

CHAPTER 1

THE CLIENT

Chapter Outline

VOLUME 1, CHAPTER 1

- § 1.1 The Essential Skills
- § 1.2 Your Very Own Client
- § 1.3 Maintaining Your Client's File
- § 1.4 Tracking Billable Hours
- § 1.5 Social Media
- § 1.6 Remote Working

ASSIGNMENTS

- Assignment § 1.2**
Choose, or be assigned, a client
- Assignment § 1.3(A)**
Select or create a client number
- Assignment § 1.3(B)**
Students should maintain a client file throughout the program
- Assignment § 1.4**
Keep track of your billable hours when working on assignments related to your client

Volume 1 Introduction

WHERE TO BEGIN

There are many places a paralegal program *could* begin.

- An introduction to legal terminology.
- An outline of court structure.
- A review of the profession in general.
- A history of the American legal system.

All of the above would be understandable points with which to begin a paralegal education.

However,...

There is only one place a paralegal program *should* begin.

With the client.

As a paralegal, almost everything you do will be about the client. After all, that is why your attorney and law firm have been hired: to represent that person's (or business's) legal interests. As a paralegal, you should be laser-focused on how you can best assist your supervising attorney in that representation.

With that in mind, let's get started.
With the client!

IN THIS CHAPTER . . .

MEET YOUR CLIENT

**LEARN ABOUT THE CLIENT
FILE FOLDER**

**KEEPING TRACK OF
BILLABLE HOURS**

§ 1.1

The Essential Skills

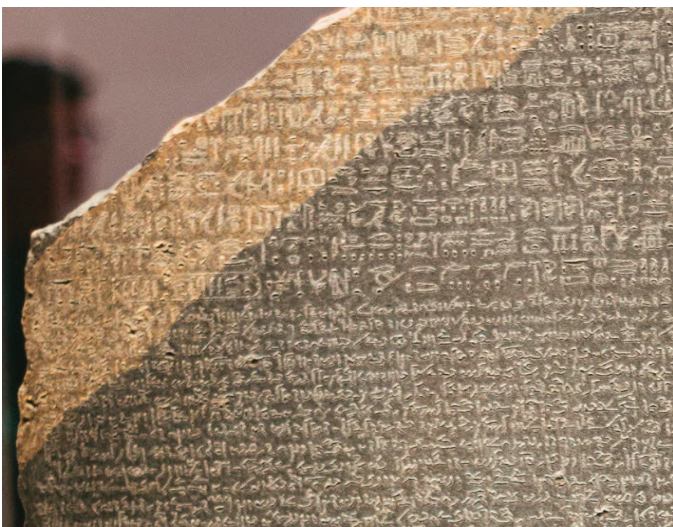
A Powerful Foundation

THE ROSETTA STONE

For more than five thousand years, the hieroglyphs of Egypt were indecipherable. Some of the greatest minds of the ages attempted unsuccessfully to unlock the meaning of these strange symbols. Many Egyptians thought that the hieroglyphs were protected by magic and would never be understood. By the late-1700s, most scientists believed the meaning of these ancient works would never be revealed.

Then in 1799, a block of stone with remarkable etchings was found among a heap of rubble that had once been a building. This unique stone featured etchings of hieroglyphs, but it also featured Demotic Egyptian and Greek characters. For every hieroglyph, there were corresponding words in the other two languages. This block, the Rosetta Stone, was the key that unlocked the ancient hieroglyphs of the Egyptians.

The law is like those hieroglyphs. It seems indecipherable and overwhelming. Yet when a student is shown the keys and provided with the correct tools, the law becomes understandable.



EDUCATIONAL DYNAMICS

Getting Started

These volumes have evolved through use by thousands of students across the country at major universities. They focus on the most universally-demanded paralegal skills.

In education, there are generally two basic goals: the attainment of knowledge and the development of skills. This textbook adheres to the tenet that by developing certain foundational skills, students prepare themselves to attain almost limitless knowledge. Skills are the keys to the attainment of knowledge.

Although there will always be some memorization in any educational experience, mastering certain skills can lessen the burden of memorization. When a student studies legal terms or phrases, procedures or systems, he or she should try to understand the concept involved instead of the word-for-word definition or description. Memorizing the word-for-word definition of "prima facie case," for instance, will not be nearly as helpful as understanding the concept. Every textbook, instructor or attorney will define the same term using different words and examples. Yet, the concept remains consistent. In accordance with this reality, test questions in this program may not match word-for-word the definitions in the textbook.

CREATING NEW DOCUMENTS FROM EXISTING FORMS AND TEMPLATES

CRITICAL SKILL-SET

Use the examples and forms provided in this textbook. They have been provided to make your learning experience more efficient. It is also imperative that students utilize the website corresponding with this textbook. While this course is not easy, every effort has been made to make the learning experience as productive, even as enjoyable, as possible, but your

education depends in great part on your commitment to the program. How much you learn will, in part, depend on how much effort you are willing to put into your studies.

If you do not own a computer, almost every library offers computer terminals, many with free access to the Internet. However, computer access is critical, and required.

Years from now, the time and energy you spent in this course will seem a small price to have paid for a new career. This is your career, so give it everything you've got!

BRINGING EXPERIENCE TO EDUCATIONAL DESIGN

BY PARALEGALS, FOR PARALEGALS

These manuals have been designed with the real-life experience of the authors in mind. Not only experience as paralegals, but experience as paralegal students.

Most paralegal programs, and the materials used to prepare students, simply do not prepare their graduates in an adequate fashion to enter the profession. Most programs and materials seem to be more concerned with academic theory alone instead of developing working skills.

A paralegal education is not complete unless it provides the student with the actual skills to perform the work.

Students will have the opportunity in this program to develop skills that are transferable to any area of legal practice: civil litigation, criminal law, personal injury, contract law, bankruptcy, or any other specialty. The skills you develop will be the foundation of your career.

The program you are taking is designed with a single purpose in mind: to provide the best training possible in paralegal skills. These textbooks are an extension of that effort. If you study hard, and successfully complete this program, you can be confident that you possess the skills you need to become a great paralegal.