

PARALEGALS CONNECT MAGAZINE

FOURTH QUARTER

*

DECEMBER 2021

*

ISSUE NO. 14



MEET OUR AFFILIATE PARTNER

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*“Our Groups are accelerating Paralegals, Future Paralegals, and Future Attorneys Worldwide”
Currently, our groups have approximately 29,700+ combined active members worldwide.*

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MEET THE CREATOR

Crystal Cornett is the busy women behind the scenes of Paralegals Connect. I work hard to make these professional, successful groups, and create ideas to help paralegals, future paralegals, and future attorneys become a legal success!

Paralegals Connect was created in 2013 by Crystal Cornett and has grown significantly since that time. These groups provide information and support at every stage of your legal career.



Crystal Cornett

Creator of Paralegals Connect and Admin

Crystal@ParalegalsConnect.com <https://www.linkedin.com/in/crystalcornett/>

Crystal has been a Paralegal since 2004. She earned her first Paralegal Certificate from University of Houston in March 2006. Crystal received the degree of Associate of Applied Science from Center for Advanced Legal Studies and her second Paralegal Certificate in 2010. She is a member of the Lambda Epsilon Chi National Honor Society for Paralegal / Legal Assistant Studies (LEX).

Crystal has practiced in Family Law, Elder Law, Probate Law, Guardianships, Health Law, Social Security, and heavy litigation in Intellectual Property and Bankruptcy. Crystal is currently a residential and commercial Real Estate Paralegal in Houston, Texas. Crystal also serves on the Paralegal Advisory Committee (PAC) for Center for Advanced Legal Studies.

WHAT IS PARALEGALS CONNECT?

***“Our Groups are
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Paralegals Connect was established in 2013 and we have grown significantly since that time. We now have four Facebook groups which are all dedicated to providing valuable information and support to succeed in the legal industry. Our groups provide support at every stage of your legal career.

Currently, our groups have approximately **29,700+ combined members worldwide.**



Website www.ParalegalsConnect.com

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Paralegals Connect (Main Group) (16,067 Members)
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www.Facebook.com/Groups/PCEmploymentBoard

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Virtual/Freelance Paralegals Connect (3,631 Members)
www.Facebook.com/Groups/Virtual.FreelanceParalegalsConnect

A group designed for Virtual and/or Freelance Paralegals and those intending to break free of their 8-5 to go out on their own.

Paralegals Connect: Study Group) (868 Members)
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We would like to thank our Affiliate Partners because they make it possible to print and distribute our Magazine to our members and various paralegal schools and large firms throughout the U.S.

Becoming an Affiliate with our groups offers worldwide visibility to approximately **29,700+ combined group members** in the legal industry.

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Silicon Valley Legal

Jennifer M. Celaya founded Silicon Valley Legal Services in 1999 out of the passionate vision drawn from her own experiences with the Family Courts. Although her focus is mainly on document preparation for Family Court such as child custody, child support, divorces, etc. she also has the knowledge and experience to prepare other documents such as name changes, property transfers, drafting trusts or wills, and much more. **DISCLAIMER:** Silicon Valley Legal is the affordable non-attorney solution for all your legal document preparation needs in the Bay Area. Silicon Valley Legal is not a law firm and cannot represent you in court, advise you about your legal rights or the law, or select legal forms for you. We can only provide self-help services at your specific direction and guidance.



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New Beginnings Family Services (NBFS) began out of a need to strengthen family ties while going through the legal justice system. These needs demand a response, one which we took as a Mandate for a Call-to-Action. Our answer to that call was to Organize and Educate, and NBFS was born. As a non-profit organization, we offer low and no-cost services, courses, and classes on a variety of subjects, such as Parent-to-Parent Mentoring, Navigating the Legal System, and Understanding Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's Studies) during transitions. For field professionals, we also provide development training in Family Literacy, and Compassion Informed Servicing, amongst others. As an organization, our goal is to provide for and facilitate mutual understanding between all parties, intersections, and institutional facets in the Family, Legal and Mental Health Service overlap to do what's best for the child. We focus on children by keeping families together with preventative Case Management.



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The Paralegal Writer™

Jackie Van Dyke, Certified Paralegal, and owner of **The Paralegal Writer**, inspires best writing practices and confidence in legal writing communication. She is a faculty member in the Paralegal Studies Program at The George Washington University and at the University of San Diego (USD) Law School. Jackie is also a member of NALA's Continuing Education Council and the Paralegal Educators Committee. She has numerous published articles in NALA's *Facts & Findings – The Paralegal Magazine*, NFPA's *National Paralegal Reporter*, and the Paralegals Connect Newsletter. Jackie's passion is to help paralegals at all levels with professional document and letter writing, persuasive memo writing, precise legal citations, and improved grammar and punctuation.

The Paralegal Writer offers a quarterly email course, "Pen A Memo™," to prepare applicants taking the NALA Skills Exam. **The Paralegal Writer** recently launched the "Legal Scribble Sessions" – an eight-week email course focused on writing general correspondence, demand and status letters, and professional emails. The course includes grammar and punctuation exercises along with practice writing in active voice and avoiding legal jargon.

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Eunice Colón, is the creator and owner of Ever So Creative. Eunice joined Paralegals Connect in May 2017 and since then has added customized items to our Paralegals Merchandise Store including shirts, signs, cups and jewelry.

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DON'T DERAIL— STAY ON TRACK

By: *Denise M. Blassak, AACP*



Eight hour workday, you say? Does that exist anymore? It seems there is so much to do, and not enough time. We need to be in charge.

First, let us be honest. Usually we are on task, but now-and-then, our eyes glaze over. We may move along until opposing counsel's motion arrives. Below are helpful tips to make the most of each day.

A good step toward managing the clock involves taking stock of all there is to do. Consider documenting tasks in one workspace location. Everything from project deadlines and client check-ins, to dental appointments and seminars. Choose the calendar that suits you so you will use it.

Does 'all-inclusive diary' sound overwhelming? Consider how it might prevent future pain and suffering. If need be, make it fun so it becomes a 'habit,' not a 'hindrance.' Do a little doodling while adding and removing events. Maybe draw payday dollar signs, or the word 'HOORAY' on vacation day. Look at the calendar regularly, including at the start of each day.

Speaking of sunrise, any morning people here? I confess I am, but I may be the minority. Regardless of whether you are, or not, take note of your preferred time zone. There are periods in the day when we each feel most productive. Those are the times to tackle quick projects, when possible.

During simple jobs and lengthy ones, be prepared for inevitable distractions. Maybe that voice in your head, reminding you of an urgent matter. Or maybe a client who is seeking your attention. There will always be interruptions, though some we can control.

One intrusion we all need to manage is e-mail. Instead of playing 'whac-a-mole'¹ with the never-ending flow, consider a review timetable. Curb that desire to read every new message upon receipt. Pay particular attention to the senders and subject lines. If your boss e-mails you, you will want to respond. When co-workers 'reply all' to the bake sale alert, your waistline will thank you to wait.

Beyond e-mail, be wary of social media distractions. Set boundaries for yourself. For those finding it difficult to disconnect, think of that post better left untouched. Did anyone need to see Jack Black's quarantine cowboy dance? Turn off push notifications and leave YouTube and LinkedIn for afterhours.

Do not fret—your day should not be all work. Our bodies need to pause and reboot. Walk to the snail mailbox or freshen your cup of Joe. At lunch, check in with a co-worker or two. Consider sharing with them these 'stay on track' tips.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Denise M. Blassak, AACP is a juvenile dependency paralegal with over 15 years of experience with research, motions, appellate writing, and more. Her education is ongoing and includes her ABA approved bachelor's paralegal degree from Winona State University. Off hours Denise enjoys DIY travel and Grisham novels.

You can reach her at southerncaparalegal@gmail.com.

¹ 'Whac-a-mole,' sometimes spelled 'Whack-a-mole,' "entered the language as a metaphorical term for something that keeps popping up no matter how many times one tries to get rid of it." (<<https://grammarist.com/words/whac-a-mole/>> [as of Nov. 27, 2021].



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¹ Council on Occupational Education, 7840 Roswell Road, Building 300, Suite 325, Atlanta, GA 30350, Telephone: 770-396-3898 / FAX: 770-396-3790, www.council.org

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PARALEGALS AND MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES

By: *Mary Katherine Mayer, ACP*



Mental health, simply stated, is our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It comprises how we feel and how we react to the world. To be sure, we all have “good” days and “bad” days, but compromised mental health, in the form of depression, anxiety or other mental disorders, can take an enormous toll on our lives and careers. Paralegals may face greater mental health challenges because expectations are high, and deadlines are ever-looming.

At some point in our Paralegal careers, we all have the feeling of excessive stress, anxiousness, and just being overwhelmed with our work. Fortunately, there are great resources and educational information for us to improve our day-to-day work. However, how about our mind, body, and soul? This is a real important issue and I think we should look at it more often than we do.

First, let’s explore: Why do paralegals face greater mental health challenges?

Well, one obvious reason is that attorneys are usually under extreme pressure, which they convey that to their Paralegal(s), even when it has nothing to do with us. However, it has been my own experience that they necessarily don’t realize how it affects us. You know the saying, don’t take it personally? Yeah, well, that doesn’t help, at least in my situations (work in progress)!

According to the American Bar Association, Paralegals (Lawyers, and support staff) may face greater mental health challenges because of the nature of our work. Clients bring legal professionals the most difficult problems of their lives and demand help right away.

Mental health is always a relevant topic, but the current situation with the COVID-19 pandemic highlights the importance of self-care, support, and awareness needed to maintain good mental health. Even the American Bar Association is concerned with this.

During relatively normal times, the law is a profession that requires extensive “brain power” for critical thinking, analytical reasoning, logic, focus, attention, and recall. As professionals, the “output” or “product” that we create is the documentation of our ideas and advice. None of this work can be done at its best without taking care of our mental health.

How do paralegals fit into the legal profession's mental health movement?

Although there is no specific data on paralegals, if the attorneys with whom we work are experiencing mental health issues at a greater rate, it would stand to reason that paralegals and legal support staff are subject to the same concerns. According to an August 12, 2019, article from ALM Media (formerly, American Lawyer Media), law firm staffers feel left behind in the legal profession’s mental health movement.

“[D]espite a plethora of resources available at several large firms today, including on-site mental health professionals and wellness applications, many have not extended their mental health resources firmwide. A survey of 30 AM Law firms found that 36% of firms that say they offer mental health programming do not extend those to programs to their professional staff.

This bifurcated mental health treatment is actually symptomatic of one of the most acute stress factors afflicting law firm professionals: a power hierarchy that devalues professional staff.”

But, while these efforts mention covering legal staff, more needs to be done to ensure that Paralegals (and other legal support staff) are included and supported by these efforts.

Ideas for creating balance and wellness

I work for my county Public Defender’s Office, and they offer us Employee Assistance Programs, which allow for counseling of all types – work, financial, marital, etc. If more firms offered these or similar programs, it would be an advantage for us to take part if you need someone to talk to. If you are feeling overwhelmed, please talk to a friend or a confidant. For me, it wasn’t easy in the beginning because I hate to “burden” people with my problems. But it turned out they felt anxiety and were overwhelmed like I was, and by talking things over, we both felt better.

Moreover, research shows some simple things we can all do to improve our mental health, exercising, spending time outside, eating a balanced diet, eliminating caffeine (yeah, right) getting enough sleep, and even talking to a friend. Winter is fast approaching and can be a particularly challenging time as days are shorter and colder. Taking care of our mental health is an important part of maintaining a productive life. Emotional and psychological well-being must be a priority for all Paralegals!

I struggle to exercise or even take a few minutes to get up and stretch. When I do, what a huge difference it makes. I feel refreshed, and ready to tackle the next project!

We know the craziness and stress of being a Paralegal won’t go away; but if we take time for ourselves, exercise, talk to people (counselor, friend, mentor), we can enjoy a happy, successful, and well-balanced career and life.

Remember, we cannot take care of anyone unless we are well! So, please be well, my Paralegal family!



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Mary Katherine Mayer, ACP is an Advanced Certified Paralegal in Criminal Litigation. She is the Recording Secretary for the Arizona Paralegal Association, a member of the APA, a member of NALA, and is a Paralegal for the Yavapai County Public Defender’s Office in Arizona.

Mary has written articles which have been published in several Paralegal resources. When she is not working or writing, Mary enjoys time with her Husband and Son, and cooking.

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Legal Translation: A Comprehensive Guide to Successful Legal Translations

By: eTranslation Services



Legal translation is a delicate and challenging process that requires the utmost care and precision. This article will provide you with some insights into translating legal documents to be accurate, culturally sensitive, and appropriate for the target audience. We'll look at methods of translation, what makes for an effective translator, the importance of context in translation work, how to build trust with your clients when translating their texts, what it takes to be successful in this field - everything you need to know about legal translations!

When writing blog posts or articles on professional topics such as law or medicine, it's important to include lots of helpful information and make sure it reads well and makes sense. The last thing you want to do is lose readers due to poor sentence structure or jargon that they don't understand. It's always better to assume a lower standard of knowledge and build up from there, rather than assume high levels of expertise on specific topics and risk alienating those for whom this information is new - no matter how well-educated your audience may be!

Legal translation requires lots of training as well as creativity. There are many different legalities in different places throughout the world, so it can sometimes feel overwhelming when trying to find accurate translations all over the globe. The legal translation should convey exactly what was written and make sure that it sounds good, flows nicely with other parts of speech, and is culturally appropriate.

Translating legal documents can be an enriching career, but it also requires lots of patience and attention to detail.

One way that you can make the process easier on yourself when translating official texts such as these is by using translation software or an automatic translator. Many people think that this will produce better results than going through the text themselves with a dictionary in hand. However, they often don't take into consideration all the technical terms used within specific fields - which may not have exact translations!

In addition to being inaccurate at times, these types of tools are only helpful if your native language happens to be what you're trying to translate from or into; otherwise, there's no point since any text will come out in its original form!

One of the most important things to consider when translating legal documents is the context.

Understanding cultural norms, idioms, and phrases can make all the difference between a successful translation that conveys meaning effectively or one that misses it entirely. While some languages may share similar aspects with others, they are not always identical either - which means you need to know where your audience lives as well as what their needs are before attempting any kind of text conversion.

This also requires understanding industry-specific terminology so that you can choose words professionally while staying true to both meanings at once! Legal translators often work closely with lawyers who provide additional information about meeting specific requirements within different fields. This is a great way to start if you haven't had much experience with legal translation yet or don't feel comfortable attempting it on your own.

In addition to knowing the law, most successful translators also have excellent communication skills.

This means being able to build trust and rapport with their clients as well as customers through effective written communication that is both friendly and professional at once. Legal professionals rely heavily upon accurate translations of any kind in order to make educated decisions within an increasingly international market - which requires lots of hard work from those who are willing and capable of doing this type of work! If you're passionate about helping others find solutions for themselves, then this might be just what you've been looking for! It's crucial to know how to do this and understand how to do it well to provide the maximum benefit possible.

Legal translation is an essential part of all aspects of society.

There are many different ways to help provide translations for others within this field, particularly if you don't have a lot of experience or education with the law! Depending on your interests and motivations, you could be working on websites, advertisements, articles, books, email messages, and many more formats!

A big part of being a successful legal translator is doing lots of research and investigating the specific areas you want to work in. This means knowing how best to target your audience as well as what their needs are before deciding on a course that will help them solve problems effectively within any given industry or culture.

Legal translation can be a very rewarding career, so this might be right up your alley if you are interested in the law, languages, and writing!

Depending on what type of legal texts you want to translate will determine how much training is needed, but it's essential always to stay abreast of new changes within any industry that require lots of research. It may seem like there are too many factors involved with undertaking such a project yourself or that you'd need years' worth of experience before attempting anything on your own.

However, these days, even people without extensive qualifications can do some types of translations successfully while also learning more along the way. This means getting paid for doing something worthwhile and gaining skills and knowledge through the process you can use to grow your career in the future. As with any type of translation, accuracy is vital, so it's crucial not only to know how to do this but also to understand how to do it well so that you can provide the maximum benefit possible.

Whether you need a legal translation for your business or are in the process of immigrating to another country and require this service, you must know what to expect. Legal translations can be complex because they often involve specialized terminology not commonly used outside of the law.

This article has provided some insight into how these types of translations work and should give you a good understanding of the process from start to finish. If there are still questions about legal translation services after reading this article, please don't hesitate to reach out! Our team would love to help answer any lingering questions.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

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Are you making these big mistakes in your career?

By: *Holly A. Sheriff, MSLS, MCC, CCC, PCC, LPCC, CPP*



The journey to career satisfaction: Achieving career satisfaction is a continuous journey of learning and discovery exercises, but you should not do things along the way.

Mistake No.1: Pay Packages

Many career enthusiasts (CE) fall victim to the antiquated notion that salary and pay packages are crucial for a new position. Although salary and pay packages are essential, it's possible to pay packages are not as important to some of you as you may believe. Career experts agree job satisfaction is far more critical than the size of the pay package because overall job satisfaction influences productivity, mental & physical stamina, and self-esteem. Focusing on career satisfaction versus a hefty pay package helps people stay in roles longer.

The value you put on salary and pay packages during a career move should be based on a collection of needs such as personal finances, motivation triggers, overall career ambitions, and realistic job market pay scales.

Mistake No.2: Not having an advisory team

Another notion many people fall victim to is not having an advisory team to help make big moves within their careers. Think about your life. When you want to make a big decision about faith, you speak to a priest, preacher, or spiritual advisor. Then when you have a big decision to make about your health, you seek medical treatment with a doctor. You may even seek advice from a nurse. And again, when you have a significant financial or tax decision to make often, you may seek the advice of a bookkeeper or CPA. Are you starting to see a trend? In all the major areas of your life: faith, health, & financial, you seek the advice of professionals to help guide you through significant changes.

Why isn't your career not on the above list? Your job should be just as important as your financial and medical health. The fact is the average person will spend 90,000 hours at work over a lifetime. It's safe to say your job can make a massive impact on your quality of life. Walking around working for the wrong company is just as painful as walking around wearing your shoes on the wrong feet.

A career advisory team should consist of four people. One person should be a cheerleader, such as a family member. Your cheerleader should not be your sole source of industry information. This person should merely be on your side to listen. You should have a friend. Your friend should be a source of fun. The third person on your advisory team is a mentor, such as a teacher or a coworker familiar with the industry who can be your source of proofreading facts. And the fourth person on your career advisory team should be a bona fide coach. Your coach should keep you on track with your abilities, needs & goals. Your coach should do all the heavy lifting regarding your resume, CV, cover letters, and interviews.

How to find the right people?

Finding the right people is like shopping for shoes. Some might look like they are the right fit but turn out to be all wrong. That's ok. Sometimes people are in our lives for a reason for only one season, and others are with us for many seasons. So, surround yourself with the people who will inspire you to be the best.

The journey to career satisfaction is all about the journey, not the destination. If you spend too much time focusing on the destination, you will miss out on the lessons the journey has to offer. Thanks for reading! Hope this brief introduction to career satisfaction helps you to start living your best life! And as always, don't forget to be kind because life is way too short & you can't hit rewind!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Holly A. Sheriff, MSLS, MCC, CCC, PCC, LPCC, CPP is an experienced, seasoned paralegal & certified empowered action coach. Holly's holistic approach brings clarity, direction, and positive support to her clients. She helps clients live their best life. [Scan the code to connect with Holly today!](#)

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Determine Your Unique Idea Leaping Legal Pads™ The Freelancing Journey

By: *Holly A. Sheriff, MSLS, MCC,
CCC, PCC, LPCC, CPP*

Starting a freelance paralegal business is an exciting time. There are so many options and possibilities ahead; it is easy to become overwhelmed by all the possibilities. Taking the time to understand your mindset, skill set, and the fundamental business skills one needs to start a business will help keep you on track. This will help you make the most informed decisions.

A successful business starts with a solid, interesting, and unique idea. This is the most critical decision you will make. As the gig economy grows, the market for freelance paralegals gets crowded. Standing out from the crowd is getting more challenging; paralegals need to leverage their skills and ideas to survive.

When refining an idea, start by asking yourself four probing questions:

- **Is there a service missing in your area?**
- **Do you have the paralegal skills needed to produce a high-quality work product?**
- **Do you have enough experience working as a paralegal to work independently?**
- **Do you know how to do something better than most paralegals?**



Coming up with an excellent idea for a paralegal business will require you to consider your mindset, skills, education, and resources. You will need to evaluate these attributes carefully and honestly. Nobody can do this work for you. You will also want to ask yourself:

- **Why do you want to start a business? Money, freedom, and flexibility to solve a problem, or something else?**
- **What areas of law do you know about?**
- **Do you want to provide a service or a product like an app?**

A mentor, teacher, or business coach can assist in decluttering this process. However, mentors, teachers, and business coaches cannot tell you if your mindset, experience, education, and inner drive (your passion) align with your ideal client. Instead, mentors, teachers, and business coaches can help you keep your thoughts in perspective and help you develop a system for evaluating each area using effective strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT or SWOTS) analysis. You need the right mindset to succeed and transition into the role of a successful business owner. You must look at your mindset as more than just your outlook on life. Having a confident mindset about starting a business is only a tiny part of the mindset pie.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

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Let's chat – we will take a deep dive to find the tools that will catapult your business or career! Connect with Holly A. Sheriff today! Holly is an experienced, seasoned virtual paralegal & certified empowered action coach. Holly's holistic approach brings clarity, direction, and positive support to her clients. She helps clients live their best life. [Scan the code to connect with Holly today!](#)

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Tackling an Unfamiliar Topic?

By: Jackie Van Dyke, MPS, CP®

The Paralegal Writer

Another notion many people fall victim to when presented with writing about an unfamiliar topic or a difficult subject, spend some time brainstorming through the scenario. Research the subject matter.

Ask yourself the following questions:

- Who is involved?
- What is the issue?
- When did the issue begin?
- Where is the action taking place (jurisdiction)?
- Why did the issue develop?
- What laws apply?

Create an outline as you answer each of the above questions. This process can generate good content for your document.

Next, start writing. Draft an introduction, body, and conclusion. Then, take a break.

Return to your writing task and read your draft. If you don't like it, start the process again. If you are pleased with the content, proofread carefully. If you have time, ask a friend to give you feedback.

Writing about an unfamiliar topic can be scary and stressful. But, this type of writing helps you grow. Who knows? You may learn something that really excites you!

How to Be a Better Writer

By: Jackie Van Dyke, MPS, CP®

The Paralegal Writer

- Practice. Writing takes practice and more practice.
- Ask for feedback. "How can I make my writing more concise?" The positive feedback you receive will generate confidence.
- Break down a big writing task into tiny steps. Begin simple.
- Unlearn skills or behaviors. Be open to changing your approach at writing. Instead of thinking "I don't know where to begin," start writing whatever comes to mind.
- Keep your writing uncluttered. Use short sentences. Short sentences can be powerful.
- Vary sentence lengths for easier reading and attracting interest.
- Use exclamation marks sparingly.
- Write in active voice. Place adjectives and adverbs close to the words they are modifying.
- Avoid using contractions in formal writing.
- Use action verbs. Details and data can be boring.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Jackie Van Dyke, MPS, CP® is a certified paralegal, professor in paralegal studies, copy editor, published author, writing coach, and paralegal student mentor. She formerly worked as a senior trademark paralegal for an international nonprofit corporation. She can be reached at jackie@theparalegalwriter.com.

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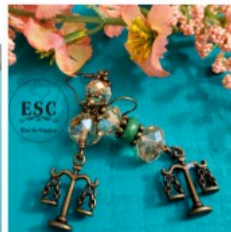
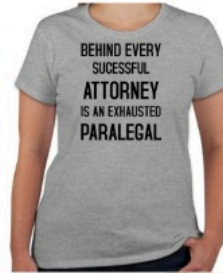
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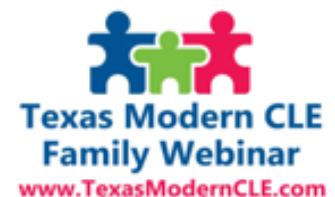
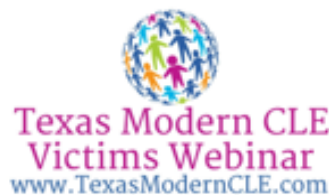
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