HOW TO BECOME A SUCCESSFUL EXPERT WITNESS

Presentation by Brad Taft, Arizona Chapter President
How to Become a Successful Expert Witness

- Introduction
- The Expert Witness Process
- Forensic Expert Witness Association (FEWA)
- Certified Forensic Litigation Consultant (CFLC)
- Building & Maintaining a Successful Practice
Brad Taft, MBA, CMF, SPHR, SHRM-SCP

- 35+ Years in the Employment Field
- Consultant, Author, Speaker
- 5 Years as an Expert Witness
- Education
- Certifications
What is an Expert Witness?

expert witness

*Noun*

One who is permitted to testify at a trial because of special knowledge or proficiency in a particular field that is relevant to the case.
The Expert Witness Process

- Basics for Getting Started
- Becoming Known to Attorneys and Clients
- Consulting with Attorneys and Clients
- Research and Analysis
- Development of Opinions
- Report Writing
- Deposition and Testimony
Basics for Getting Started

- Determination
- Skills/Knowledge
- Integrity/Recognition
- Experience/Specialty
- Contacts/Referrals
- Marketing Skills and a Plan
- Tenacity vs. Passivity
- Trust – The Key Relationship Builder
The Expert Witness Process

- Becoming Known to Attorneys and Clients
  - Reputation & Credibility
  - Marketing Mix
    - Visibility in Your Profession/Industry
    - Visibility in the Legal Field
    - Articles, Speeches
    - Organizations
    - Meetings and Conferences
    - Advertising, Directories, Promotion
The Expert Witness Process

- Consulting with Attorneys and Clients
  - It’s About Them, Not You
- Research and Analysis
  - Gathering Facts from Obvious and Not-So-Obvious Places
  - Separating the Relevant Facts
  - Making Deductions
- Development of Opinions
  - Creating Relevant Conclusions
The Expert Witness Process

- Report Writing
  - Comprehensive but Compact
  - Relevant Details with References to Sources
  - Follows an Impartial Approach, Analysis, and Opinion
  - Arranged in a Logical Manner
The Expert Witness Process

- Deposition and Testimony
  - Effective Communication Skills
    - Listening Skills
    - Verbal Skills
    - Non-Verbal Skills
  - Preparation
    - Keep the Objectives in Mind
    - Practice, Practice, Practice
Based in San Francisco, the Forensic Expert Witness Association (FEWA) is the only non-profit professional membership organization that verifies that each of its professional members has testified at least three times as an expert witness.

FEWA is dedicated to the professional development, ethics and promotion of forensic consultants in all fields of discipline.

All members subscribe to the FEWA Code of Ethics.
Benefits of Membership - Referrals

- Referrals for new testimony opportunities
- Networking events with attorneys, potential clients and other experts
Benefits of Membership – Directory

- Free listing on our online expert directory
- Exposure to thousands of attorneys, law libraries, and insurance companies in the annual FEWA print directory
Benefits of Membership - Education

- Discounted rates for the highly anticipated Annual Conference and robust Chapter events
- Quarterly educational webinars – FREE for FEWA members
- Educational opportunities cover topics ranging from basic skills such as report writing to how to deal with an aggressive cross-examiner
Who Are FEWA Members?

- The Forensic Expert Witness Association boasts a broad range of industries and participants among their audience.
- FEWA comprises consultants from an array of disciplines, ranging from a multitude of construction expert witnesses, to the premiere cosmetologist expert consultant in the nation.
Membership with FEWA

- **Professional Membership** - open to forensic consultants in all disciplines who meet a minimum of 3 verifiable forensic engagements

- **Associate Membership** - open to those forensic consultants working toward Professional Member requirements

- **Affiliate Membership** - open to other professionals using or supporting forensic consultants
FEWA Chapters

- Arizona Chapter
- Chicago (Midwest) Chapter
- Dallas Chapter
- Florida Chapter – currently in formation
- Houston Chapter
- Los Angeles Chapter
- Northern California Chapter
- Orange County Chapter
- San Diego Chapter
Arizona Chapter Events

- Chapter Events: Where relationships are built
- Sample presentation topics include the following:
  - Document Management: Are You in Control?
  - Business Development Strategies to Grow Your Client Base
  - A Judge’s Perspective of Expert Witness Testimony
Certified Forensic Litigation Consultant (CFLC)

- Certified Forensic Litigation Consultant (CFLC) certification – A new credential for consultants
- CFLC is granted exclusively to FEWA Professional members who have met the eligibility criteria established requiring significant participation in FEWA activities and completion of education courses in the subjects of forensic analysis, litigation consulting and expert witnessing.
Benefits of CFLC Certification

- Promotes a greater level of confidence for clients and employers
- Enhances the credential holder's industry recognition as an educated and committed forensic consultant
- Positions the credential holder ahead of fellow experts in the same discipline without the credential
- Demonstrates the credential holder's passion and commitment for improvement in forensic consulting
- Increases opportunities for leads, referrals, and assignments
Learn More – Becoming A Forensic Consultant Workshop

- 3 hour introductory workshop to forensic consulting
- Led by seasoned experts in an interactive setting
- Three parts reviewing the following tenets of forensic consulting:
  - The Basics of Getting Started
  - Eminence Building: Getting Found
  - Best Practices in Forensic Consulting
Building & Maintaining a Successful Expert Witness Practice

- Your “Day Job” Comes First
- Maintaining a Strong Marketing Mix
- Keeping your Expert Witness Tools Sharp
- Networking – Giving and Receiving
How to Become a Successful Expert Witness

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