INTRODUCTION

Atticus Finch

Hedley Lemarr

We all talk about Difficult Lawyers.

Here are **my opinions** about...Managing the Difficult

Lawyer or...

JERK MANAGEMENT 101 •

Some famous Difficult Lawyer examples:

Roy Cohn

chief counsel for Senator Joe

McCarthy

attorney for Steinbrenner, Onassis &

Gotti •

Michael Cohen

"Tread very lightly because what I'm going to do to you is going to be disgusting."

Jackie Chiles-Seinfeld character -Kramer's lawyer

> The McDonalds Hot Coffee Parody Kramer sneaks a covered cup of coffee into a movie theater. He drinks hot coffee. He goes to his lawyer.

Jackie Chiles tells Kramer: "This is a clear violation of your rights as a consumer. It's outrageous, egregious, preposterous." - Johnnie Cochran Parody by actor Phil Morris

Difficult Lawyers...

...have always been difficult ...and will always be difficult.

Why? Because being a Jerk works for them.

After all...a handsome rat in a suit is still a rat.

OVERVIEW - 3 parts

Tactics of a Difficult Lawyer
Tools to Manage The Jerk
Civility Works

This CLE is **Blended Scholarship** with the experiences of many lawyers...including me. •

TACTICS OF A DIFFICULT LAWYER

We know we have a Jerk when: •

condescending statements

such as: You think I'm

condescending? Do you

even know what that means?

or

"My client is a moron."

profanity

Your opinion is noted. Now F_____Off. •

shouting

I shout at you because you are stupid.

threats

"Buckle Up Buttercup." Michael Avenatti making a televised statement meant for Rudy Giuliani about a pending case.

(George Washington University Law School (2000). 1st in class. Order of the Coif.)

insults from The Bully

If I agreed with you...We would both be wrong.

or

I'm not insulting you...I'm describing you.

or •

insults that are just plain rude: "fool, idiot, punk, boy, honey, sweetheart, little lady."

The Difficult Lawyer:

shows up late. •

Tries to communicate **ex parte** with the court.

Holds up a signed entry so long that the Court sends out a notice. •

Tells you that you have a **conflict**...

Refers Difficult Clients to you.

Can be a **puppet** for a client or some supervising attorney

Is **obsessed** with your client's **past behavior**...may tell you:

"there are some things about **your client**you may not want the Court to know."

Views compromise as a reward for wrongdoing •

Offers **no alternatives** to suggestions to resolve the case or move it along •

Manipulates facts with misstatements and exaggerations

Trial is a holy war for public vindication

May go to the **media**...

Here are some "tv attorneys"

Michael Avenatti

Kellyanne Conway

George Washington University

Law School

Rudy Giuliani

NYU School of Law

More Media...

Here are some practicing attorneys often in the media...•

Gloria Allred - Loyola Law - Los Angeles

David Boies - Yale Law - Bush v.

Gore - Theranos -dyslexic

Alan Dershowitz - Yale Law (1st in class)

Old School Lawyers with the Media ...

"No comment" or... We will respond in the courtroom.

Today...we may have to respond when the media asks about our case.

Tries to put drama and emotion into a factual dispute.

refuses to concede liability or responsibility •

bluffs •

won't return calls or e-mails or is slow in doing so

narcissistic It is all about me. It is never my fault.

I never apologize. Any criticism is a personal attack.

antisocial Has no conscience.

Takes advantage of others.

The Charming Liar. •

MAKES LIFE MISERABLE

Everything is a point of contention... opposes any continuance (even if a continuance is going to be granted anyway)

Mr. Motion...files frivolous motions and pointless discovery.

Blah. Blah. •

Cites questionable authority that, after research, is:

not binding; or the facts are distinguishable; or there are other cases that reach another conclusion

uses discovery for **intimidation** just to wear you down

makes **general objections** to interrogatories such as "not relevant"

stonewalls discovery: No answers and/or no documents

"hides" documents by mixing important info in with **volumes** of discovery

is disruptive in depositions such as... shuffling papers, interrupting... and making speeches

instructs the witness... "do not answer"...even though no privilege exists

overuses leading on direct •

Rants about immaterial facts unrelated to the case

does not understand the tax consequences of the deal

tries to get you to bid against yourself such as: "Your offer stinks...try again" • does not settle - may talk settlement but always goes to trial •

believes settlement is surrender

files a "surprise" voluntary dismissal or...

or the eve of trial **finally** gets serious about settlement

(This means the Jerk is lazy, overloaded or is milking the case) •

Then In Trial the Jerk: •

brings "missing" evidence • and "lost" witnesses • makes "surprise" motions...also a surprise to the court and... •

In a **final order**...omits "details"...important details •

TOOLS TO MANAGE THE JERK •

Set the Tone.

From the get go...pledge cooperation to opposing counsel •
And at the first chance...introduce your client •

Investigate your adversary.

Check their bio for education, age and experience (engineering, medicine or tech) •

Google •

talk to other lawyers •

litigation record w/ Lexis Nexis •

public records •

social media •

Know Your Client. Before the Jerk tells you the "dirt" on your client...**cross-examine the client** in the interview.

Inform your client: "This is what I know about **the tactics** of **this** Difficult Lawyer." ●

The Rules have done away with our **duty** of zealous advocacy. **Now** lawyers have a duty to 'act with reasonable diligence and promptness'.

ORPC 1.3 (HANDOUT).

Expect Trial. Plan to go to trial from the day you take the case. The matter **could** settle...just don't count on it.

Opinion: There are 4 kinds of lawyers

dumb	smart
aggressive	aggressive
rude and reckless	understand the case
	& works the case
dumb	smart
lazy	lazy
believe everything	understands the case
the client says	but you do the work

Keep your temper...because...

The Jerk is **far** more skilled with hostile tactics. •

It is OK to act angry...just don't be angry

Stick to the facts and the issues...not the personalities (like Ghandi).

Ghandi was a lawyer.

NOW ABOUT ATTACKS FROM THE JERK: •

Attacks on Intelligence or Training:

Insults such as...You probably failed finger painting.

You use white-out on your computer screen.

You probably had to study for a blood test.

You think *Time* magazine is for inmates to read.

Attacks On Ethnicity:

So white when you eat a carrot you look like a snowman.

So white you could play tennis naked. •

Attacks On Age:

So old your birth certificate says 'expired'.

You have the patent for fire.

The Three Wise Men helped you with your homework. •

You belong in a Raisin Ranch.

OVER THE YEARS OUR AUDIENCE HAS EVOLVED: •

<u>Less</u> <u>More</u>

jury Trial to the Court

Arbitration

Mediation

Civil jury trials are down

Ohio Common Pleas Courts

2008 881 civil jury trials

2017 250 civil jury trials

Civil trials to the Court are up Hamilton County Common Pleas

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What does this mean?
Our audience is now more trained in the law and the tactics of the Jerk.

More Tools...

We need a Plan...Obviously.

Mike Tyson: Everyone has a plan...until they get punched in the mouth.

I say...

Visualize The Story Of Each Case and each step to the End? What do I need to prove each element of the case? •
Visualizing is Playing It Forward •

We must stay ahead of the Jerk. •

From the Jerk we expect every trick, trap, insult and roadblock. •

Get ready to get punched in the mouth...and when that happens... •

Counterpunch...but **not** with hostile tactics.

do the research amend the pleadings amend the proof motion to strike motion in limine • Shut Up...and Ignore The Jerk...Because •

After all...the Difficult Lawyer is just a pathetic/crybaby.

Know more about the case than any party, witness or attorney

This is the Gold

Our preparation is dynamic • This is the Counterpunch... We continuously revise:

discovery needed questions for witnesses exhibits trial brief

We will get the abusive calls: "Tell the Jerk... "This is over for today. When you can discuss this without screaming we can resume. Goodbye." Then...•

Nail.It.Down.

Send a **confirming email** detailing the insults, threats and profanity...

Consider communicating **only** by e-mail •

Any agreement on any point...put it in writing **or** put it on the record. •

Keep the Rules on your Ipad.

What Rules? The Civil Rules, Rules of Evidence, local rules and ORPC.

The Jerk has no answer to the Rules. •

THE LIAR

Lying is lawyer misconduct • ORPC 4.1 (HANDOUT)

"...a lawyer shall not knowingly...make a false statement of material fact or law..."

and...ORPC 8.4 (HANDOUT)

"It **is** professional misconduct for a lawyer to...

(c) engage in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation."

The Prosecutor...We. Get. It.

The Prosecutor is not difficult...to
understand.

Like us, the Prosecutor:

- has "clients"
- listens to expectations
- knows some "clients" expect to get

- an apology
- knows some cases just have to go to trial
- knows it is not personal

Unlike us the Prosecutor:

- does **not choose** the "clients"
- the "client" does not make the decisions
- cannot fire a "client"
- always has the resources to go to trial
- gets paid win or lose
- does not have to try a clear loser...

Sometimes we have to take bad facts to trial

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Idiots and The Overmatched.

(Vincent Gambini) (Joe Pesci)
I say ...an incompetent lawyer is more
dangerous than a Difficult Lawyer. A
pro se party is also dangerous.

War stories

An example...Close Call Rulings: It is only human for the Court to "help" an overmatched party.

The Powerless. When we represent the Powerless we have few weapons other than the rules and the law. No Continuances....For the sake of the Powerless ...we cannot concede anything.

If this makes you the Difficult Lawyer, So Be It. You Took The Case.

WE SET THE AGENDA...NOT THE JERK. •

Case Management: Set the Pace of the Case •

We present a schedule for:

- discovery
- motions get enough time for your reply

memo

- ? mediation or arbitration?

The Pretrial.

- The first thing is that the Pretrial is to sell the Theme of the case •
- And state the Issues - bring supporting authority with you to Pretrial •

Footnote: A judge said "When there is **discretion** in pretrial...the court often rules for the side that has been the most reasonable in discovery."

In Chambers:

I say what happens in chambers need not stay in chambers. Agreement on any issue should be put in a pretrial order or an agreed entry.

Footnote: ? Lawyer ethical misconduct such as lying or hiding evidence. Should lying be put on the record? (Not easy.)

Leave Last. The Jerk may try to speak to the court ex parte after you have left the room.

The Bluff.

When The Jerk missstates or exaggerates...clarify in writing or on the record.

Make the Jerk eat those words.

Warren Buffett says: **Bluff = Risk**"Risk comes from not knowing what you are doing."

Another word on The Bluff:

"Never advertise what you don't have for sale."

Because...Let's Face It...when our adversary has a winning issue...the lawyer will file and not bluff.

Discovery. • Focus on The Theme of the Case •

Interrogatories

The Jerk has objections everywhere...• such as "not relevant"...a red flag

Civil Rule 37(A)(4)
 (HANDOUT)...an evasive or incomplete answer shall be treated as a failure to answer.

Requests for Production

Documents may be withheld or hidden by the Difficult Lawyer which brings up...

Obstruction in Discovery, ORPC 3.4 (HANDOUT)

"A lawyer shall not...

- (a) obstruct access to evidence...alter, destroy, or conceal a document having potential evidentiary value...
- (d) ...intentionally or habitually make a frivolous ...discovery request...fail to make a reasonably diligent effort to comply with a legally proper discovery request..."

All this is Obstruction•

Options to get Discovery: •

Get the info by subpoena or from public records •

Check Facebook for similar conduct, • Interview former employees,

competitors, suppliers and former spouses. •

Move to compel

Civil Rule 37(A)(3) (HANDOUT) •

First confer to get discovery without crying to the court.

Then ...list the missing and incomplete responses and...state the efforts made to get discovery. That is our Motion to Compel •

Difficult Lawyers ignore the Rule that objections in discovery require reasons •
Difficult Lawyers confuse admissibility with the broad

admissibility with the broad scope of discovery.

Ask for Sanctions. Civil Rule 37(B) HANDOUT

The Court can: Strike, limit or establish evidence award default judgment
Order payment of expenses including attorney's fees

But...use a Motion To Compel sparingly. •Because:

The Court may say: "These discovery problems are your problem, not mine" or

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The Court may stay silent because courts dislike managing discovery disputes

Admissions

Start Early. Ask to admit reports and appraisals. Limit the adversary by admissions.

Depositions and the Difficult Lawyer • Client misconduct.

ORPC 1.16 (b)(4) (HANDOUT)

"if...the client insists upon taking action that the lawyer considers **repugnant** or has a **fundamental disagreement**..." a lawyer may withdraw

Don't put up with "I can't control my client."

Make the Record

State the **GROUNDS** for each objection -

HANDOUT •

In a deposition we can complete the depo or adjourn before moving to compel. Judge Steve Martin.

My experience: telephone/jury room

Ask for **missing** documents on the record in the deposition. •

Pursue **incomplete** responses with follow up questions in the depo.

Mark your settlement offer letter as an exhibit in the depo. Ask the party witness about statements made in the letter. You may get some admissions

Ask a party-witness in a deposition about **expected results**. What are you looking for? The Difficult Lawyer may not have prepared the party-witness for this. But be careful with this.

The Difficult Lawyer may instruct the client not to answer. When that happens...

First, ask for the reasons(s) for an instruction not to answer.

If the reason is privilege, explore the **basis** and/or **waiver** of the privilege

Video Depositions and the Jerk

On video the Difficult Lawyer is less likely to cause mischief.

Video shows: attitude, tone and volume.

Video shows witness credibility by facial expressions and body language. •

Judges and juries are used to TV. They are annoyed by the Jerk making distracting deposition sounds, coaching and interruptions.

Beware of the "Tag Team" Difficult Lawyer and Client

Do not permit the Jerk to **coach** the witness with non-verbal communication or long speeches.

Put this mischief on the record.

I say...Hold eye contact with the deposition witness.

By the way, I always sit next to my client witness.

Limit Discovery. Put a stop to pointless discovery from the Jerk. Civil Rule 26(c), Protective Orders.
HANDOUT

"...the court **may**...order" no discovery...or discovery on...terms and conditions..."

Move In Limine

We file motions in limine to prevent "blurt outs" in testimony.

Be ready for expressions of vengeance from prosecutors and victims.

But...limit your battles. •

Settlement with the Jerk •

Know what you want and when you will walk.

Visualize what the other side wants

Either side can make the first offer.

Any agreement...Nail It Down.

An early offer in writing may have value when it comes time to ask for fees.

Every proposal deserves a deadline and a response •

Except...an outrageous demand does not require a counteroffer - only a response like "That's not going to happen."

The Jerk may not communicate your proposal to the client.

A Difficult Lawyer may say "will you accept X?" This is not an offer...it is a request for you to make an offer...

Put yourself in the shoes of your opponent and...

show the other side a way out with **your** offer.

But...some cases never settle.

Trial •

My experience:

List their witnesses as our witnesses too.

Footnote about witnesses:

Example - Kellyanne Conway •

GETTING READY FOR TRIAL. Trial is our opportunity to slow things down. • We analyze what has happened. So we can tell the story of the case step by step. •

Because the Difficult Lawyer wants only Blaming and Shaming. •

Once trial is set...Stipulations

Outline opening and closing. Stick to The

Theme •

Keep It Simple.

Why? Some people have been told all of their lives that they are not very bright. Some judges struggle with some subjects. • So when the Difficult Lawyer says "This is going to be complicated..." •

Trial briefs...lazy lawyers hate them
Jury interrogatories...lazy lawyers
hate them
Jury instructions...lazy lawyers hate
them

In trial stay on guard for witness questions with wrong facts

The Jerk may also put wrong facts in statements to the Court •

Summation

- Offer solutions. Because the Jerk only wants drama.
- In our summation we speak in terms of findings of fact and conclusions of law.

- In a trial to the Court...we **speak** to the decision. •
- In written final argument... we write to the decision. Because in summation, the Jerk just wants to rant. ●

Final Order(s)

The final order is perhaps the most ignored part of the case

If there is a written decision from the court ...incorporate the decision by reference in the final order.

SELF- MANAGEMENT •

Look In The Mirror - Perhaps you are the Jerk.

There is no need to mirror bad behavior. •
Avoid saying "Bite Me" •
When the problem is you...Don't Die In

The Fight •

take a Time Out
 Go to side bar or just
 Get out of the room. Chill.

And...don't ruin an apology with an excuse.

Don't poison future cases • or burn bridges just because **you** have been the Jerk •

Stay Ethical.

Edward Bennett Williams - "If anyone is going to jail...make sure it is your client and not you."

Client misconduct.

ORPC 3.3 (HANDOUT)

"a lawyer...who knows that a person, including the client, intends to engage, is engaging or has engaged in criminal or fraudulent conduct related to the proceeding, (that lawyer) shall take reasonable measures to remedy the situation, including...disclosure to the tribunal."

The Fun House Mirror of the Jerk has distortion. •

The Difficult Lawyer may see you as:

weak
unprepared
lazy
naive
disorganized
fearful
...and that is O.K...Because...•

A lawyer can make a lot of money being underestimated.

I know.

More self management: •

All of us have 2 enemies... opposing counsel and the person inside of ourselves.

Once we control the person inside... opposing counsel really doesn't matter.

We can't hide

Every email is a potential exhibit. Before sending a sarcastic email...Take a breath.

Every statement we make could be a quotation in an affidavit.

We are always on display:

- to other counsel
- to the Court Staff...and by the way...
- our clients are always on display too.

ASL - we are always being watched. My Story •

Self management works when we:

Lean In...we can be assertive...just not rude...leave that for the Jerk.

Offensive tactics bring attorney discipline.

Some disciplinary cases against the Jerk: •

Signing False Documents

married lawyer goes to Jamaica with his girlfriend. While there he signs false marriage documents with her. 6-month suspension

In Matter of Rosonzweig •

Sanctions in depositions:

Lawyer sanctioned \$10,000 for deposition misconduct for:

- repeated interruptions
- improper objections
- conferring with his client mid-answer
- insulting opposing counsel, the judge and the clerk... and insulting the court reporter who walked out of the deposition

Later the Court awarded an **additional** \$36,274 in attorney's fees and costs

Calderock Joint Venture, L.P. v. Greenberg & Sons Int'l

The Lesson from *Calderock*: •

Never interrupt your opponent while he is busy committing suicide. •

More Sanctions:

Lawyer sanctioned for:

- failing to correct his client's conduct in delaying the deposition
- interruptions in the depo
- using the "F" word 73 times during a deposition.

The lawyer and client were sanctioned \$29,000

GMAC Bank v. HTFC Corp

The "F" word...strong language...But...

But...What about **our First Amendment** rights? Well, we may have given up some of that when we became lawyers. •

INCIVILITY

Sanctions In Litigation

plaintiffs' attorneys sanctioned for \$14,800 for:

- failure to investigate defendant's address for service
- filing a false affidavit of stating there was service
- attempting to enforce an invalid default judgment
 - making harassing collection phone calls
 - failing to send a lawyer with knowledge of the facts to a hearing

Erin Serv. Co. LLC v. Bohnet

Lawyer Misbehavior With a Client: Client paid a retainer.

Lawyer billed client for "meetings" in which lawyer and client engaged in sexual relations...in hotels, parking lots and in the client's home. Over a period of six months. Understand this:

It gets worse: Lawyer ended the relationship and fired the client. Client attempted suicide.

In Re Lowe. •

THE OHIO OFFICE OF DISCIPLINARY COUNSEL

A staff of 26 including 11 lawyers - Annual Report •	
2017 was a typical year	
grievances dismissed on intake or after investigation	r 2,254 •
Sanctions issued by the Ohio Supreme	2
public reprimands	2
six month to two year suspensions	12
indefinite suspensions	6

MORE SUSPENSIONS...

disbarments
resignations with displinary
action pending
12

Local Certified Grievance Committees	32
appeals from dismissals	150
ODC filing a complaint ZEF	RO •

CIVILITY WORKS

Civility is respect...Civility is **not** the absence of criticism.

Judges and juries dislike hostile tactics. •

Lawyers that are respectful get better results and have better reputations •

For example: Close Call Case - Judges-

For example: **Close Call Case** - Judges-Are-Only-Human

Civility brings job satisfaction •

Experienced lawyers expect to deal with attacks and surprises. Civility is our job.

Civility is not Conversion Therapy for the Difficult Lawyer.

Civility takes Patience. The Jerk has no patience.

Warren Buffett.

"Some things take time...you can't produce a baby in one month by getting nine women pregnant."

The reward for patience is...•

Time Wounds All Heels.

Civility means:

Be on time (or even a few minutes early).

Conclude with a handshake or courteous statement.

Identify changes in previous drafts. •

FOOTNOTE:

The Out of Context Award

Shakespeare: "The first thing we do...let's kill all the

lawyers". Henry VI
The context: Jack Cade, the Anarchist,
plans to overthrow the government.
Dick the Butcher speaks - "The first thing
we do, let's kill all the lawyers."

The Meaning:

Shakespeare knew that for anarchy to prevail the lawyers must be gone.

WHERE DOES LAWYER INCIVILITY START?

My opinion: The most demeaning insults I have ever heard came from the front of the law school classroom.

Some professors are overcredentialed and underexperienced. They misuse the Socratic Method. •

I say...put one of these professor-bullies in front of a no nonsense judge...and they will **choke**...or **cry** like a baby. •

The question for us: What does insulting conduct teach law students about relationships in the practice?

The Paper Chase
(Professor Kingsfield)
(John Housman)

INCIVILITY and... •

Jerk Management.

First...What DOES NOT work with the Jerk: •

CLE...Because you can't teach a **pig** to sing...it wastes your time and annoys the pig. •

publicity •

lectures from the judge •

WHY?

Because incivility is the Brand of the Jerk.

More Pig: Never wrestle with a pig...you both get dirty and the pig likes it. ●

The Jerk...What Does Work

Investigate your adversary. • call B.S. when you see it •

Know that the Jerk is a **distraction. Focus** on the client, the facts and the law. Just like...

Rule No. 1 for every pilot: "First, fly the airplane."

Problems with the aircraft are secondary. FOCUS. •

Stay Calm and Be Clear (FBI hostage negotiators) •

Slow. It. Down.

More Action Steps to manage the Jerk:
pursue with follow up questions
get limiting orders and
orders to compel. Because...

It works when clients figure out that it is expensive to SCORCH THE EARTH.

Time for...**THE SUMMATION** •

B.B. King...Bring It Home. **Be Ready** when the Difficult Lawyer threatens you or is reckless, rude, bluffing and unprepared.

Let the Jerk show you how he wants to lose.

Like Judo...use the opponent's attacks against them.

or...Shut up and Ignore hostile tactics and **Outwork the Jerk**. •

Yes...making a **good** deal with a **bad** person **is** difficult. •

But...lawyers think, write, listen and even talk...all at the same time.

Advocacy is a Skill. •

? Where Does Our Profession Come From ?

Our legal system developed from Trial By Combat in the Middle Ages •

But...2500 years ago...

Sun Tzu, the warrior/general, wrote that the object in war is to **break the enemy's** resistance without fighting •.

This is The Art of War.

In "our war" we show the Difficult Lawyer that:

- we have the time, money and patience to go to the End.
- We Lean In.
- reasonable negotiations are always open
- early resolution is Best

This is our strategy.

Law is not Trial By Combat...

it is Conflict Resolution...We Solve Problems.

- we speak truth to power
- we make the record •
- we speak fact to fiction...
- and the Difficult Lawyer can't stand that.

Atticus Finch

NOTES

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ABA Seminar

Taking The High Road: How to Deal Ethically With Bullies Who Don't Play By The Rules (2013)

Frank Alimonti

Dealing With The Difficult Adversary, American Bar Association

Frederick Alimonti

Tips from the Trenches, Dealing With the Difficult Adversary Litigation News, Volume 35, Number 1 (2008)

Anonymous

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charlestonlaw.net

How to Deal With a Difficult Attorney

Richard A. DiLiberto, Jr.

Dealing With the Difficult Lawyer

Stephen D. Easton

How to Win Jury Trials: Building Credibility With Judges and Jurors

Bill Eddy, LCSW, CFLS

Misunderstanding Incivility and How to Stop It

Roger Fischer, Billy Ury, and Bruce Patton

Getting to Yes

G.M. Filisko

You're Out of Order! Dealing With the Costs of Incivility in the Legal Profession ABA Journal

Gillivan, White & Boyd, P.A. Working With The Difficult Lawyer

Ronald L. Hicks, Jr., Meyer, Unkovic & Scott, LLP Strategies and Tips for Dealing With Dirty Litigation Tactics by Opposing Counsel

Lessonsinlaw.com

Dealing With a Difficult Lawyer on the Other Side

Tim Mak

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All Things Considered, NPR, 5/31/18

Linda J. Ravin

Coping With The Difficult Lawyer in Settlement Negotiations, The Compleat Lawyer

Jayne R. Reardon

"Civility as the Core of Professionalism", Essential Qualities of the Professional Lawyer - ABA

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Randall Ryder

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Sun Tzu

The Art of War

William E. Walters

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