

Praise for *The Curmudgeon's Guide to Practicing Law*

“Part primer. Part comedy. And part keen insight into the practice of law in America today.”

— Stephen Phillips, Defense Liaison Counsel,
In re Orthopedic Bone Screw Product Liability Litigation

“Required reading for anyone who is a lawyer, knows a lawyer, or has ever laughed at a lawyer joke.”

— David Gulley, Ph.D., Navigant Consulting

“I’ve had Mark Herrmann’s ‘Memorandum From A Curmudgeon’ tacked to my office door for years. Now I’ll have to find a bigger tack.”

— Professor Sue Liemer, Director of Lawyering Skills,
School of Law, Southern Illinois University

“Mark Herrmann’s book is the perfect graduation gift for new lawyers. Don’t let the humor fool you into thinking that this book isn’t serious; it’s the most practical introduction to life as a lawyer you can find.”

— Ian Gallacher, Director, Legal Research and Writing,
Syracuse University College of Law

“Mark Herrmann has written a fun—and incredibly useful—book . . . It could fairly be called ‘Everything You’ve Ever Wanted to Know About Law Practice But Were Afraid to Ask.’ Now, at last, we can find out the tricks of the trade without the risk of appearing stupid. And we can do so with a book so humorous that at times I found myself laughing out loud.”

— Professor Robert H. Klonoff, Douglas Stripp/Missouri Professor of Law
University of Missouri/Kansas City School of Law

“The Curmudgeon cuts to the chase about how to practice law successfully . . . Instructive, insightful, . . . and just plain fun!”

— Gary Garfield, General Counsel,
Bridgestone Firestone North American Tire, LLC

“This is the only book I’ve ever read that I wish had been longer.”

— Robert C. Weber, Senior Vice President, Legal and Regulatory Affairs, IBM

“I’m already drafting papers to get Mark Herrmann drummed out of the lawyer corps for spilling the beans.”

— Ron Coleman, Coleman Law Firm PC, author of *The Princeton Review Pre-Law Companion* and the Likelihood of Confusion blog

“I loved this book! No, really—I mean it.”

— Tracy Stratford, Jones Day litigation associate, who knew that there’d be hell to pay unless she said something awfully nice about this book

“Mark Herrmann has penned a well-written and clear guide on how to be an effective law-firm associate. It’s also funny: Herrmann writes as The Curmudgeon, a grizzled law-firm partner who has zero tolerance for such horrors as the passive voice, long string cites, and sloppy billing records. Were this material covered in some big-firm internal handbook, it would surely bore us to tears. But Herrmann’s cutting wit and lively writing bring to life such painful topics as how to write a brief, how to treat your assistant, and how to take a deposition.”

— Peter Lattman, The Wall Street Journal Law blog

“[I]f you want to become a real lawyer (or mentor a young ’un to become one), and you really don’t know how, then this is really the book for you. Really, I’m not kidding. But, what the hell do I know? Really!”

— The Honorable Richard G. Kopf, Senior United States District Judge for the District of Nebraska, at Hercules and the Umpire

“It gradually becomes apparent (though not at first), that the Curmudgeon is not an unpleasant person at all, but rather more of an avuncular figure, taking his own time to help you make better use of your own. . . . We should be glad that he was moved to do so and should recommend this book routinely to others—not merely because it will make your own associates (and you) into much better lawyers, but because it will help elevate the human tone of our profession in ways we all should care about.”

— Richard A. Cordray, Former Director,
Consumer Finance Protection Bureau, in *Columbus Bar Briefs*

“[A]bsolutely addictive, unputdown-able. . . . *Curmudgeon’s Guide* pulls off—with great elan—a technique that many writers attempt, only to crash and burn in the face of its extraordinary degree of difficulty. That technique is to deliver deadly accurate truths veiled in laugh-out-loud humor.”

— Bruce MacEwen, Law Firm Consultant, at Adam Smith, Esq.

“If you need a gift for someone who is graduating from law school this spring, a great choice would be a brand new book, *The Curmudgeon’s Guide to Practicing Law*, by Mark Herrmann. . . . He tells it like it is, with the straightforward language that many a legal writing professor wishes she could use more often while still maintaining employment.”

— Susan P. Liemer, Professor of Law,
Southern Illinois University School of Law, at Legal Writing Prof blog

“Every year when I hand back my first graded legal writing assignment and students are grumbling that I’m too picky, I read portions of Herrmann’s book aloud in class. It effectively captures the level of pickiness to which all good lawyers should aspire.”

— Judith D. Fischer, Professor of Law,
University of Louisville School of Law, at Legal Writing Prof blog

“With great humor and deadly accuracy, Mr. Herrmann cuts through the cant and provides tough love advice for those on their way up.”

— David Maister, Former Harvard Business School Professor
and expert on managing professional services firms

“I highly recommend the book because it’s an easy and enjoyable read, and it’s packed with useful advice. And, in the end, *The Curmudgeon’s Guide* delivers an unwavering focus on the importance of excellent client service, an appropriate reminder for every lawyer. . . . This is one of the rare law practice how-to books that belongs on every lawyer’s shelf.”

— Julie Fleming, Law Firm Consultant, at Fleming Strategic

“Here are a few reasons to read it: [*The Curmudgeon’s Guide*] is funny and whimsical; it is concise; it offers sage advice for lawyers at all stages of their careers; and it celebrates a return to the fundamentals of such things as civil behavior and mentoring.”

— Susan P. Chetlin, Partner at Dahl & Osterloth, LLP, in *The Colorado Lawyer*

“[T]he chapter ‘The Curmudgeon Aruges’ is the best ten pages I’ve ever read on preparing for an oral argument.”

— Carolyn Elefant, The Law Offices of Carolyn Elefant PLLC, at My Shingle

“I gave every single new associate in our practice group copies of *Making Your Case* and *The Curmudgeon’s Guide to Practicing Law*. Both are outstanding; word for word, Herrmann’s ‘Memorandum from a Curmudgeon’ is the most useful legal-writing advice that I have ever received.”

— Jay O’Keefe, Partner, Johnson Rosen & O’Keefe, LLC,
in the *University of Richmond Law Review*

“Mark Herrmann’s *The Curmudgeon’s Guide to Practicing Law* does a good job of conveying to new lawyers the gestalt of how a lawyer manages himself or herself. . . .”

— Maxwell S. Kennerly, Kennerly Louty LLC, at Litigation and Trial blog

“ [F]ortunate new attorneys may benefit from the guidance of practiced mentors. One such mentor available to all new attorneys for the small price of a paperback book is Mark Herrmann’s curmudgeon in *The Curmudgeon’s Guide to Practicing Law*.”

— Anna B. Cole, Drummond Woodsum, at Drummond Woodsum website

“ A humorous but pointed book that should be read by every articling student/new lawyer wishing to avoid common pitfalls in private practice.”

— Gaye Lefebvre, Director of Library Services at Davies Ward Phillips & Vineberg LLP, and Laurel Murdoch, Manager, Library Services at Heenan Blaikie LLP, in *Entertainment, Media and Communications Section* newsletter of the Ontario Bar Association

“ Packing quite a punch in its 150 pages, this book is as hilarious as it is informative. . . . Each chapter is packed with memorable anecdotes, classic mistakes and helpful advice you’ll remember for years to come.”

— “The 8 Best Books to Buy for a Lawyer in 2018” at The Balance SMB blog

“ [*The Curmudgeon’s Guide*] is easy to recommend, especially for litigation associates at large defense firms.”

— Evan Schaeffer, The Schaeffer Law Office, PLC, at The Trial Practice Tips blog

“ This slim volume of blunt, but humorous, advice for new law firm associates is right on target. . . . I recommend this book for anyone about to begin work at a law firm as an associate or summer associate, and for any second- or third-year law student.”

— Diane Murley at Law Dawg Blawg

“ In *The Curmudgeon’s Guide to Practicing Law*, Mark Herrmann—a law firm partner and part-time law professor—offers advice to new lawyers in a cranky style that amuses while getting across his points.”

— Mary Whisner, University of Washington School of Law, at Trial Ad (and other) Notes blog

“Highly recommended for law students is *The Curmudgeon’s Guide to Practicing Law*. This funny guide is dead-on with its tips for new associates.”

— Bonnie Shucha, University of Wisconsin Law School, at WisBlawg

“This is without a doubt the best book I have ever read on the practice of law, and explains a lot (especially to those of us that have never been tall-building lawyers) about how we should do our jobs. . . . [G]et a copy and read it. It’s the best advice I’ve ever read for a young associate, especially at a large firm, and a good laugh for the rest of us.”

— Michael C. Smith, Siebman, Burg, Phillips & Smith LLP, at EDTexweblog

“No question, *The Curmudgeon’s Guide to Practicing Law* could be retitled ‘The Dangerous Book For Professionals.’ . . . So close to the bone does Herrmann’s advice cut that I didn’t find the book, as some reviewers have, funny. Actually, I experienced pain reading about so many mistakes I had made in my own professional life. Most of them came, just as Herrmann pointed out, from my failure to ‘think about everything that you do from the other person’s perspective.’”

— Jane Genova, Communications and coaching consultant, at Law and More

“Part-survival guide, part-*The Art of War* for the eager-smart but painfully clueless, it is as good a book on practicing law in many respects as Jim Freund’s classic *Lawyering: A Realistic Approach to Legal Practice*, published nearly thirty years before but which (like Freund himself) is more deal and transactions-oriented. I could pay Mark and his book no greater compliment. And for a young fire-breathing corporate ‘trial lawyer’—yes, they still have those in both boutique and larger firms—Mark’s 150-page straight-talking volume is a better investment of time than anything I have read. For litigators, it is simply the best.”

— Dan Hull, Partner, Hull McGuire PC, at What About Clients?

“It’s just perfect. If you haven’t read the book, I highly recommend it. . . . One of the book’s highlights is its chapter on preparing for oral argument. In just ten pages, it offers as good a treatment of the topic as I’ve ever read.”

— Jay O’Keefe, Partner, Johnson, Rosen & O’Keefe LLC,
at De Novo: A Virginia Appellate Law blog

“Mark Herrmann has done a service by providing practical advice for new lawyers, in the form of a curmudgeonly boss. . . . I’d recommend the book to any attorney. I would especially recommend the book to new lawyers, even those of us (ahem) who have been out of law school for almost four years. It’s also short and to the point, so it reads well and quickly.”

— Randy, at The Fifty Books Project 2018

“For those not lucky enough to have guidance from the corner office, Mark Herrmann’s new book, *The Curmudgeon’s Guide to Practicing Law*, offers the next best thing. In fact, the *Guide* should be required reading for brand new attorneys and isn’t a bad refresher for the seasoned practitioner.”

— Sam Felker, Shareholder, Baker Donelson, in *Tennessee Bar Journal*

“The *Curmudgeon* isn’t loquacious. He’s neither gentle nor genteel. He is abrupt. But if you follow his advice, you just might succeed as a lawyer. Buy this book, read it, and do as he says; you’ll be glad you did.”

— Raymond P. Ward, Adams and Reese, LLP, at the (new) legal writer blog

“You have to read this book. Written in a droll but still hilarious manner, the *Curmudgeon* conveys scores of practice tips that no doubt make the *Curmudgeon* the toast of his clients. The book starts with a memo to associates about writing that is one of the best I’ve ever read. . . . I laughed and learned. You will too.”

— Patrick Lamb, Valorem Law Group, at In Search of Perfect Client Service blog

“ [A] must read for people seeking to succeed in the legal profession.”

— Ron Coleman, Mandelbaum Salsburg, PC.,
at Likelihood of Confusion blog

“ This month I am reading the short and handy *The Curmudgeon’s Guide to Practicing Law* by Mark Herrmann. With quick, practical, and to the point tips on everything from how to write a clear and concise brief to the etiquette of voice messages, it has proven, so far, to be both a delightful and refreshing reminder of the basics of legal practice, not to mention a good laugh. . . . Pick it up. . . . [I]t’s worth your read, both for the chuckles and the real, and very practical, advice for success as a lawyer.”

— Daniel Burton, Attorney, at Publius Online

“ *The Curmudgeon’s Guide to Practicing Law* is a valuable contribution to a discussion that seldom takes place in print. While entertaining, the book makes some very serious points on how to go about dealing with people in an intense and competitive business environment, points that need to be understood by everyone and not merely the entry-level young people at whom it is ostensibly directed.”

— Robert L. Duncan, Deputy Publisher, The Metropolitan
Corporate Counsel, in *Corporate Counsel Business Journal*

“ The *Guide* should be required reading for all newly minted associates. This is not only true for BigLaw but for small firm life as well. Anyone hiring an associate should hand that associate a copy on the first day of work. The book would also be a welcome refresher for those getting a little long in the tooth. In fact, some that are longer in the tooth would do well to read this primer, particularly for its emphasis on writing style and the art of persuasion.”

— Eric Turkewitz, The Turkewitz Law Firm,
at New York Personal Injury Law blog

“Herrmann, who affectionately calls himself a ‘curmudgeon,’ has written a roadmap for the novice that includes everything from a section on writing a legal memorandum to suggestions for managing an assistant. His sound advice, which evidences his experience in and commitment to the legal field, is delivered in a lighthearted, tongue-in-cheek manner, like taking medicine with a spoonful of sugar. . . . Pick this one up for the new law graduate in your life, and sneak a copy for yourself as well—it is a good review for all of us.”

— Tracey Weaver Brame, Assistant Professor,
Thomas M. Cooley Law School, in *Michigan Bar Journal*

“*The Curmudgeon’s Guide* is the sort of book that can be taken two ways. On the surface, it’s just a darn good guide to some very basic rules for being a good lawyer. Mark covers the essentials clearly and succinctly. While some might think this is some BigLaw roadmap only, it’s how every lawyer should do the job. These are the fundamentals of good lawyering that law school should, but never will, teach. That’s why we have guys like Herrmann to fill the gap. But on another level, the subtle humor and good nature of its presentation was brilliant. For those associates who still watch SpongeBob SquarePants, it probably won’t make a dent. You’re not ready for it. But for anyone who has shoes older than most first-year associates, the wry wit that permeates the *Guide* will bring a twisted smile to your face.”

— Scott H. Greenfield, Attorney and Counsellor at Law, at Simple Justice

“While it does delve into specific litigation activities such as depositions, briefs, and preparations for trial, the *Guide’s* lessons cross practice areas and, in this reader’s opinion, should be required reading for all associates, particularly those at large law firms.”

— William L. Hirata, Parker Poe Adams & Bernstein LLP, in *The Bond Lawyer*

“It’s the sort of book you can read quickly and find yourself going back for a second helping.”

— Howard Posner, in *California Lawyer*

“Have you heard about Mark Herrmann’s new book *The Curmudgeon’s Guide to Practicing Law*? Read it and you will be a better lawyer than you are now. In it, Herrmann gives you humorous, pungent, and sharp advice about how to make your clients, your associates, and yourself happier. This book is a treasure trove of tantalizing tips. . . . I have been practicing law for 48 years, and I wish I had met *Curmudgeon* when I first became a lawyer. Once you have met him, you will never let him go.”

— Robert Aitken, Ball, Hunt, Hart, Brown and Baerwitz, in *California Litigation*

“Herrmann’s book is a labor of love. It is a guide to a legal life well lived and is worth the time spent reading it.”

— David F. Herr, Partner, Maslon Edelman Borman & Brand LLP, in *Federal Lawyer*

“If you love a young lawyer or paralegal, buy them this book. If you are a young lawyer or paralegal, buy yourself this book. Even if you are an old codger, buy yourself this book. *Curmudgeon* is a tour de force.”

— Katherine Larson, in *Ohio Lawyer*

“The advice is excellent, entertaining, and runs the gamut from seemingly small things that turn out to be large, to large things that may seem obvious, but are not.”

— Merrill Hirsh, Partner, Ross, Dixon & Bell, in *Legal Information Alert*

“I really enjoyed the book. It captures common sense ideas and presents them clearly and humorously. I have recommended it to clients. Our firm ordered a copy for each of our associates.”

— Thomas R. Jayne, Thompson Coburn, in *Precedent*

“*The Curmudgeon’s Guide to Practicing Law* (ABA Publishing) is a fine piece that should be required reading for younger lawyers just entering the practice—especially those involved in litigation. . . . Highly recommended.”

— Edward W. Madeira, Jr., Partner, Pepper Hamilton, in *The Legal Intelligencer*

“Many of us are familiar with Herrmann’s teachings in the ABA Litigation Section’s *Litigation* journal. He expands upon his ‘curmudgeonly’ advice in this very readable, purposely provocative, and occasionally hilarious handbook.”

— Gary L. Sasso, President and CEO of Carlton Fields, P.A.,
in *The Florida Bar Journal*

“Finishing this book was like ending a great conversation with someone who’s never afraid to tell you the truth. I’m just happy his truths are memorialized—we can all use a refresher on the insights the *Curmudgeon* provides.”

— LeAnn W. Nealey, Member, Butler, Snow, O’Mara, Stevens, & Cannada, PLLC,
in *For the Defense*

“The book’s practical advice is laced with amusing suggestions, such as the only three circumstances in which the associate could pass a note to him while he is delivering an oral argument: He has the wrong party, he has the wrong case, or his pants are on fire.”

— Gunnar Birgisson, Bracewell & Giuliani, in *Legal Times*

“*The Curmudgeon’s Guide to Practicing Law* is well worth the couple of hours it will take you to read. It is decades of experience compressed into 150 pages of sharp-witted guidance. The book is not just for new lawyers. The *Curmudgeon’s* ideas for building a practice, keeping happy clients, and proper etiquette are useful for lawyers of all levels of experience.”

— Jon N. Strasburger, Hodes, Buckley, McGrath & LeFevre,
in *New Hampshire Bar Journal*

“After reading Mark’s book, I was tempted to start writing *The Terrified and Paranoid Associate’s Guide to Practicing Law* or *The Machiavellian Associate’s Guide to Shafting the Big Firm and its Curmudgeon Partners*. He comes on strong and, even though I don’t work for him, I felt intimidated just reading his book. But on reflection, I realized that, unlike some partners who treat associates like cannon fodder, his writing this book and sharing his wisdom demonstrates that he cares about the people who work for him.”

— John B. Spitzer, American Law Institute—American Bar Association,
in *The Practical Litigator*

“*The Curmudgeon’s Guide to Practicing Law* is concise, funny, well-written, and provides valuable insight for survival in the modern firm. It doesn’t pull any punches. It tells you what partners like and don’t like. It even tells you how to keep that ever-present ‘curmudgeon’ happy. Every lawyer should have this book by his or her side.”

— Stephen C. Norman, Potter, Anderson & Corroon LLP,
The Journal of the Delaware State Bar Association

“The book articulates the foundational principles that a new lawyer needs to know to get off to a good start in any firm, not just *Curmudgeon’s* fictional firm, and it is laugh-out-loud funny. I read the book during a trans-Atlantic flight, and, at one point, I laughed so hard my wife heard me over her headphones. She was sitting across the aisle!”

— Mike Lennon, Baker Botts, L.L.P., in *Texas Bar Journal*