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Paralegals Connect Newsletter

www.ParalegalsConnect.com

Paralegals Connect

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Paralegals Connect: Who We Are

"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 ***14,500+ combined active members worldwide***. We have become the largest paralegal networking group worldwide!

Paralegals Connect

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: Study Group

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.

Virtual/Freelance Paralegals Connect

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 Employment Board

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.

LSAT Connect

https://www.facebook.com/groups/LSATConnect

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

We would like to thank our Affiliates because they are the ones that make it possible to print and distribute our Newsletter to our members, various paralegal schools throughout the US, and large firms throughout the US.

Becoming an Affiliate with our groups offers world-wide visibility to approximately 14,500+ combined group members in the legal industry.

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

Meet our Affiliates

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 http://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.

Those seeking a more comprehensive preparation for their paralegal career, or those seeking their first college degree, can continue to the Associate of Applied Science Degree Paralegal program which includes additional paralegal electives such as E-Discovery, Oil and Gas, Intellectual Property, and Immigration Law. Academic general education courses round out this paralegal degree program.

PARALEGAL.EDU
CENTER FOR ADVANCED LEGAL STUDIES

www.Paralegal.edu

Armenhyl Group LLC

Paralegal Connects Official Process Server
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We look forward to being a quality resource for the Paralegals Connect community! Our goal is to ease your workload. You can assign your Service of Process needs to us with confidence, then focus on other priorities. Let us do the legwork of ensuring that your documents are delivered successfully both near and far!

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CobbleStone Software provides award-winning contract management software to simplify and automate contract tracking and management for legal professionals. CobbleStone's software provides a centralized repository for one-click contract access, unlimited document storage, easy searching and reporting, advanced reporting, proactive key-date alerts, online contract calendar, in-system collaboration, desktop and mobile access, and much more to take the stress out of contract administration. Contact CobbleStone today for a free demo or trial system at **https://www.cobblestonesoftware.com/paralegals**

COBBLESTONE software
Leaders in Contract Management Software℠

Linguistic Areté LLC (aka LAI aka Areté International)

Linguistic, as a leading language provider, offers legal and other subject-matter specific translation and interpretation services. We produce highly accurate translations at competitive pricing. We also offer paralegal services, focusing on litigation support, contract and project management.

kelly@arete-int.com
www.linguisticarete.com

Linguistic

Meet our Admins

Crystal Cornett

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 the 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 currently practices Real Estate Law in Houston, Texas. Crystal also serves on the Paralegal Advisory Committee (PAC) for Center for Advanced Legal Studies.

Kira Muren

Kira Muren joined the Paralegals Connect admin team in 2018. She has been working as a civil litigation paralegal in Frederick, Maryland since 2013.

Kira has her Associates Degree in Paralegal Studies and is working on her Bachelor's in business administration at Frostburg State University.

In addition to work and school, Kira also currently serves on the Paralegal Advisory Committee (PAC) for Frederick Community College.

Eunice Colón

Eunice has been a paralegal since 2003. Eunice has a bachelor's degree in Psychology and in Spanish from the University of Houston.

Eunice is also the owner of a hand-made jewelry business, and she has extensive experience in creating and running Facebook Groups and websites.

Eunice currently practices Real Estate Law in Houston, Texas.

Katy Rodriguez

Katy has been a paralegal since 2014. She began her legal career at 16 as a file clerk in a small law office in her hometown. Katy completed her Level 2 Certificate in Paralegal Studies in 2011 and her Associate of Applied Science in Paralegal Studies in 2013. Katy is a member of the Capital Area Paralegal Association of Texas and is currently studying to take the NALA CP Certification Exam.

Currently, Katy is the paralegal for a solo practice that specializes in Business Law & Litigation, Corporate Law, Oil, Gas & Mineral Law, Bankruptcy, and Creditor's Rights Litigation in the Permian Basin and Fort Worth areas of Texas.

Meet the Women Behind the Scenes

These are the busy women behind the scenes of Paralegals Connect, Virtual/Freelance Paralegals Connect, Paralegals Connect: Study Group, Paralegals Connect: Employment Board, and LSAT Connect.

We are working hard to make these professional successful groups, and creating ideas to help paralegals, future paralegals, and future attorneys become a legal success!

Amanda DeVincenzo

Amanda has 20+ years of professional experience in a variety of paralegal and administrative roles in the private and public sectors. She has worked in Contracts Law, Family Law, Immigration Law, Civil Litigation, Criminal Law, and Bankruptcy. She has also worked with such agencies as the Oregon Judicial Department and the U.S. Attorney's Office.

Amanda completed the Paralegal Studies Program at Southwestern College, earning her Paralegal Certificate and Associates degree in 2007. She also holds a Master's degree in Public Policy and Administration from Northwestern University, a Bachelor's degree in Sociology from University of Oregon, and an Associate's degree in Journalism from Southwestern College.

Currently, Amanda runs her own freelance business that provides virtual paralegal services, legal software training, and operations management to sole practitioners and boutique law firms. She also offers career coaching and skills training for paralegal entrepreneurs.

PARALEGAL.EDU

CENTER FOR ADVANCED LEGAL STUDIES

Your Paralegal Career Begins Here!

Center for Advanced Legal Studies (CALS) 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.

Specialized Paralegal Training

"100 percent of our resources are devoted to paralegal education and training."

Your Success is Our Priority

+ Expect smaller classes and more attention from instructors.
+ Your personal needs will be addressed with classes designed around your lifestyle.
+ Courses are designed to educate, prepare, graduate, and secure employment.
+ 100 percent of our resources are devoted to paralegal education and training.
+ Practicing attorneys and experienced paralegals teach law specialty courses.
+ Real world skills are emphasized to meet employers' needs.
+ Financial Aid is available for those who qualify. (**FAFSA School Code: 026047**)

Attend Class Online or On Campus

+ **Online** - Complete your program in the most interactive online classroom available. See and talk with your professor and classmates in real-time while attending class on your computer, laptop, smartphone or tablet. We bring the classroom to you.

+ **On Campus** - If a classroom setting is your preference, we've got you covered. Classroom instruction provides traditional in-person lecture and increased opportunity for teamwork and collaboration. Weekday and Saturday classes are available.

Securing Employment after Graduation

+ Career Services. We offer a multitude of services to help graduates begin their careers.
+ Resume Review. Professional guidance in preparing your resume for today's hiring managers.
+ Employer Connections. Leverage our relationship with hundreds of law firms and employers.
+ Personal Focus. You receive personal attention; not a bulletin board or a web job bank.
+ Available Externships. Gain real world experience before you graduate.

Accreditation, Memberships & Associations

- Council on Occupational Education
- Higher Education Coordinating Board
- Texas Workforce Commission
- American Association for Paralegal Education
- National Federation of Paralegal Associations
- National Association of Legal Assistants
- Paralegal Division of the State Bar of Texas

Curriculum

Paralegal Certificate
Essential Paralegal Skills
8 months . 24 semester hours
$9,300

If you already have a college degree or are working toward your first college degree, this program is perfect for you!

Core Courses
- Introduction to Law and Ethics
- Interviewing and Investigation
- Legal Research and Writing
- Corporate and Business Law
- Civil Procedure
- Computers and the Law

+ 2 Electives chosen from
- Personal Injury*
- Family Law*
- Intellectual Property
- Real Estate

* *Recommended for those continuing on to AAS Degree Paralegal Program*

★★★

AAS Degree Paralegal Program
Comprehensive Paralegal Skills
22 months . 62 semester hours
$23,550 *($14,350 after Paralegal Certificate)*

Our Paralegal Degree Program includes all 24 semester hours completed in the certificate program plus an additional 18 to 21 semester hours of law specialty courses. These electives provide students with the opportunity to study some of the most interesting and exciting areas of law.

This program meets or exceeds the law specialty requirements suggested by various state and national paralegal authorities.

Core Courses *(included in certificate)*
- Introduction to Law and Ethics
- Interviewing and Investigation
- Legal Research and Writing
- Corporate and Business Law
- Civil Procedure
- Computers and the Law
- Personal Injury
- Family Law

General Education
- English Composition I
- English Composition II
- General Psychology
- American Government I
- Introduction to Speech Communication
- Anatomy & Physiology I

Advanced Electives
- + 6 Electives including Externship (7 w/o Externship)
- Wills, Trusts and Probate
- Criminal Law and Procedure
- Real Estate
- Intellectual Property
- Immigration Law
- E-Discovery
- Advanced Civil Procedure
- Advanced Research and Writing
- Oil and Gas Law
- Externship

Other Requirements: Business Math

New Paralegals Can Overcome "No Experience" Obstacles

By: Tami Riggs

The emphasis on experience in the paralegal profession is a significant factor in job placement and career advancement. The good news: it is possible to demonstrate your ability to perform well in a legal role even if you are just out of paralegal school and have no direct law firm experience. Many factors will impact success in getting hired, but paralegals new to the field can make themselves attractive to attorneys and hiring managers in a number of ways:

1. **Be open to all opportunities and willing to expand your search to other roles.** Limiting employment options with preconceived expectations regarding job title, salary, size of firm and location may result in missed opportunities. Paralegals often start their careers as administrative assistants, receptionists or file clerks. These less specialized positions and others in litigation support, document production and client intake can help you broaden your skill set without taking on the massive responsibilities associated with substantive legal work for which a lawyer is responsible - and for which you may not yet be fully prepared to support.

2. **Highlight academic performance.** Pursuing a paralegal certificate or degree requires strong organization, a planned approach to completing tasks, attention to detail and the ability to work under pressure to meet assignment deadlines - key tangible skills necessary for success in the legal field. When you interview, discuss how you can apply these skills, and your classroom learning, to an entry level position. Don't forget your GPA and attendance, especially if you are seeking your first professional job out of college. Most employers view a high GPA and high rate of attendance as strong indicators of commitment and ability to excel.

3. **Accept a law related internship or volunteer position to gain real-world experience.** Firms are interested in graduates who can apply what they have learned in the classroom to real-life situations. Internships are a fantastic way to gain hands-on training, develop skills and make mistakes in a learning environment. They can be instrumental to building experience. However, they are not just a resume-enhancing endeavor. Internship programs are also widely used by firms as a recruitment tool to evaluate the drive, ambition, and work ethic of a potential hire before offering employment.

4. **Join a paralegal association to network, make connections and gain exposure to other opportunities.** Participate in promotional efforts, networking events and professional development seminars as part of your membership. This will increase your competencies in interpersonal effectiveness, relationship-building, cross-functional teamwork and customer service. Employers value an employee who can relate to coworkers, legal entities and court personnel. Not only will you enhance your competitive edge, the contacts you make can also prove invaluable throughout your career. The more people who can attest to your accomplishments and contributions, the more marketable you will be overall.

5. **Summarize "hard skills" and core competencies in specialized areas and make them relatable to the legal field.** These include computer, software and technical skills, typing, proofreading, editing, drafting, file management, document control, use of general office equipment and experience in accounting and billing. The scope of your skills in these areas, how you've used them, and to what extent could differentiate you from others competing for the same position.

6. **Showcase "soft skills" that will demonstrate you share common values.** Performing paralegal work means interacting with many different types of people – lawyers, other paralegals, witnesses, clients, experts and more. Qualities and personal characteristics that will enable you to thrive and succeed in these interactions include communication, teamwork, problem-solving, personal integrity, dependability and timeliness. Be prepared to illustrate how you have applied these skills in past academic and job settings.

7. **Honestly assess your personal traits and how these will fit with a firm. In what areas do you need to improve?** How do you express yourself? Is punctuality a problem? Are you able to understand and accomplish a range of legal tasks or will you find them overwhelming? Do changes need to be made in the way you dress, or the way you speak, or perhaps, the way you write?

It is important to evaluate your strengths and weaknesses because attitudes and behavior impact conduct, performance and the workplace atmosphere. Every firm will have a different organizational structure, will evaluate performance differently and will have different expectations with respect to an employee's responsibilities - but they are just as interested in your personality, your motivation and the demonstrated ability to show up on time, prioritize work, multi-task and communicate effectively.

It is possible to overcome "no experience" obstacles. As a graduate from Center for Advanced Legal Studies you will have the education, training and practical experience to succeed as a paralegal. Your existing experience is also valuable, and chances are you have transferable skills that, if framed appropriately, can help you stand out. Take advantage of new opportunities to build professional skills and connections. Finally, recognize your behavioral style in the workplace and how your personality traits may impact your performance. In the end, getting any job involves showing a prospective employer that you have what it takes to meet their needs. Instead of dwelling on what you lack, focus on what you have to offer.

Tami Riggs is Director of Outreach and Career Services at Center for Advanced Legal Studies 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

The Nuts and Bolts of Entry-Level Paralegal Credentialing Examinations

By: Michael Sullivan

After teaching paralegal studies for over fifteen years, I can say without a doubt one of the most common questions asked by students and recent graduates pertains to paralegal certification. What's more, a large percentage of lawyers, if they are being honest, will admit a complete lack of awareness or understanding of post-graduate credentialing processes available to legal paraprofessionals. As such, it should come as little surprise that for many paralegal certifications are cloaked in cloud of confusion, uncertainty, and mystery.

Let's start with the basics. Paralegal schools do not "certify" the paralegal students they graduate. Rather they certificate or degree graduates depending on the type of curriculum provided. Moreover, the fact that an institution is approved by the American Bar Association (ABA) has no bearing on a graduate being "certified."

To put it simply, to become certified an eligible paralegal must successfully pass a credentialing examination of which there are several options to choose from. For recent graduates seeking initial credentialing, the following are the most well-known: **(1)** The Core Registered Paralegal (CRP®) credential offered by the National Federation of Paralegal Associations, Inc., **(2)** The Certified Paralegal (CP®) credential offered by the National Association of Legal Assistants (NALA), and **(3)** The Professional Paralegal (PP) credential option offered by NALS-The Association for Legal Professionals. **Here are some the specifics surrounding each exam.**

(1) Core Registered Paralegal (CRP®)
National Federation of Paralegal Associations, Inc. (NFPA)

To secure the CRP credential, a paralegal must pass an exam called The Paralegal CORE Competency Exam™ (PCCE®). Launched in 2011, the exam is sponsored by the National Federation of Paralegal Associations (NFPA). The PCCE® is a computerized 125-question multiple choice exam, which examinees have 2 ½ hours to complete. The scale score on the exam is 300-700 with 550 set as the passing point. **The application fee to take the PCCE is $215 for NFPA members and $250 for non-members. There is also a $25.00 application processing fee.**

The exam consists of two main domains: (1) Paralegal Practice (52% of exam) and (2) Substantive Law (48%) of exam. The specific topics tested on each domain is listed as:

Paralegal Practice Domain	Substantive Law Domain
Paralegal Practice & Ethics	Business Organizations
U.S. Legal System	Contracts
Legal Research	Criminal Law
Legal Writing & Critical Analysis	Wills, Estates & Trusts
Communication	Family Law
Law Office Technology	Real Estate
Civil Litigation	Torts

There is no limit to the number of times an examinee can retake the test in the event they do not pass it. However, there is a six-month waiting period required before a retake.

Examination Eligibility Information:

A bachelor's degree in any subject, a paralegal certificate, no experience, or continuing legal education (CLE); **or**
A bachelor's degree in paralegal studies, no experience or CLE; **or**
A bachelor's degree in any subject, no paralegal certificate, 6 months of experience and 1 hour of ethics taken in the year preceding the exam application date; **or**
An associate degree in paralegal studies, no experience or CLE; **or**
An associate degree in any subject, a paralegal certificate, no experience or CLE; **or**
An associate degree in any subject, no paralegal certificate, 1 year of experience and 6 hours of CLE, including 1 hour of ethics taken in the year preceding the exam application date; **or**
Active duty retired, or former military personnel qualified in a military operation specialty as a paralegal and 1.0 hour of Ethics CLE within the year preceding the exam application; **or**
Candidates who are within two months of graduating and registered for the PCC Exam by a Director of a paralegal studies program participating in the PCCE Assurance of Learning (AoL) Program at the Partner level; **or**
A paralegal certificate from a program that meets or exceeds the requirements set forth in NFPA's Short Term Paralegal Program Position Statement , 1 year of experience and 6 hours of CLE, including 1 hour of ethics taken in the year preceding the exam application date; **or**
A high school diploma or GED, 5 years of experience and 12 hours of CLE, including 1 hour of ethics taken in the 2 years preceding the exam application date.

One a paralegal secures a certification credential, he/she is subject to mandatory continuing legal education to maintain their status. **The continuing legal education obligations for this CP is 8 CLE hours every 2 years (1 Ethics)**

Additional information pertaining to the exam application process, eligibility, and study materials can be viewed on the NFPA website at: **Paralegals.org.**

(2) Certified Paralegal (CP)®
National Association of Legal Assistants (NALA)

The Certified Paralegal (CP)® credential has been around since 1976 and is provided by the National Association of Legal Assistants. Since its inception, more than 28,000 have participated in the program. The exam underwent a significant change last year. The exam now consists of only two sections (before 2018 it was five sections): (1) The Knowledge Exam (multiple choice assessment) and (2) The Skills Exam (essay assessment). **The exam application fee is $250.00 for NALA members and $275.00 for non-members.**

Candidates must first pass the Knowledge Exam to be eligible to register for the Skills Exam. The Knowledge Exam is available to take on-demand throughout the year whereas the Skills Exam is only available during four separate testing months: February, April, July, and October. Examinees must pass the Skills Exam within one year of passing the Knowledge Exam. Exam specs are as follows:

Knowledge Exam **120 Questions: 3 Hours** **Available on-demand all year round**	**Skills Exam** **Essay Assessment: 2 Hours** **Available Four Testing Months: February, April, July, October**
U.S. Legal System	Punctuation
Civil Litigation	Grammar
Contracts	Spelling
Corporate Law	Clarity of Expression
Criminal Law & Procedure	Reading Comprehension
Estate Planning and Probate	Analysis of Information
Real Estate	Decision Making
Torts	
Professional Responsibility	

Examination Eligibility Information:

Graduation from a paralegal program that is: • Approved by the American Bar Association; **or** • An associate program; **or** • A post-baccalaureate certificate in paralegal studies; **or** • A paralegal program which consists of a minimum of 60 semester hours or which at least 15 semester hours are substantive legal courses.
A bachelor's degree in any field plus one-year of paralegal experience.
A high school diploma or equivalent and seven years of paralegal experience, plus evidence of a minimum of 20 hours of continuing legal education having been completed within the last two years prior to the examination date.

One a paralegal secures a certification credential, he/she is subject to mandatory continuing legal education to maintain their status. **The continuing legal education obligations for this CP is 50 CLE clock hours every five years.**

Additional information pertaining to the exam application process and helpful resources can be viewed on the NALA website at: **Nala.org**.

(3) Certified Professional Paralegal (PP) The Association for Legal Professionals (NALS)

NALS Established the Certified Professional Paralegal exam in 2004. The credential is given after passing a one-day, four-part examination. The examination is in multiple choice format. If an examinee only fails a certain section, he/she only must retake only that failed section. Candidates must pass all four sections of the examination within a two-year period. The exam specs are as follows:

Part One: Advanced Communications	**60 Minutes**
Part Two: Advanced Legal Procedures and Technology	**60 Minutes**
Part Three: Advanced Legal Ethics and Authority	**40 Minutes**
Part Four: Advanced Substantive Law	**80 Minutes**

Examination Eligibility Information:

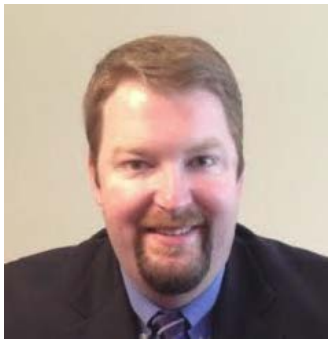
Have a minimum of five years of experience performing paralegal/legal assistant duties.
Hold a bachelor's degree in paralegal studies.
Have graduated from an ABA approved program.
Have graduated from another accredited paralegal program which consists of a minimum of 60 semester hours and/or 900 clock hours, of which a minimum of 15 semester hours and/or 225 clock hours were in substantive law.
Hold a bachelor's degree in an unrelated field and have a minimum of one year of experience performing paralegal/legal assistant duties.

One a paralegal secures a certification credential, he/she is subject to mandatory continuing legal education to maintain their status.
The continuing legal education obligations for this CP is 75 CLE hours every five years
Additional information pertaining to the exam application process and helpful resources can be viewed on the NALS website at: **Nals.org.**

While these examinations are voluntary in their nature, they are a wonderful way for paralegals to establish a credential that recognizes their unique competencies. They don't come easy, however. Each requires a significant commitment of time to prepare properly. Credentialing isn't the right fit for everyone. Eligibility for the exam and passing it are two very different things! Unfortunately, many attempt these exams by trying to "wing" it and don't commit to quality and/or adequate prep hence the pass rates traditionally being quite low.

That said, once obtained the credentials serve as an optimal way for a recent graduate to set themselves apart from the competition in their job searching. Likewise, law firms considering prospective candidates for employment will find the pursuit of voluntary advancement evidence of a very strong work ethic, drive, and motivation all of which bode well for employability.

Michael K. Sullivan, Esq. is an Associate Professor and Program Director of Paralegal Studies. Mr. Sullivan has also served as an educational consultant assisting Paralegal Studies programs in securing and maintaining American Bar Association (ABA) approval status. Mr. Sullivan has close to twenty years of paralegal teaching experience in the following areas: Contracts, Litigation, Torts, Constitutional Law, Criminal Law & Procedure, Legal Research & Writing, and certification exam prep. Mr. Sullivan is one of the founders of The Paralegal Education Group, LLC, a learning platform that provides online certification exam review courses and study resources.



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ParalegalEducationGroup.com
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Visit our Paralegal Merchandise Page at:

http://www.paralegalsconnect.com/Merchandise.html

HOW TO DEAL WITH DIFFICULT ATTORNEYS

By: Raeann Bromark

Have you ever woken up in the morning and tried to find every reason not to go into the office, because of your office setting, boss in particular? Or do you get a racing heart, agitated and stressed just thinking about what can happen during the day. Does your boss make you cry if something goes wrong? Do you try to avoid having any communication with your boss?

If any of these sound like your situation, you will learn to identify and deal with these types of people.

As the saying goes Men are from Mars and Women are from Venus, the same is true in the legal world. Lawyers are from Mars and Paralegals are from Venus. In order for this type of relationship to work and get both parties on the same page, communication is essential. Both sides need to be willing to communicate and say exactly how they feel at any given point and must be willing to listen to criticism. In this very unique relationship, everyone must realize both jobs are not easy and that they are both extremely stressful. Attorneys also expect paralegals to be mind readers and the jack of all trades. As a paralegal we have multiple hats – paralegal and therapist. Start to figure out what makes your attorney tick and find ways to deal (cope) or just leave the toxic situation.

Here are a few real life examples to the above: 1. Some paralegals get very good at understanding the mood and stress level of their boss based on the timeline of the cases they're working on – filing motions isn't as stressful as preparing for closing arguments in a close fought trial, for example. These paralegals learn to head it off at the pass and become skilled at anticipating what they need to do to mitigate that stress and 2. Even when it might seem like an attorney is attacking you, don't take it personally! And don't take it home with you! Don't dream about it, don't think about it! When I leave work, my day stays at work, and I might not turn it back on until I was heading back to the office.

Key pieces in the attorney/paralegal relationship include respect, communication and make it a team effort, not a competition. Things attorneys can do to make the relationship better and "non-stressful" is to have patience, everyone start's somewhere even attorneys and paralegals at one time or another, be consistent, be organized – a lot of times this is not going to happen, but we can wish. Others include making the expectations of an assignment clear, communicate, allow questions and show respect.

There are four types of difficult people: Downers, Better Thans, Passives & Tanks. I find it important to know these four types because at one time or another you are going to run into this type of person.

Downers are also known as Negative Nancy's or Debbie Downers. They always have something bad to say. They complain, critique and judge. They are almost impossible to please. Better Thans are known as Know It All's, One Upper's or Show-Offs. They like to impress you, name-drop and compare. Passives are also known as Pushovers, Yes Men and Weaklings. They don't contribute much to conversations or people around them and let others do the hard work. Tanks are also known as being explosive, a handful or bossy. They want their way and will do anything to get it.

Now if you are these types of scenarios you need to look out for you and your well-being, so you will need to relieve the stress before you explode which would not be good. So, a few things I recommend for just this include deep breathing, long walks, meditation, massages, just getting out of the area for a few minutes to calm down and talking with people you trust. But under no circumstance should the situation get so bad that you need to rely on alcohol or drugs.

A key takeaway from all of this is: With any negative working situation, if you feel like you cannot handle the issue yourself or truly feel in danger, do not be afraid to ask for help. A bad attorney doesn't mean that you should dread going to work. And more often than not there is a solution. You can ask a sympathetic co-worker for advice or go to HR.

Always remember CYA, CYA!! If you are in a bad situation at work dealing with an unreasonable boss remember to document everything you do and show your value to the firm at all times.

I wish you all the very best and feel free to reach out to me should you want to discuss further at raeannbromark@gmail.com.

Raeann Bromark currently works for Brewer Attorneys & Counselors in New York City. Raeann works on high profile, high media advocacy cases. She has been a paralegal for over 20 years. Currently serves on the New York City Paralegal Association Board as a Coordinator at Large. She received her paralegal degree from Norwalk Community College in Norwalk, Connecticut. Over the years she has presented numerous CLE and webinars and has written for numerous newsletters.

This Newsletter was made possible by the Affiliates of Paralegals Connect. Thank you!

We also want to thank our writers who contributed to make our Newsletter a success.

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