



## Young Lawyers Report

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### Learning Lawyering Skills, Pt. 2

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In the last edition of the *Quarterly*, I shared “lawyering skills” for young lawyers, including how to ask the right questions, how to prepare for a deposition, and how to handle the work load. In this section, we will discuss more tips and tricks to help you succeed as a young lawyer building your law practice.

- 1. How to succeed in the courtroom:** Having the opportunity to argue your written motion in court can be exciting and downright terrifying. First, take a breath—everyone from your opposing counsel to the judge was once new to the practice and in your shoes. This is your chance to hone your craft. Second, you conducted the research, reviewed the key documents, and drafted the motion. Be confident in your knowledge of the case, but do not rely on that fact alone to carry you through argument. Draft an outline, review the cases you have cited, those cited by your opponent, and know your argument inside and out. Once you are prepared, you can go into the argument without the fear of missing a key point. Third, be sure to ask your managing partner for tips on practicing before the judge hearing your argument. It is likely that they have appeared in front of that judge before and know what to expect. Fourth, dress professionally. Appearing presentably will raise your confidence levels and ensure that your attire does not distract from your case.
- 2. Managing your time:** In the last article, I discussed the risks of a young associate taking on more than they can handle in order to impress or for fear of disappointing their co-workers. However, sometimes handling several pressing matters at once is unavoidable. If you find yourself in this position, the first step is to manage your time appropriately to meet your deadlines. Pick the assignment that has the more pressing due date and tackle that assignment first. You may also decide to complete several small projects before moving onto the bigger projects. No matter how you decide to break up your time, remember, do not skip a due date just because you are feeling overwhelmed. If you are very pressed for time and cannot complete the assignment or feel that you need assistance in order to meet your deadlines, speak with the assigning partner and let them know what is going on. As any seasoned partner will tell you, they would rather that you come to them for help *before* missing a deadline or doing rushed work, than after. As with everything else in our profession, communication is key.
- 3. Keep the drinking to a minimum at conferences:** Many young lawyers attend multi-day conferences away from home. With these conferences comes alcoholic beverages, which are often free. It is easy to drink one alcoholic beverage after the other throughout the course of the evening, without keeping close track. Remember, someone is always watching. Do not do anything that will cause you to be scrutinized by your employer. Also, remember that you are representing your firm and you do not want to do anything embarrassing that could turn a potential client running in the opposite direction. To avoid the pitfalls of inhaling one drink after the other at a work event, make a



point to sip on one drink over the course of a couple of hours. If you are planning on having more than one drink, have a glass of water between drinks. If you are conscious of your actions and make the deliberate decision to limit the number of drinks you enjoy at work events, you will thank yourself later.

### Update on the YLD

The YLD hosted a CLE event regarding substance abuse in the law on May 11, 2018 at the office of *Heyl Royster Voelker & Allen, P.C.* in Peoria, Illinois. The CLE also addressed diversity in the workplace. Christine Anderson from the Illinois Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission spoke on Promoting Wellness in the Legal Profession. Ms. Anderson specifically discussed how young lawyers were at risk of substance use disorder and depression. She also discussed Lawyers Assistance Programs and how the various programs help attorneys with mental impairment and substance abuse issues.

Next, Jazz Hampton from *Foley & Mansfield's* Minneapolis office spoke on diversity and inclusion within law firms. He asked various attending attorneys to think about diversity and inclusion at their firms and how their firm struggles. Mr. Hampton challenged us to look beyond the well-intentioned, but ultimately surface-level reasons offered as the objective of diversity initiatives, and to instead embrace long-term, sustainable diversity initiatives. He also discussed how more clients are encouraging diversity within the firm. Many firms struggle with a lack of commitment to diversity, and emphasize diversity in recruitment only. At the end of his presentation he presented a 9 step program for firms to implement for their diversity committee. Mr. Hampton's presentation evoked many thoughts and comments.

### About the Author

**Sheina R. Franco** is an associate in the Minneapolis office of *Foley & Mansfield*. Ms. Franco focuses her practice on personal injury, products liability, and premises liability, with an emphasis on the defense of toxic tort/mass tort claims. She has represented clients including premises owners, individuals, and product manufacturers from initial complaint to trial prep. Ms. Franco received her J.D. in 2014 from Liberty University School of Law. While there, she interned with the Madison County Circuit Court in Illinois, where she researched, compiled, and compared legal documents for Madison County Civil Court judges.

### About the IDC

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