

City Bar Small Law Firm Center

June 2005 Newsletter

June Events

Small Law Firm Center Luncheon How Judicial Writing Guides Can Help Lawyers Become Better Writers

Thursday, June 9, 2005 12:30–2:00 pm

While a brief is first and foremost a forum for advocacy on behalf of your client, the closer it approximates judicial writing style, the more favorably the judge will be inclined view the substance of your argument. In this program, Lisa Solomon, a frequent speaker on legal research and writing topics, will discuss how you can apply the lessons set out in judicial writing guides to write more effective briefs that will make judges want to rule in your clients' favor. All attendees will receive a copy of the Federal Judicial Center's Judicial Writing Manual.

Speaker:

Lisa Solomon

Lisa Solomon, Esq. Research and Writing

Registration by June 2 is necessary.

The fee for the Small Law Firm Luncheon is \$20 for members and \$30 for non-members. Click here to register or visit www.abcny.org.

Supported by LexisNexis.

Smart Marketing Series Part III Client Relationships: The Heart of the Business

Wednesday, June 8, 2005, 8:30–10:00 am

Perfect for niche leaders, solos, and small to mid-size firms. Join us at this session and:

- Learn the essential elements of a good client service plan
- Find out how to apply a plan in a small firm or solo situation
- Understand how clients value legal services.
- Find out what clients want from you
- Discover the secrets of making yourself invaluable to your clients

There is no fee for this event but you must register for the event. Click here to register or visit www.abcny.org.

The Mid-Year Firm Assessment

Have you reviewed how your practice has been going lately? Now is a good time for you to take an assessment of what has happened so far this year, and make the necessary adjustments for a better second half.

Do your clients owe you money? Is it because you have not found the time to create and send an invoice? Your practice can only be successful if you get paid for your work and reimbursed for expenses you incurred on your client's behalf. Generally, monthly invoices serve not only to provide you with a steady stream of income, but also to provide your client with information about the progress of your services.

If you have sent invoices but have not been paid, you need to have a discussion with your client. Was there a problem with your services or was your invoice difficult for the client to understand? Is the client having financial difficulties? A frank discussion with your client will allow you to assess whether you need to better explain the invoice, negotiate the fee, offer a payment plan, or prepare for something worse, like a lawsuit. It will also help you when you prepare a budget for the coming months.

How busy have you been? Are you too busy to return client's phone calls? This is a recipe for disaster. Endeavor to get back to your client as soon as possible, but within 24 hours, even if it is to advise that you are busy and will need to get back to the client (let the client know approximately when you will be able to talk). If you are too busy to do this, have an assistant return the phone calls. If you don't have an assistant, you may need to hire someone.

If you have not been busy, you need to create a plan to network and market your practice. The plan should set aside time each day, or a particular day and amount of time each week that you will take a specific action, such as: calling colleagues that you have not spoken to in a while and setting a date to meet for coffee or lunch; attending a networking function; joining a new group; or writing an article. Your efforts at networking and marketing should be part of your "To Do" list.

You can also take advantage of the "down time" to take a CLE class or get involved in pro bono work, so that you are aware of the latest changes in the law or so that you can start expanding your fields of practice to get new matters.

This article has barely touched upon the different management issues that you should be assessing on a regular basis to maintain a healthy practice. For more issues, click here to see our practice management checklist or go to www.abcny.org.



The Association of the Bar of the City of New York

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Forms and Information Available Online

CD-ROM Forms at the Library — Did you know that research materials, including many popular form books are available at the library's computer terminals? Just click on the desktop icon "CD-Rom Titles for Members". 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.

Free Real Estate Forms — Free real estate forms prepared by the Association's real estate committees are available from the Association's website by visiting www.abcny.org or click here to access the pages directly.

Small Law Firm Center Facilities

Our Small Law Firm Center is available to you for meeting clients or getting some work done. The Center, on the third floor of the Association's House, includes three work stations equipped with computers and printers (generally available Monday through Friday 9:00-8:30, Sat 10:00 -4:30 on a walk-in basis), and a conference room (generally available by reservation Monday through Friday 9:00-8:30, Sat 10:00-4:30). A fax machine is also available for use. To reserve the conference room, please contact the Library reference desk at (212)382-6666. For questions regarding the Center, you may contact Ronald Mirvis at (212)382-6748 or rmirvis@abcny.org.

Free Member Postings on Our Website

Members can now post messages free of charge about the following, whether desired or available: office space; equipment and books; law practice for sale; affiliations/associations with other attorneys; and staff sharing. For further information, posting rules and to view the Member postings click on the Small Law Firm Center Section of the Association's website at www.abcny.org or click here.

CLE Programs of Interest

Fundamentals of Trust Accounting Income & Principal Rules Under the Revised New York State Laws: Ethical & Liability Issues You Need to Know
Tuesday, June 7, 2005, 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Buying & Selling Commercial Real Estate
Thursday, June 9, 2005, 6-9 p.m.

Video Replay: Giants of the Trial Bar VI: "Handling the High Profile Case" (The Case We All Want)
Friday, June 10, 2005, 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

Ethics for Litigators
Tuesday, June 14, 2005, 6-9 p.m.

Civility & Zealous Advocacy - Building Blocks To Success: The American College of Trial Lawyers Codes of Pre-Trial & Trial Conduct
Monday, June 20, 2005, 6-9 p.m.

For a complete description of each of the above programs, information about other programs and to register, click here or go to https://www.abcny.org/abc_cle.html.

Save the Date

November 1, 2005
2nd Annual Law Practice Management Symposium

July 12, 2005: CLE Program
Ethical & Practical Issues for Small & Solo Law Firms To Get & Maintain Clients Online July 12, 2005 9 a.m.- 11 a.m.

Questions or Comments? Please e-mail feedback to slfc@abcny.org

