

PARALEGALS CONNECT MAGAZINE

FIRST QUARTER * MARCH 2021 * VOLUME NO. 11



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Video Conferencing in
the Stay-At-Home Era
&

Lawsuits Change Lives

By: Karen Renee of
eCourt Reporters

*"Our Groups are accelerating Paralegals, Future Paralegals, and Future Attorneys Worldwide"
Currently, our groups have approximately 25,000+ combined active members worldwide.*

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Page 4

What is Paralegals Connect?

Page 5

Meet Our Admins

Pages 6-10

Meet Our Affiliates

Page 12

Video Conferencing in
The Stay-At-Home Era

By: Karen Renee of eCourt Reporters

Page 13

Lawsuits Change Lives

By: Karen Renee of eCourt Reporters



Page 14

Creating Resumes for
Humans and BOTS

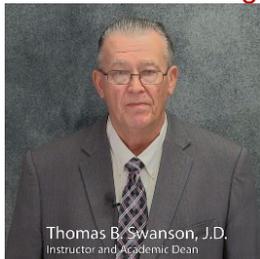
By: Tami Riggs



Page 15

A Tribute to Thomas B. Swanson, J.D.

By: Center for Advanced Legal Studies



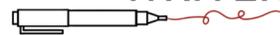
Thomas B. Swanson, J.D.
Instructor and Academic Dean

Page 17

Adjusting to the "New Normal"

By: Jackie Van Dyke, CP®

THE PARALEGAL WRITER™



Empowering Confident Written Communication

Pages 18-19

Don't be Afraid to
Ask for Help

By: Holly A. Sheriff, MSLS



Best Virtual Paralegal LLC

Page 20

Unmasking your Paralegal Power –
Tips to Reignite the Passion in Your Career

By: Malukah McMillion, Pa.C.P.

Page 21



Inkjets and Toners



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Pages 22-23

Lost in Translation: What Is Legal Translation and Why Is It So Important?

By: **eTranslationServices**



Pages 28-29

Helping Paralegals with Office of Foreign Asset Controls (OFAC) Compliance

By: **Mark Nastasi, EVP**



Pages 24-25

Top 5 Skills an Attorney Needs in a Paralegal

By: **Eric Young, J.D.**



Page 30

Jud Patterson's Personalized Merchandise
www.paralegalsconnect.com/merchandise-store.html



Page 27

The Paralegal Entrepreneur Circle Enrollment to our Private Eight Week Membership is Now Open! Empowering, leading, and developing paralegals to begin and scale their freelance paralegal career as entrepreneurs

By: **Jaclyn Foster**



Page 31

Get to Know Loio

By: **Team Loio**

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WHAT IS PARALEGALS CONNECT?

***“Our Groups are
Accelerating Paralegals,
Future Paralegals, and
Future Attorneys
Worldwide”***

Paralegals Connect was established in 2013 and we have grown significantly since that time. We now have five groups which are all dedicated to providing valuable information and support to succeed in the legal industry. Our groups provide support at every stage of your paralegal career.

Currently, our groups have approximately **25,000+ combined active members worldwide**. We have become the largest paralegal



Paralegals Connect (Main Group)

[www.Facebook.com/Groups/ParalegalsConnect](https://www.facebook.com/Groups/ParalegalsConnect)

Our first and largest group created for paralegals and paralegals-in-the-making to interact with other paralegals worldwide and provide valuable information to succeed in the paralegal industry.

Paralegals Connect: Employment Board

[www.Facebook.com/Groups/PCEmploymentBoard](https://www.facebook.com/Groups/PCEmploymentBoard)

A group designed for those seeking legal employment or internships, and for those seeking to hire legal professionals for their firm.

Virtual/Freelance Paralegals Connect

[www.Facebook.com/Groups/Virtual.FreelanceParalegalsConnect](https://www.facebook.com/Groups/Virtual.FreelanceParalegalsConnect)

A group designed for Virtual and/or Freelance Paralegals and those intending to break free of their 8-5 to go out on their own.

Paralegals Connect: Study Group

[www.Facebook.com/Groups/ParalegalsConnectStudyGroup](https://www.facebook.com/Groups/ParalegalsConnectStudyGroup)

A group created for those attending a paralegal school or studying for a Paralegal Certification Exam where you can post questions about your legal studies.

LSAT Connect

[www.Facebook.com/Groups/LSATConnect](https://www.facebook.com/Groups/LSATConnect)

A group designed for those studying for the Law School Admission Test.

Paralegals Connect: Instagram

[www.Instagram.com/ParalegalsConnect](https://www.instagram.com/ParalegalsConnect)

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Paralegals Connect: Twitter

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Paralegals Connect: Facebook Page

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MEET OUR ADMINS

These are the busy women behind the scenes of Paralegals Connect. We work hard to make these professional, successful groups, and create ideas to help paralegals, future paralegals, and future attorneys become a legal success!



Crystal Cornett

Crystal@ParalegalsConnect.com

Founder of Paralegals Connect. Crystal has been a Paralegal since 2004. She earned her first Paralegal Certificate from University of Houston in March 2006.

Crystal received the degree of Associate of Applied Science from Center for Advanced Legal Studies and her second Paralegal Certificate in 2010. She is a member of the Lambda Epsilon Chi National Honor Society for Paralegal / Legal Assistant Studies (LEX).

Crystal has practiced in Family Law, Elder Law, Probate Law, Guardianships, Health Law, Social Security, and heavy litigation in Intellectual Property and Bankruptcy.

Crystal currently practices residential and commercial Real Estate and Property Law in Houston, Texas.

Crystal also serves on the Paralegal Advisory Committee (PAC) for Center for Advanced Legal Studies.



Eunice Colón

Eunice@ParalegalsConnect.com

Eunice Colón has been a paralegal since early 2003. Eunice has been residing in Houston, Texas where she earned a Bachelor's in Psychology and Spanish from the University of Houston.

Eunice is currently preparing to take the LSAT Exam and achieve her goal to attend law school and become an attorney. She is currently a twelve-year paralegal for one of Houston's best Real Estate and Commercial Litigation Firms.

Aside of preparing to take the LSAT Exam, Eunice owns and runs a small handmade jewelry and jewelry supply online business. She has acquired extensive knowledge in the creation of Facebook Groups and various other marketing projects including websites. Eunice's ability to multitask together with her ability to think and operate in English and Spanish has opened many doors and continues to be a great asset in her professional growth.

MEET OUR AFFILIATES

We would like to thank our Affiliate partners because they make it possible to print and distribute our Magazine to our members and various paralegal schools and large firms throughout the U.S.

Becoming an Affiliate with our groups offers worldwide visibility to approximately **25,000+ combined group members** in the legal industry.

**Only Affiliates are permitted to advertise within our Groups.*



Paralegals Connect is always looking for Affiliates that can offer our paralegals, legal assistants, future paralegals, and future attorneys the skills and services to help them succeed in their legal careers. We strive to provide information to the latest resources, education, and cost-effective opportunities that will enhance the skills, knowledge, and competencies of our members.

To become an Affiliate with Paralegals Connect, please contact Crystal@ParalegalsConnect.com for additional information or visit www.ParalegalsConnect.com/Become-an-Affiliate.html

Center for Advanced Legal Studies

Center for Advanced Legal Studies was founded in 1987 to provide education and training for those seeking to enter the legal profession as a paralegal. The **Paralegal Certificate** program provides students with essential paralegal skills and includes courses such as Introduction to Law and Ethics, Legal Research and Writing, Interviewing and Investigation, Corporate and Business Law, Civil Procedure, Computers and the Law, Family Law and Personal Injury. Students can choose from on-campus morning or Saturday courses, or attend 100% online.



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Law Quill Academy

Annette Choti is President of Law Quill, a Legal Marketing Agency focusing on small and solo law firms. After graduating from law school 20 years ago and working for the federal government, she transitioned into digital marketing for attorneys. She has written over 3 million words of online legal content for hundreds of law firms throughout the United States and Canada. She is proud to help small and solo law firms increase their digital footprint and online visibility to gain more clients. She has been honored to have nationally published works in USA Today, Market Watch, and on The Today Show online.

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The Paralegal Writer™

Jackie Van Dyke, Certified Paralegal, and owner of **The Paralegal Writer™**, inspires best writing practices and confidence in legal writing communication. She is a faculty member in the Paralegal Studies Program at The George Washington University and a member of NALA's Continuing Education Council. She has numerous published articles in NALA's **FACTS & FINDINGS – THE PARALEGAL MAGAZINE**, NFPA's **NATIONAL PARALEGAL REPORTER**, and the Paralegals Connect Magazine. Jackie's passion is to help paralegals at all levels with persuasive memo writing, precise legal citations, strategic legal correspondence, along with improved grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

The Paralegal Writer™ offers a quarterly email course, "Pen A Memo™" to prepare applicants taking the NALA Skills Exam.

The Paralegal Writer™ recently launched the "Legal Scribble Sessions™" – a seven-week email course focused on writing general correspondence including demand and status letters as well as better formal emails.

Email your questions to jvandykeparalegalwriter@gmail.com.

Join the Facebook Group at

www.Facebook.com/Groups/ParalegalsWrite



Empowering Confident Written Communication

Learn more about Jackie at

www.TheParalegalWriter.com

PROServerCENTER

95% of process servers say they want more clients, but 85% feel they do not have the right tools to do so.

The Process Server Center is a legal professional organization whose mission is to set a national standard for the process service industry in the United States. The organization's approach provides specific, actionable solutions to both process servers and law office managers through:

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Jaclyn Foster Paralegals Group, LLC

Jaclyn is the owner and founder of Jaclyn Foster Paralegal Group, LLC. She is a thought leader in the industry of virtual and freelance contract paralegals. She is on a mission to empower, lead and develop other paralegals to begin and scale a successful freelance paralegal career as entrepreneurs. She believes so deeply in the amazing solution contract paralegals can provide to law firms and has determined that it is her absolute duty to help promote and develop a larger pool of qualified and professional options for law firms. Therefore, she created "**The Paralegal Entrepreneur Circle**," an exclusive membership filled with like-minded, serious paralegals trying to branch their careers and develop that entrepreneurial mindset that has made Jaclyn and her contract paralegal business scale from zero to six figures in six months.



<https://www.jf-paralegalservices.com>

Jud Patterson

Jud Patterson joined Paralegals Connect in 2021 adding some awesome new customized products to our Paralegals Connect Merchandise Store including glassware, face masks, coasters, and more!

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Video Conferencing in the Stay-At-Home Era

By: Karen Renee



Attorneys have been slow to go all in with conducting depositions remotely in the stay-at-home era, and it is understandable as to why. Software security issues, fear of off-camera coaching, and Internet skips have all been known to slow the remote deposition service process. The ability to do remote depositions has been available for quite some time, but the need for due process has forced remote services to vastly increase.

Attorneys want to get the truth in litigation and depositions are an opportunity to flesh out the facts. But what if someone that was not involved with the original incident is “helping” with the story? In an in-person deposition, there are attorneys for each side of the lawsuit, a court reporter, and the witness that is being deposed. All questions are answered without the input of outside persons. After all, attorneys just want the witness’ version of what happened. But what if the witness is at home on a video conference call and others in the home just want to help with the answers? Well, it is no longer the witness’ testimony but rather outside influences that can steer the testimony.

There is also recording issues as video conference software often has built-in recording features. “Off the record” is a crucial aspect during a legal proceeding, if recording continues during private conversations between lawyers and clients, clearly there is reason to be concerned.

Court reporters have stepped up to help with conducting remote services, but they, too, are faced with challenges. Skips in video, muffled voices, outside interference, and even handling of exhibits are just a few obvious pain points.

Likely we can all agree we would like to get back to normal, whatever that may be going forward, but in the meantime, video conferencing of legal proceedings will continue.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Karen Renee, President of eCourt Reporters, graduated with honors from Alfred State College court reporting program, Alfred, New York, in 2008. Karen was awarded 2018 Legal Innovator of the Year by the State Bar of Wisconsin and Legal Innovation Use of Technology by the National Court Reporters Association.

Company Info: [eCourt Reporters](#)’ marketplace enables law firms, government entities, and court reporting agencies to search, select, and schedule court reporters and legal videographers directly for legal proceedings held outside of the courthouse with live search capabilities across the U.S.

Lawsuits Change Lives

By: Karen Renee



Decisions made by juries and arbitrators have life-changing ramifications. For the best possible outcomes in litigation, clients need to take time to choose the right law firm for representation, and attorneys need to take time to choose the right court reporters and legal videographers for professional services. As remote legal proceedings have grown, some civil court cases have come to a grinding halt. Law firms work diligently to keep the civil hearing processes moving along.

Backlogs are growing in the courthouses and frustration is setting in. Court reporters are offering their individual video conference accounts to provide a means for law firms to keep trial preparation in motion.

The legal community continues to work through temporary emergency orders that extend court deadlines, but that is just pushing things down the road. The backlog is growing daily with the current caseload and the addition of new court filings.

Stress levels are high with changes in policies seemingly daily. In the midst of all the chaos are the clients involved in litigation. Depositions are stalled, hearings have slowed and, in some cases, halted. At the end of the line, clients are asked to sit tight as their lives are forever being changed by the litigation process.

Legal support services are bringing technology to the forefront to help through tumultuous times. Law firms are utilizing new services such as eCourt Reporters to keep cases moving along through due process. The court reporters and legal videographers are providing remote services and even helping with PPE by bringing extra masks and hand sanitizers to in-person proceedings.

Certified, experienced court reporters and legal videographers work in accordance with the high standards of the legal profession, but how do you know you're getting the best-suited professional when booking services?

- *Select court reporters and videographers with high ratings from peers.*
- *Select court reporters that are skilled in the testimony being taken.*
- *Know the charges of litigation services upfront.*
- *Work directly with court reporters and videographers for clear communication.*
- *Know the certification level of the court reporter hired.*

In the past, this due diligence has been a difficult, time-consuming task. As the court reporting industry evolves into the technology world, this process has become quick, efficient, and extremely impactful. The industry first technology of eCourt Reporters has now become the go-to platform for law firms to make the selection of certified, vetted, experienced court reporters and videographers.

The criteria for scheduling court reporters should not be based on someone that happens to be in the area. Law firms need the excellence that professional court reporters and legal videographers provide as attorneys fully understand their client's future may forever be changed through the legal process.



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Karen Renee, President of eCourt Reporters, graduated with honors from Alfred State College court reporting program, Alfred, New York, in 2008. Karen was awarded 2018 Legal Innovator of the Year by the State Bar of Wisconsin and Legal Innovation Use of Technology by the National Court Reporters Association.

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Creating Resumes for Humans and Bots

By: Tami Riggs



When you apply for a job online your resume will often be scanned by an internet robot, also known as an Applicant Tracking System (ATS) before it ever lands in the hands of a hiring manager. An ATS is an electronic filtering software that scans resume content for specific keywords to determine if the document should be passed forward for human review. ATS search for relevant information that matches a job posting, including education, training, former job titles, and other keywords that point to the required experience. At least 98.2% of Fortune 500 companies use BOT technology¹.

If your resume does not make it through the BOT labyrinth, it will never make it to the hiring official. It essentially does not exist. Therefore, how you organize your resume so that it gets the most attention from organizations that use BOTS to read information and filter out candidates is critical. ATS software cannot read embedded details and will remove your document from the applicant pool if it does not pass ATS readability. ATS will perform a more accurate review of your resume if the format is simple, straightforward, and incorporates a few basic rules. Consider the following best practices:

1. *Don't* place important details, like your contact information, in the header or footer of your resume document.
2. *Don't* embed charts, images, unusual fonts, logos, columns, hyperlinks, or other complex design elements. ATS will look for matching words and headings, and most are not able to convert PDF, HTML, and Google Doc formats.

3. *Do* incorporate keywords from the job description that are essential to the role and with proper context. Review what language, what licensing, what education, what software, and what skills are required, and include those words.
4. *Do* use standard section headings and full titles: Contact Information, Education, Key Skills, and Work Experience.
5. *Do* proofread. Misspelled words will not register as a match.
6. *Do* save your resume as a plain text file and review the results. If the plain text version of your document is missing details from your original version, has garbled characters, or has sections that appear disorganized or rearranged, then it will not pass ATS screening.

The end goal is to have your resume reviewed by a human. An ATS-friendly resume is not that different from what a person is scanning. This means it contains relevant data and metrics, is keyword optimized, error-free, well-formatted for content and space, and tailored to the job.

Center for Advanced Legal studies will train you for a career in the legal field, guide you in identifying career opportunities, prepare you for the workplace, and help you shine as a candidate in front of human eyes and BOT technology.

Contact us at www.paralegal.edu to learn more about our programs and upcoming class start dates.

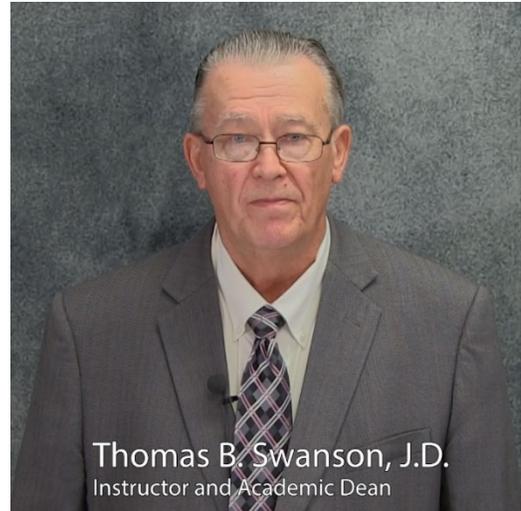


ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Tami Riggs is Director of Outreach and Career Services at [Center for Advanced Legal Studies](http://www.paralegal.edu) in Houston, Texas. She has an extensive and varied professional background that spans criminal justice, paralegal education, and international school marketing and communication. Her career has been guided by a focus on developing strategic partnerships that facilitate school growth and student opportunity. She holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice from Texas State University. Connect with *Tami* on [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/in/tamiriggs/).

¹ <https://www.jobscan.co/blog/fortune-500-use-applicant-tracking-systems/>

A Tribute to Thomas B. Swanson, J.D.



Center for Advanced Legal Studies (“CALs”) recently celebrated the 34th anniversary of the launch of its paralegal programs. On February 23, 1987, CALS started 16 morning students and 10 evening students. Their instructor was Thomas B. Swanson, J.D. and students were immediately captivated. Due to his ability to present engaging lectures and his demand for excellence, there wasn’t a single student absence for the first three months of the program. That’s getting off to a running start.

Mr. Swanson began his legal career in 1971 as a candidate in the United States Air Force Legal Services Specialist Training Program. That would be ‘paralegal’ to you and me. Mr. Swanson was trained as a court bailiff, criminal court administrator, court reporter, claims examiner and investigator. He served in this capacity until 1976 when his active-duty service was completed. He was awarded the Air Force Commendation Medal for outstanding service in Asia.



Doyle R. Happe, Co-Founder and Director of Center for Advanced Legal Studies presented Mr. Swanson with a Certificate of Appreciation

After serving in the Air Force Mr. Swanson enrolled in the University of Florida and graduated with his bachelor’s degree in 1978 in just 2 ½ years. Go Gators! Wasting no time, he enrolled at South Texas College of Law and graduated in 1981 with his Doctor of Jurisprudence and began practicing law in Houston with a focus on maritime law, personal injury law, and labor and employment law.

Mr. Swanson opened his trial practice firm in 1986 and continues private trial practice to this day. He began teaching paralegal students at Center for Advanced Legal Studies in 1987 and was the very first instructor to teach at CALS. In 2000 Mr. Swanson was appointed Academic Dean and has served in that capacity for the past 20 years. All said, 2021 will mark Mr. Swanson’s 50th year working in law, and his 40th year as a practicing attorney.

Mr. Swanson has educated, trained, and inspired thousands of paralegals at Center for Advanced Legal Studies and maintains contact with many long after they have graduated and started their paralegal careers. His no-nonsense approach, riveting lectures, and practical advice has long made Mr. Swanson a favorite of students.

On February 27, 2021 Mr. Swanson was the keynote speaker at the [67th commencement ceremonies of Center for Advanced Legal Studies](#) which was presented online via YouTube. After his address, he was presented a certificate of appreciation by Doyle R. Happe, co-founder and Director, for his 34 years of service as a paralegal instructor at CALS and 20 years serving as Academic Dean. Congratulations Mr. Swanson. You have made a difference!



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Center for Advanced Legal Studies (CAL S) is a private, nationally accredited paralegal college. Established in 1987, our focus is providing exceptional paralegal education to our students and dedicated career services for our graduates.



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National Association of Legal Assistants



Paralegal Division of the State Bar of Texas

¹ Council on Occupational Education, 7840 Roswell Road, Building 300, Suite 325, Atlanta, GA 30350, Telephone: 770-396-3898 / FAX: 770-396-3790, www.council.org

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Advanced Civil Procedure
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Oil and Gas Law
Externship

Other Requirements: Business Math

ADJUSTING TO THE "NEW NORMAL"

By: Jackie Van Dyke, CP®



Empowering Confident Written Communication

A Mental Health America survey reports that 75% of workers are experiencing burnout and that 40% of these same workers directly relate the burnout to the COVID-19 pandemic².

Many of us find ourselves working remotely month after month and putting in longer hours than when we worked in the office. A recent article in Above the Law confirms that legal professionals are increasing productivity, but their mental health is declining³. Those with children at home are juggling work with home distractions that are proving to be exhausting.

This "new normal" may continue for an extended period of time. Here are suggestions for changing up the work-at-home routine:

Set a timer, get up from your desk area, and take a 15-minute walk. Breathe. Stretch. Come back with a renewed perspective. "Working people who regularly take walks in green spaces may have higher stress-coping abilities."⁴ Perhaps add a short walk into the time that you previously were commuting before and after work. Just think! You are saving gas money that may add up to a well-deserved vacation in the future.

Stay connected. Discover new legal networks on social media. Reach out to three people you would like to meet and start a conversation. Ask questions. How are they dealing with the "new normal?"

Invest in a new and comfortable desk chair! If possible, set up your workspace near a window so that you can enjoy some fresh air during the day. Natural light may also boost productivity and brighten your day! A recent report indicates that "36% of workers lack a place free from distraction, and 28% do not have a physically comfortable workspace..."⁵

Challenge yourself to stay optimistic and motivated. Decide to have a positive attitude. At a minimum, take one day a week to dress up in office attire and do your hair. (This tip for those not part of a group or expected to be on Zoom calls.) Remember the "Dress for Success" motto?

Find a way to move outside your comfort zone. Identify your favorite pen and begin to journal for 10 minutes a day. This journaling may become a blog "in the making."

Identify short-term goals that can be measured and are realistic. An example might be, "I will take two CLE's in the next year related to e-Discovery so that I can stay current with what is happening in my field." This type of exercise gives us something to look forward to.

Block out a few minutes during the day to care for a favorite plant. Make a point to take a lunch break and eat away from your laptop!

Above all, adjust your mindset. Laugh. Recognize that everyone is experiencing interruptions from the "norm."

Work is going to be different, but it will be OK. Continue to strive for a better work-life balance.

www.facebook.com/the paralegalwriter

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Jackie Van Dyke, CP®, is a virtual-independent paralegal, legal writing coach, and part-time professor of paralegal studies at The George Washington University (GWU). Jackie owns The Paralegal Writer™, offering legal writing courses throughout the year to help paralegals improve their writing skills. She earned a Certificate in General Litigation from the University of San Diego and a master's degree in paralegal studies from GWU. Jackie is a member of NALA's Continuing Education Council, the National Capital Area Paralegal Association (NCAPA), and the Arizona Paralegal Association. You may reach Jackie at jvandykeparalegalwriter@gmail.com.



² Tech Republic 8-24-20

³ Above the Law 12-4-20

⁴ Science Daily 1-13-21

⁵ Fast Company 2-12-21

Don't be Afraid to Ask for Help

By: Holly A. Sheriff, MSLS - On behalf of Best Virtual Paralegal LLC

Don't be afraid to ask for help; that is the best advice anyone can give you. For many people, asking for help is a source of weakness. Not asking for help when you need it is not an omission of weakness. It is your ego holding you back from achieving your goals. As a legal entrepreneur, it is vital to seek help when you are in unfamiliar territory. It is essential to seek or interact with a trusted source you can confide in - someone where you are. You need to select someone other than a parent, friend, spouse, or roommate. You need to find someone outside your inner circle and bring them into your inner circle.

You are probably wondering how to select a mentor, coach, or consultant? Do not worry. It is a common question. Yet, the answer is not as cut and dry as some people want it to be. Like most things when dealing with the legal profession or legal process – how you find a mentor, coach, or consultant depends. No, seriously, it does depend on a few factors.

Finding the right mentor, coach, or consultant hinge on your strengths, weaknesses, and goals, and it also helps to understand the differences between the three types of advisors.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A MENTOR, COACH, OR CONSULTANT?

What is the difference between a mentor, coach, or consultant? Would you be shocked to learn mentors or coaches cannot tell people the differences between these advisors? Let's jump in and explain some of the critical differences.

A mentor is great for a recent graduate of any formal education. It does not matter what type of educational program you have completed; it can be occupational training, an associate degree, or any secondary higher education programming. To maximize the success of a mentor program, you need to have foundation skills to guide the mentoring program. A good mentor will base their guidance on proven strategies they have used and had the most success. To copy someone's recipe for success, a mentor is whom you want.

If mentoring is a carbon copy, then what the heck is coaching? Although mentoring and coaching do have some overlapping, coaching is more do it yourself, with a cheerleader in your back pocket. Coaching is exploring, experimenting, and learning from the results. Coaching is for people who know what they want to achieve, are struggling to achieve the results they want, yet are determined to move forward by trying different methods to achieve success. Folks that use coaching are not afraid to dive into discovering the problem and try several options before yielding results. Coaching involves a higher level of change. To achieve success with coaching, you must be committed to change, hard work, and forming a relationship with your coach.

If mentoring is carbon copying, and coaching is the buddy system, what the heck is consulting? When you work with a consultant, you are hiring an expert to identify the problem, research and develop solutions, and implement the solutions. Some consultants offer to teach their clients ways to avoid running into the same barriers again. The services one can expect to receive from a consultant can include training and developing sought-after techniques and supplying clients with the supporting information to keep the solutions in place.

Sometimes it helps to meet a few different mentors, coaches, and consultants before making an informed decision about which advisor is best for you. Many people find it helpful to work with a mentor and coach for items they are comfortable handling. And then outsource the more challenging things for a consultant. Do not be afraid to seek expert guidance from people should never be a sign of weakness. You cannot know how to do everything about everything. Knowing when to ask for help can have a positive reflection on your management and people skills. And it can also show people you are committed to your business and career.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Holly A. Sheriff, MSLS is a nationally recognized paralegal and coach. She loves helping attorneys and paralegals achieve their goals. She is currently accepting new clients who want to build and grow a successful business and careers.

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Unmasking Your Paralegal Power – Tips to Reignite the Passion in Your Career

By: Malukah McMillion, Pa.C.P.

The year 2020 took a toll on all of us. In some way, shape or form, our scale was definitely unbalanced. From a national health crisis which unveiled healthcare disparities and racial divide - to instant work from home for most with a burst of homeschooling sessions for those of us with children. Yes, it was most definitely unprecedented.

As if that was not enough, I found myself questioning my ability to perform my job - was it mental anguish, burnout, or all the above? Is this sounding familiar to you? I have been a paralegal for 20+ years and in the blink of an eye, I began questioning if the decision to embark on a career which I once loved was really something that I wanted to continue to do. During that time, I lost track of my WHY. It began to feel as though the work was meaningless and the passion for the career itself was lost. Fortunately, as time went on, I was able to reignite my passion with my go-to steps that I will share below.

“Challenges make you discover things about yourself that you never really knew”

- Cicely Tyson.

1. Authentic Self-Assessment.

Begin to think about what you do, how you feel and what makes you unique. Oftentimes we, as paralegals, find ourselves thrust in a career rattled with anxiety, stress, and high emotions. It is the nature of the business, right? When you allow yourself to take a step back, you can self-assess your why. To do so, I like to finish sentences like these:

I became a paralegal because _____.

I find solace in _____.

I have a strong comfort level when I am performing work such as _____.

I love my career because it allows for ____.

In doing these exercises, not only are you affirming yourself, but you are pulling strengths out of you which may have been hidden. Give it a try.

2. Fight or Flight Mode.

After reaffirming yourself, begin to ask, “why am I feeling this way?” Is it because something happened, and I do not have the energy to deal with it? Is it because something upset me and my body is telling me to resist (human behavior or change), or am I running because I think the grass is greener on the other side? Whatever your reason, just ask yourself and be authentic with your response. There is no right or wrong answer, in fact, you will be surprised what you unveil.

3. The One Thing.

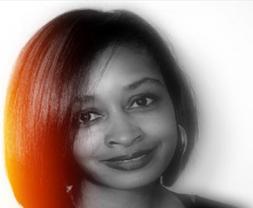
There is a book out that I read entitled “The One Thing”, by Gary W. Keller and Jay Papasan. The authors speak about finding the one thing you can do to reach your goal. In my instance, my goal was to gain better management. As the book suggested, I compiled a list of all routine tasks which I performed as a paralegal. Once that list was complete, I focused on that one thing that I could do to increase productivity and, therefore, shift my unproductive mindset to produce productive outcomes. The idea is to do one thing at a time so as to not overwhelm your process. Now, your turn!

4. Allow yourself Grace.

Cliche’ to some but powerful to me. Grace is best understood in the midst of confusion and frustration. When I found myself turning that corner onto *Inspiration Lane*, I did not sprint just yet - I tip-toed. This allowed me to take in the new views through motivated lenses. During this period, I would begin to reaffirm my progress by completing sentences like this:

“Even though I couldn't complete all 5 tasks on my agenda today, I still managed to complete the 3 that I placed in order of priority so that I could end my day anxiety free.”

This was my routine to realign myself with my paralegal career, set goals and unmask my **paralegal power**. I am sharing in hopes that it will also help someone who needs to hear this to redefine winning on their terms.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Malukah McMillion, Pa.C.P., is a paralegal / paralegal coach. She is also the Founder and Executive Director of Princess Purpose, Inc., a nonprofit organization empowering Black girls to define and creatively express themselves. You can reach Malukah at malukahdianna@gmail.com.



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Lost in Translation: What Is Legal Translation and Why Is It So Important?

By: eTranslationServices

Lost in Translation: Case Study



Legal Contracts

To sign a contract all parties must have read and understood the information contained in the document. Sometimes a non-fluent or non-English speaking party will need additional support to be able to fully understand the contract in order to sign. This also goes for sending and signing business contracts with other countries.

Other Legal Documents

It is important to communicate across languages in all sorts of legal documents, including corporate documents, financial records, trademark applications, copyright registrations, wills, tenders, and witness statements. All these types of documents often require some support from a translation company.

Legal Translation Options

If you need a legal translator, there are 2 options for you to consider: a translation company and a freelancer.

Machine translating is not on this list of options because many countries do not consider machine translators, like Google Translate, sufficient for legal purposes. So, you should not rely upon a machine translator for any legal translation services you need.

Translation Company

A translation company has networks of translators in all languages and dialects. It is usually the preferred choice as they are reliable and specialized to support all cases in all languages.

Translation is needed in many legal settings, whether it is to translate written words or interpret verbal dialogue. In most legal cases, there are no language barriers that could cause miscommunication or misunderstanding. However, in a small number of legal cases, there are multiple languages to communicate across. This is where translators and/or interpreters are needed for extra support to make sure that all parties are given fair representation and understanding.

But why is legal translation so important? And how can you make sure you find the right translator for your case?

What Is Legal Translation?

Legal Translation is exactly what the name suggests. It involves translation in legal settings, such as litigation discovery, depositions, corporate documents, business contracts, patent filings, immigration, and financial records, or even court hearings. It is a professional niche within the translation services industry and requires some knowledge of legal procedures and policies.

Here we need to understand that legal translation is different from interpretation. An interpreter or interpretation deals with verbal communication across languages, whereas a translator or translation concerns written words and languages.

Whether it is interpreted or translated, all legal translation work needs to be accurate, detailed, and high quality. Even the slightest misunderstanding or misrepresentation could have serious consequences for all parties involved.

Although most legal cases involving a translator or interpreter experience no problems, with communication being seamless across all languages involved, there are instances where bad translation has affected the outcome. Mistranslation or misrepresentation has caused unfair verdicts and case collapse.

A shortage of legal translators can affect the outcome of legal cases too. In the UK alone, more than 2000 legal cases were abandoned or adjourned in 2018 because a reliable and accurate translator could not be found.

When You Might Need Legal Translation Services

No matter what situation you are in, you need accurate, high quality, and reliable translations. But depending on how you practice, your need for translation services will vary.

There are 6 most common instances that you might need to rely on a translator as a paralegal:

Immigration Documents

The most common need for legal translation comes from legal procedures surrounding immigration. That includes immigration documents and court hearings where non-English speakers need to understand and provide information for the immigration process.

Court Hearings

Legal translation is used in a range of court proceedings, not just the most obvious immigration hearings. Translators can support everything from murder trials to parking disputes to make sure that the trial is fair for everyone involved.

Freelance Translator

Usually slightly cheaper, a freelance translator is often specialized in one or two languages. Some may specialize in legal translation but may not have the same flexibility and support for all cases as a company would. If you choose to establish a relationship with a freelancer for your translation needs, you may need more than one, which may cost the same if not as much as a company would.

How to Find A Translation Company

Whether you need to translate a legal document, witness statements, or translate speech in court, your translations need to be 100% accurate, handled with care, and completely confidential. So, when it comes to choosing a translation company to work with, you will need to make sure that they are reputable, fully experienced, and specialized. Here are 3 things you should check with your company before working together:

Qualifications

Unlike the legal industry, translation services are completely unregulated. That means that anyone could claim to be a translator without needing a qualification or being certified. However, when the accuracy and quality of the translation matters like it does in a legal situation, you need to be sure that your translator is not misinterpreting or misrepresenting what has been said. So, make sure that you choose a translation company that is fully qualified and has official certificates from boards like the Association of Translation Companies (ATC) or American Translators Association (ATA).

www.eTranslationservices.com

Specialists

For legal matters, it is important that your translator has knowledge about legal procedures and has wider knowledge about the subject matter. This will help to ensure that words are not misrepresented, or policies are not ignored. So, when choosing a translation company, consider using one with legal translation specialists or who has previous legal translation experience.

Confidentiality

It should go without saying that all content and information passed between you and your translator should be strictly confidential. That means that documents should not be shared with third parties to translate or to check. So, when talking to a translation company, make sure that they themselves do all translations and keep information in-house to ensure confidentiality.

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TOP 5 SKILLS AN ATTORNEY NEEDS IN A PARALEGAL

By: Eric G. Young, Esq., Instructor



As paralegals or paralegal students, I am sure you have all heard it before. An attorney will expect you, as a paralegal, to do this or that task. Maybe it will be draft pleadings, interview clients, write correspondence, or conduct legal research. These are certainly tasks that you will be expected to perform, but what about your skills? What are the top skills attorneys expect paralegals to possess so they can perform these, and many other, tasks?

SKILL NO. 5 - BE PROACTIVE

A good paralegal is someone who knows what needs to be done without having to be told to do it. Most attorneys simply do not have time to find things for paralegals to do. Look in the file. Look around you. What tasks need completing? If you are capable of doing one or more of these unfinished tasks, let your attorney know you would like to work on them. If your attorney tells you it is not necessary, he or she will still be impressed that you took the initiative. Chances are that your attorney will give you the green light and be grateful to have hired you.

SKILL NO. 4 - SHOW FOLLOW THROUGH

Related to Skill No. 5 is following through on the tasks you take on. Follow through is *not* a question of knowledge/lack of knowledge. If you do not have the knowledge to complete a task, it is probably best not to take it on in the first place, and in every case, be honest with your attorney if you have not done a particular task before. The skill of follow through is doing what you say you are going to do.

Assuming you have the requisite knowledge, the skill of follow through requires three qualities: confidence, "stick-to-it-iveness," and time management.

Confidence is that innate feeling of comfort you have with your level of knowledge and a belief you have what it takes to get the job done. Attorneys appreciate and expect confidence. "Stick-to-it-iveness" is the quality of not giving up when a task become difficult. Your attorney (and the clients) will rely on you, and no one can rely on someone who throws up their hands and complains that a project is "too hard" or "overwhelming."

Finally, time management is a skill every paralegal needs to possess, and while it is likely you will be expected to keep track of your time and to reach certain billable hour marks set by your firm, which is "timekeeping." Time management is different from timekeeping. Time management is doing what you say you are going to do *when you say you are going to do it*. Good time managers meet deadlines.

Unfortunately, some of us are naturally better able to manage our time than others. If you are good at time management, you are off to a head start. If you are not, or are prone to procrastinate, you will want to develop this skill. Perhaps, a productivity or time management app will help. Remember, no task can be completed successfully if it is not completed by the deadline associated with the task. Legal work is filled with deadlines, and attorneys expect their paralegals to meet them.

SKILL NO. 3 - BE PROFESSIONAL & TRUSTWORTHY

Paralegals are just as important to the practice of law as nurses and nurse practitioners are to the practice of medicine, so act accordingly. You should have a good awareness of your ethical requirements as well as those imposed on your attorney and firm. A good paralegal knows the information he or she receives must be kept strictly confidential for the clients' protection. A good paralegal knows not to give legal advice to clients. A good paralegal knows how to make clients feel comfortable and secure with their interactions. Be professional and make yourself trustworthy to your attorney and the clients, and you will be a valuable asset.

SKILL NO. 2 - COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY

If you boil the practice of law down to its basic essence, it is the practice of communication. Attorneys communicate ideas and concepts that may be complex or difficult to understand in a way that is, hopefully, persuasive. We communicate these ideas and concepts within our firms as well as to others outside our firms, such as opposing counsel, mediators, arbitrators, and judges. Because communication is at the heart of law practice, your attorney will expect you to also be able to communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing.

What does it mean to communicate effectively? Verbally, you must be able to articulate the information you find.

For example, if you are asked to complete a legal research project that requires you to analyze legal authorities, you will need to be able to explain to your attorney what you found and what the authorities say.

When it comes to effective legal writing, there are 5 main qualities good legal writers possess:

- Good legal writers make sure their writing is free from grammatical errors and misspellings
- Good legal writers consider their audience with every writing project
- Good legal writers always use proper tone and voice
- Good legal writers always use proper word choice
- Good legal writers write precisely and succinctly



SKILL NO. 1 - DEMONSTRATE A WILLINGNESS TO LEARN

I have employed paralegals since I began practicing law in 1997. Each had different abilities to perform certain tasks. Some had more experience than others. When I look back on the many employees that I have had over the course of nearly a quarter century, however, what is the single, most important skill that stands out in my mind? Without a doubt, it is the willingness to learn. However, demanding I might be, or have been, at any given time, I have never expected my paralegals to "know it all." Certainly, I have never expected that from day one.

While I expected a paralegal to have a basic understanding of the legal field in which they wanted to work, I assumed he or she would probably need to be taught how to do some things. What distinguished the best of my hires from the least, however, was the best ones consistently demonstrated a willingness to learn *that which they did not already know*. This skill is particularly important today when possessing a certain level of technological acumen has become so much more important to the practice of law than it was twenty-four years ago when I started out.

Why is this skill so important? The answer is simple. Demonstrating a willingness to learn shows your attorney you are curious, you are motivated, and that you want to excel at your craft. Any attorney would be hard pressed to find fault with a paralegal who comes to work every day demonstrating these qualities.

If you are still a student, remind yourself that the career you are embarking on is serious and worthwhile. If you are a graduate working in the trenches, remind yourself that what you are doing is important and makes a difference to others. Practice these five skills every day, and you will be a success.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Eric Young, J.D. is an experienced attorney with a strong background in civil litigation and appeals. Mr. Young is an adjunct paralegal instructor with a demonstrated history of working in the higher education industry. Skilled in Learning Management, Legal Writing, Trials, and Civil Litigation. Strong operations professional with a JD from Golden Gate University, School of Law.



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The Paralegal Entrepreneur Circle Enrollment to our Private Eight Week Membership is Now Open!

Empowering, leading, and developing paralegals to begin and scale their freelance paralegal career as entrepreneurs

By: Jaclyn Foster



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- Preparing for clients, business checklist, systems and processes to establish;
- Nailing the discovery call, what to expect, how to land your leads;
- Putting it all together, creating a Lean Business Plan, getting that first client (or growing), subcontracting;
- Q&A with other contract paralegals that have built successful businesses.

ABOUT YOUR HOST, JACLYN FOSTER

In 2018, Jaclyn began subcontracting for both large and small law firms across the nation through a virtual staffing agency. She made this leap to the virtual and contracted world because it was the best decision for my growing family at the time. Little did she know that leap would become the catapult that would soon launch her into running the business of her dreams. In her subcontracting career, she had the opportunity to advance her career to federal jurisdictions across the nation, support a Supreme Court candidate, and work for regional and national firms. She did this all from her kitchen table with a baby on her lap in the middle-of-nowhere, Wisconsin.

In 2020, Jaclyn Foster Paralegal Services, LLC launched and immediately thrived during the middle of a global pandemic. The attorneys needing her assistance quickly became unmanageable, but her burning passion to serve them all refused to lessen. She began tapping into her network and building her team. Since then, Jaclyn Foster Paralegal Services has transformed into Jaclyn Foster Paralegal Group, bringing in dozens of freelance paralegals across the country every quarter to match up with her book of amazing attorney clients.

Jaclyn is a thought leader in the industry of virtual and freelance contract paralegals. She is on a mission to empower, lead and develop other paralegals to begin and scale a successful freelance paralegal career as entrepreneurs. She believes so deeply in the amazing solution contract paralegals can provide to law firms and has determined that it is her absolute duty to help promote and develop a larger pool of qualified and professional options for law firms. Therefore, she created "The Paralegal Entrepreneur Circle," an exclusive membership filled with like-minded, serious paralegals trying to branch their careers and develop that entrepreneurial mindset that has made Jaclyn and her contract paralegal business scale from zero to six figures in six months.

Secure your seat here:

[The Paralegal Entrepreneur Circle](#)

The Membership will open on April 1, 2021 and run through May 30, 2021. Please read the terms and conditions here.

Helping Paralegals with OFAC Compliance Software

By: Mark Nastasi - Cobblestone Software



Office of Foreign Asset Controls (OFAC) compliance is complex and included in general terms and conditions of many contracts. OFAC along with Vendor risk management can be daunting for paralegals and contract administrators. In many cases, the process of sourcing a suitable vendor or partner is hard enough on its own let alone vetting the counterparty to ensure they are not sanctioned by OFAC. However, a paralegal professional must *also* understand a business' requirements and solicit vendors, contractors, and other partners to engage in business to ensure they are qualified. Add to the mix the financial responsibility of ensuring compliance under OFAC, or the **Office of Foreign Assets Control** from the United States **Treasury Department**. Clearly, the duties of reviewing OFAC as it relates to contract review, negotiation and vendor onboarding is complex. The process of compliance, reviewing agreement terms, and clauses can be a time-consuming set of tasks. Leading contract management software, however, can streamline these processes with seamless **OFAC search integration**.

What is OFAC?

According to the **US Treasury Department**, "The Office of Foreign Assets Control ("OFAC") of the US Department of the Treasury administers and enforces economic and trade sanctions based on US foreign policy and national security goals against targeted foreign countries and regimes, terrorists, international narcotics traffickers, those engaged in activities related to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and other threats to the national security, foreign policy or economy of the United States."

Essentially, OFAC helps the United States reduce the flow of financial assets to enemies, terrorists, and other parties sanctioned by the US government.

OFAC publishes a list of individuals, companies, and other entities on their national sanctions list. *At one of the companies I worked with, we colloquially referred to this list as the "no no list." Hence, we should not pay a person or entity on the "no no list."*

The Challenges of OFAC Search Processes

Paralegals, contract administrators, executives, financial controllers, accountants, and risk managers bear a tremendous amount of responsibility to comply with regulations - and OFAC is a crucial one. Searching for and ensuring the OFAC compliance of vendors, employees, and other entities can be a complicated, multi-faceted process for organizations that do not leverage the most robust compliance tools available.

Why?

Well, the OFAC sanction list is not perfect. The names of entities of interest may be spelled or positioned in various ways (for example, ABC Inc. and ABC Incorporated could be the same entity). As such, one must understand the payee's name (the company or person that they are paying) if the entity trades under an alternate name, commonly referred to as a "doing business as" (DBA) or "also known as" (AKA) name. One must search for variants of the payee's name and location.

Furthermore, entities and persons on the sanction list can be added and removed by the US Government - depending on their status with the United States. Since the list changes and is updated, one cannot merely clear the vendor or payee just once. The process is not perfect and is not an exact science, so regular OFAC searches will need to occur.

Thankfully, the US Treasury Department has created a **search page** for the sanction list. This list has instructions, but they are time-consuming.

In the old days - when I worked at another company - we would export the sanctions list and run the companies we paid via an extracted spreadsheet. With tens of thousands of payees to be accounted for, this was a significant task...and a *mess*. Our CFO and lead accountants worried about the quality of the matches and wanted to figure out a way to avoid unwanted risk from missing an entity on the sanctions list.

Saving Time with OFAC Search Automation!

Since the abovementioned days of old, time has passed, technology has matured, and meaningful, seamless integration is now possible. I am currently the EVP of Cobblestone Software and have been offering leading **vendor management software**, eProcurement, and **contract management software** for over 20 years.

Much like the organization I mentioned before, we wanted to make OFAC compliance management easier for our existing customers and invite risk, financial, and accounting professionals to utilize CobbleStone Software products. With our leading source-to-contract management software suite - **Contract Insight®** – coupled with CobbleStone's proprietary artificial intelligence engine – **VISDOM AI®** - organizations can leverage powerful OFAC search automation tools.

With CobbleStone Software, paralegals and contract administrators can run detailed, regularly scheduled OFAC searches for optimal compliance. These searches can be seamlessly integrated with contract, request, vendor, purchase order, customer, and employee records for unified risk analysis for vendors, companies, employees, and other paid entities.

With Contract Insight's intelligent OFAC data aggregation service, paralegals can:

- Choose which available areas within their Contract Insight system they want to be checked against the US Treasury Department's OFAC database.
- Define whether or not they would prefer to include automated checks for DBA and AKA records.
- Determine what is flagged as a positive "match" between the data of paid entities and OFAC data based upon a pre-established percentage (for example, a matched is set at a similarity percentage of 70% or more).

In addition to an initial OFAC screening, Contract Insight also allows for *ongoing* scheduled searches. Consequently, organizations maintain awareness of national compliance status with consistent and up-to-date compliance audits!

Furthermore, a link on system record pages presents users with a visually appealing graph showing the percentage of data matched between Contract Insight and OFAC data. Clicking the link displays a more comprehensive of the matching details.

Organizations can trust CobbleStone's OFAC search with VISDOM AI-based contract management to help them automate vendor review and maintain up-to-date vendor compliance data.

Leaving you with a bonus tip: If your contracts have clauses and conditions that state that vendors must comply with OFAC standards, use the VISDOM AI engine to extract clauses from your contract related to OFAC –to help your organization (and your vendors) consistently and easily comply.

Always seek an attorney for advice on compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Be sure to review all OFAC guidance for more details.

Get started with OFAC search automation and CobbleStone's vast array of future-minded tools for better source-to-contract management. **[Book a free demo](#)** today!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mark Nastasi is the Executive VP and founder of CobbleStone Software with over 20 years of professional experience in the industry. He launched the first commercial contract software in 1995 named CMTS (Contract Management Tracking System) and the first commercial SaaS contract software in the 90s named Contract Web. He holds a bachelor's degree from Rutgers University in Finance with a concentration in Management Information Systems and a master's degree (MBA) from Drexel University. He is a Microsoft Certified Professional who has worked extensively with vendor managers, financial controllers, general counsels, paralegals, lawyers, and legal professionals to help manage contracts better. You can reach Mark by email at mnastasi@cobblestonesoftware.com

ABOUT COBBLESTONE SOFTWARE

CobbleStone Software provides leading eSourcing Software, Vendor Management Software, and contract lifecycle management software named Contract Insight™ as a web-enabled (SaaS) or deployed (on-premise) solution. CobbleStone Software is used by over two hundred thousand users globally. Founded in 1995, CobbleStone was among the first and most experienced companies to offer a vendor contract management software product and continues to be a leader with full vendor, procurement, and contract lifecycle management software. Discover **[CobbleStone Software](#)** today.

CHECK OUT OUR NEW PERSONALIZED MERCHANDISE IN THE PARALEGALS CONNECT STORE

Created By:

Jud Patterson



<http://www.paralegalsconnect.com/merchandise-store>

Get to Know Loio

By: Team Loio - www.Loio.com

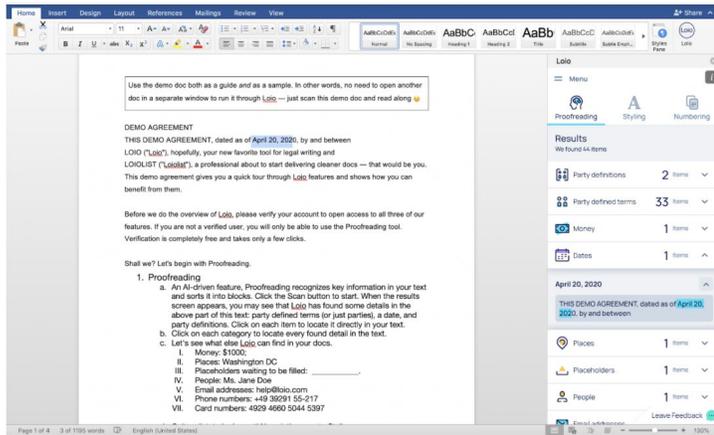
Hi everyone! 🙌

We are Loio, an extension for Microsoft Word that makes reviewing and editing contracts faster, simpler, and more efficient. We offer 30 days of free trial with access to all tools and a simple transition to an affordable paid subscription. We are also hosting a survey right now and would like to invite you to share your experience of reviewing contracts. It'll take up to 5 minutes of your time and will help us improve our product to match your specific needs.

What does Loio do?

Loio is a tool for reviewing, editing, and drafting contracts. As you open it as a side screen while working in Word, you can scan the doc with 3 tools: Highlights, Styling, and Numbering.

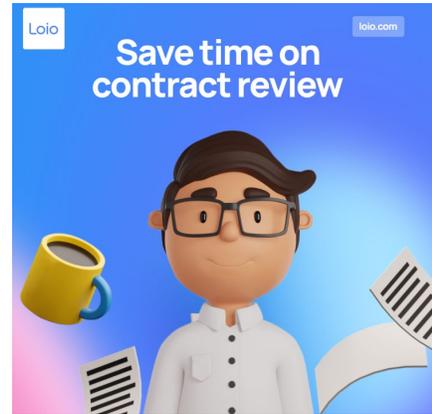
- **Highlights** tool scans your text and locates key contract details for your easy review. Here's a screenshot of how it looks:



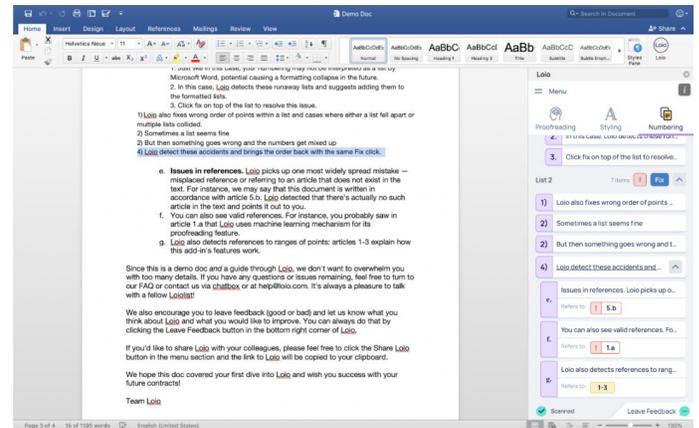
How can I get started with Loio?

Easy. Create a free account at Loio using your email or social media profile. After that, open your Word, go to Insert → Add-ins → Store. Then search for Loio Contract Assistant and click Install. The whole installation and authorization process will not take more than a few minutes. After you have installed the add-in and logged into your account — voila! For more information, visit our website and subscribe to our social media communities.

We're excited to hear feedback from paralegals and other legal professionals, so feel free to reach out!



- **Styling** gives you a clear overview of formatting styles that appear in your document and allows you to quickly re-style big chunks of text right within the add-in screen.
- **Numbering** scans lists in your text, detect mistakes, and offers to fix them. It also shows where each cross-reference appears. Here's how it looks:



Learn More about Loio by Visiting

https://loio.com/?utm_source=paralegalsconnect&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=newsletter

Cheers! -Team Loio

www.Loio.com

<https://bit.ly/2OAKaPk>

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Affiliates of Paralegals Connect. Thank you!

We also want to thank our writers who
contributed to make our magazine a success!



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