

SYLVESTER LAW FIRM ONE PAGER (6/2009)

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Did You Know...?

- ♦ Before going to law school, I obtained a master's degree in education instruction (i.e., pedagogy). After my thesis was completed and approved by the graduate school faculty, I joined the teaching faculty of an Episcopal college preparatory academy for boys in Phoenix, Arizona. I taught economics, politics, and history.
- ♦ After a year of teaching, I returned to Minnesota for law school. After completing law school, I took a job as a **Judicial Law Clerk** with the Honorable Jeffrey D. Thompson of Minnesota's Third Judicial District in Winona. As a Judicial Law Clerk, I performed research and writing for the judge. The judge would have me sit in on all hearings and bench trials. I would then write findings of fact and conclusions of law based on the evidence as I saw it. Judge Thompson would then either sign off on my decisions or overrule them.
- ♦ **Collaborative divorce** is different than **mediation**. Collaborative divorce involves the divorcing husband and wife, 2 collaborative divorce lawyers, 2 divorce coaches, a child development specialist (if there are children), and a neutral financial consultant. Mediation involves the divorcing parties, 2 advocating lawyers, and a mediator.
- ♦ We would be delighted to receive referrals in the areas of **Estate Planning; Post-Death Administration; Estate Litigation; Divorce & Family Law; Business Entity Formations; and Real Estate Transactions**. A handful of you receiving this *One Pager* have been very supportive of me and my law practice, and I can assure you that I will never forget your generosity. I especially appreciate your support over the last several months since my estate planning business has been painfully slow.
- ♦ When I represent sellers of real estate, I use **First American Title Insurance Company** to handle the closing and issue the title insurance policies. In Illinois real estate transactions, the seller's attorney chooses the title company. I charge sellers \$850 and purchasers \$750. Those fees are slightly above average, but certainly not the highest.
- ♦ I received advanced training in Collaborative Divorce law for 2 days in Madison, Wisconsin. There are 4 "forms" of divorce: (i) traditional litigation; (ii) mediation; (iii) collaborative divorce; and (iv) *pro se*.

Business Development Tid-bits

- ♦ Include a **clear call to action** in your marketing materials. If you leave it up to prospects to decide what to do in response to your marketing message, you will no doubt be disappointed. Prospects *want* and *need* clear guidance, no matter how simple it is. Every marketing piece/effort has to guide the prospect in what to do next: call your office; visit your web-site; request a free financial planning kit; etc. Take a look around, and you will be amazed at how often marketing messages leave out a call to action. Those messages are simply not as effective as messages that convey clear guidance to prospects on what they should do next.
- ♦ Spend approximately **80%** of your marketing time on **Relationship Building** (e.g., meet other advisors for breakfast or lunch, send holiday cards, send thank-you notes, etc.) and approximately **20%** on **Reputation Building** (e.g., speak to groups on your area of expertise, write an article, clearly communicate the differences between your services and your competitors' services, etc.).

Recommended Product and/or Resource

- ♦ If you are considering starting a new web-site, I recommend **Scorpion Design**. You can see Scorpion's portfolio of web-sites at www.ScorpionDesign.com.
- ♦ For vehicle maintenance, I recommend Mike Lynch of **Mike's Garage** at 1902 Willow Road, Northbrook, IL 60062. (847) 412 – 0111. In addition to being an honest, smart and skilled auto technician, Mike is a Glenview firefighter.
- ♦ My new divorce and family law web-site at www.SylLawFirm.com.