs of Interest

Watch Out! A Guide to Ethical Practices in Start-Ups & Smaller Firm,

April 5, 2006 6-9 pm

A Practical Guide to LLCs & LLPs, *April 24, 2006 9-1 pm*

Trials of Tort Cases: Views From the Bench, *April 25, 2006 6-9 pm*

You Don't Practice Criminal Law? So, What Do You Do If a Client Calls You in The Middle of the Night About a Criminal Matter?, *April 26, 2006 6-9 pm*

Talk Your Way to the Top of the Profession! Public Speaking for Lawyers, *April 27, 2006 9-5 pm*

Current Issues in Insurance Regulation 2006, *April 28, 2006 9-1 pm*

For information on the Association's CLE programs visit www.nycbar.org.