



Books

Rules for Success

Adrienne W. Webb reviews *How to Succeed as a Trial Lawyer, 2d. ed.* by Stewart Edelstein

I recommend this book for:

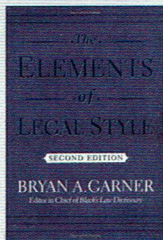
all attorneys, but especially for new ones.

My favorite thing about the book is:

The writing section—if only everyone would follow Edelstein’s advice on effective writing.

My favorite line:

“Much of what you write is analogous to playing a chess match—you must think many moves ahead before you make your next move.”



You may also like:

The Elements of Legal Style, 2d. ed. by Bryan A. Garner

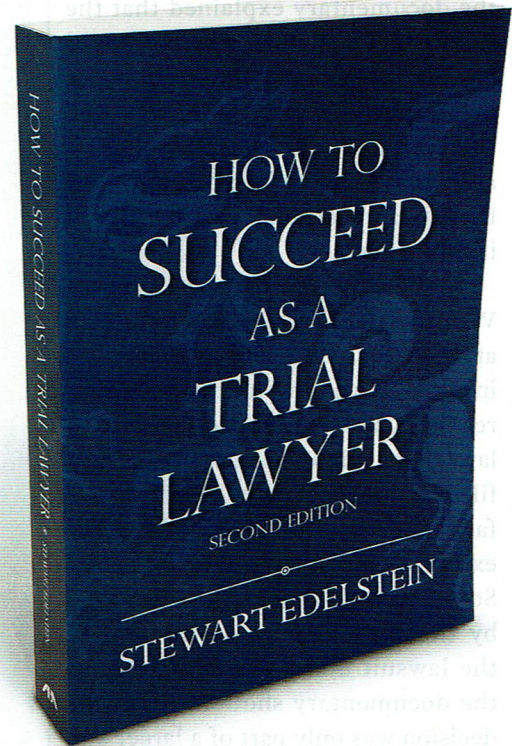
Stewart Edelstein’s *How to Succeed as a Trial Lawyer* is a must-read for new trial lawyers and a should-read for those already practicing. More than once, I found myself wishing I had read the book 10 years ago when I graduated. As another reviewer put it: The book has “everything you need to know that you didn’t learn in law school.”

For plaintiff attorneys, *How to Succeed* provides a thoughtful framework and useful tools for every aspect of your practice. It covers an array of topics, from how to accept or decline representation of a prospective client to writing techniques, discovery, case resolution, and an overview of successful marketing and networking techniques.

The book outlines crucial questions that may not always be at the top of an overloaded attorney’s mind, such as: Is the marketing email blast I just sent going to get me in trouble? And, what is my duty to disclose in settlement negotiations? It also thoughtfully addresses delicate topics such as handling ethics issues relating to a former client.

The practice checklist at the end of each chapter or topic section is the book’s best asset. The checklists put the most valuable practice points—including applicable ethical, federal, and local rules—on your radar in an easily digestible format. This information may be second nature to a seasoned litigator, but newer lawyers will find it extremely helpful.

When he cannot adequately address an area, Edelstein’s appendix recommends relevant reference material. Notably, the section on the discovery of electronically stored information (ESI) acknowledges that it merely scratches the surface of this ever-evolving field. It reviews the requirements of a litigation hold letter, information on how to obtain ESI, and ideas on cost



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allocation for production, but it does not cover the intricacies of metadata or forensic ESI. Instead, it directs readers to references such as *The Sedona Principles*, which many courts cite.

While some may find the advice too basic—for example, “don’t interrupt a judge” or “if you reach an impasse in mediation, take a break”—each practice tip struck me as worth mentioning. As the book notes, it is not a formulaic recipe for success. It is up to you to consciously apply Edelstein’s advice. This is a book every trial attorney should add to his or her collection. ▣

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