

Peluso & Weintraub, P.C.

## On Becoming A lawyer

Spring is in the air. Due to the weather, If it were not for baseball, crocuses and recently graduated law students starting to prepare for the July bar exam, we might not have realized that summer is on the way.

Shakespeare apparently had some thoughts on thinning out the number of lawyers, however, a less drastic means might be for prospective law students to examine what is involved in becoming a lawyer and consider the high cover-charge to enter and the conditions upon arriving. The entry fee is not only paid in dollars, but also, in time, effort and sometimes one's vision, which due to excessive reading begins to deteriorate just before half way through the first year.

A wannabe should start by attempting to understand what if any character flaw may be at the root of his or her interest in the profession. Is it the desire to be wealthy? How about being naturally argumentative; thinking oneself smarter than others; needing to be right; being intellectually competitive, aggressive and picky...or maybe its just not having any real skill, a B.A. in political science or communications and graduating from college in a bad job market. Understand your motivation and thereby learn your true master. This might, however, be said about many if not most or all human endeavors.

After that one or two minutes of self-reflection, the next step is to take the LSAT (Law School Admission Test) examination, which tests reading comprehension and reasoning. Well...really, the next step is to enroll in an LSAT prep course and drill on practice questions until you are, relatively and competitively speaking, just where you started, because everyone else is also taking the same type courses.

Following is a sample LSAT multiple choice question:

1. Buses 1,2, and 3 make one trip each day, and they are the only ones that riders A,B,C,E,F, and G take to work. Neither E nor G take bus 1 on a day when B does. G does not take bus 2 on a day when D does. When A and F take the same bus, it is always bus 3. C always takes bus 3. Traveling together to work, B, C, and G could take which of the same buses on a given day?

- (A) 1 only
- (B) 2 only
- (C) 3 only
- (D) 2 and 3 only
- (E) 1,2, and 3

I will not insult the reader by placing the answer upside down at the bottom of the article...this is not some daily newspaper with a readership that demands the easy way out. Hint...it's the middle one.

After the application process, a three year schooling saga commences, with each such year perhaps aptly described as abusive, boring and held for ransom, respectively. The program might reasonably be lessened to two years with the third being optional if one just pays the tuition and goes away quietly. Law schools are businesses and profit centers to the education industry. This becomes apparent at the check-out counter, with tuition charges that may range from \$25,000.00 to \$55,000.00, per year, and higher.

Upon graduation, yet another hurdle awaits, that being the bar exam. Well...not really...there is the bar exam prep course that makes the LSAT prep course look like Romper Room. Taken from an advertisement..."50+ hours of...lectures; 1,571 real...questions from previous bar exams; 115 real practice essay questions; Unlimited e-mail and phone support; Over 600 flashcards categorized by subject;...outlines in Word format for note taking..." All this is necessary just in case one did not get enough legal education in the last three years.

The actual exam is spread over two days, the first of which includes two hundred multiple-choice questions testing legal knowledge in various areas of the law, including ten un-scored questions being tried-out for future test-takers. This portion of the test is given over three hours in the morning and another three in the afternoon. The second day is reserved for seven essay questions. Imagine all this for an examination fee of \$575.00 to \$1,100.00, depending upon the enrollment date, an additional finger print fee, and all a bargain when compared to a \$3,000.00 plus fee for the prep course.

It is quite a process indeed, encompassing financial investment, time and effort, all to be permitted the opportunity to compete for an entry-level position where one may work harder than most would likely imagine. For many, and likely most, becoming a lawyer is the realization of a personal and sometimes generational effort to improve one's personal and even familial lot in life. It is the result of a lot of hard work.

To all recent law school graduates, congratulations. As for the bar exam, a personal experience that seemed helpful was that during the lunch break, I took a basketball from the car and shot baskets for a while before the afternoon session. As I think back, I seem to remember other test-takers studying even then. Don't make it harder than it is.