

GOT HURT? FORGET THE SILLY LAWYER ADS

Here's a How-To Guide
to Help You Find the Right
Lawyer for Your Case
(Even if it's Not Me)



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(A PERSONAL INJURY LAWYER)



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America's Top 100 Lawyers: Top 100

Pennsylvania Super Lawyers: Rising Star

Rue Ratings: The Best Attorneys of America

The National Trial Lawyers: Top 40 Under 40

American Jurist Institute: Top 10 in Pennsylvania

American Academy of Trial Attorneys: Premier 100

The National Trial Lawyers: Top 100 Trial Attorneys

Distinguished Justice Advocates: Top 1% in Pennsylvania

National League of Renowned Attorneys: Top 1% in Pennsylvania

Million Dollar Advocates Forum: The Top Trial Lawyers in America

American Institute of Personal Injury Attorneys: Top 10 in Pennsylvania

National Academy of Personal Injury Attorneys: Top 10 in Pennsylvania

PREFACE

I have a new friend. Let's call him "Charlie." A few years ago, Charlie was violently rear ended by a distracted driver. He immediately felt pain in his neck and back. The distracted driver's insurance company denied Charlie's claim, saying his injuries weren't *caused* by the accident. Preposterous, right? That's what Charlie thought, too. So he hired lawyer – a lawyer with a big advertising budget, a fancy website bragging about all his big wins, and too many TV and radio commercials, billboards, and newspaper ads to count. Three years later, that same lawyer LOST Charlie's case.

On appeal, I was asked to step in and try the case; and try it, I did. After a 4-day trial, the jury awarded Charlie a lot of money. So much money, in fact, that he immediately burst into tears of joy when he heard the verdict.

Why am I telling you this? Because I'm an awesome lawyer, and if you've been hurt in an accident, you should hire me because I'm so awesome.

Sounds pretty stupid, doesn't it? But that's how lawyers advertise today. "Millions recovered for clients just like you." "Rated by *whomever*." "Decades of experience." "As seen on *local news*." "I'll fight for you!" "Aggressive representation!" And so on. It's always the same, and none of it means a darn thing if it doesn't lead you to the right lawyer for you and your case.

Truth is, every lawyer is different. We all have different training, different styles, different experiences, different points of view, and, most importantly, different skills¹. Before hiring a lawyer, you owe it to yourself to sift through all the fluff to find the right lawyer for you. Consequences of not doing so can be devastating.

Forget the silly lawyer ads. Do a little research, ask a few good questions, and the lawyer you choose – even if it's not me – will be the right lawyer for you.

¹ Charlie's original lawyer is excellent. He's very well respected by me and other lawyers, judges, and, I'm sure, his past and current clients. Heck, I'd consider hiring him if I were hurt in an accident. So why did he lose? Why did I win? No, it's not really because I'm awesome (I totally am, though). It's because I have different training, experiences, points of view, and skills than he does, and those differences simply made me better suited to handle Charlie's case than he. Those same differences, by the way, make him better suited to handle cases I'm not as suited for.

DISCLAIMER

A lawyer writing a how-to guide for finding the right lawyer has a legal disclaimer? Who'd have thunk it?

In all seriousness, there's no sure-fire formula for finding and hiring the right lawyer, ensuring the best possible outcome of your case, or guaranteeing your everlasting happiness. And that's not what this how-to guide is meant to promote. It's meant to inform; to educate. It's meant to save you the hassle of sifting through all the lawyer ads you see and hear every day. It's meant to guide you, and hopefully entertain you. Nothing else.

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CHAPTER 1: LAWYER ADVERTISING – I'M SUPER AWESOME, HAVE LOTS OF EXPERIENCE, WILL VIGOROUSLY FIGHT FOR YOU, AND WILL GIVE YOU A FREE CONSULTATION! CALL ME NOW!

It's snowing like crazy here in the Philadelphia area today, so I took a snow day and stayed home to play with my kids – Jude, Abby, and Penny. We were out sledding most of the morning, and now we're finishing lunch. Crustless PB&J for Jude, and grilled cheese for Abby and Penny. Me? A delicious bowl of New England clam chowder (the white, not the red).

The girls now want to watch Mickey Mouse Clubhouse, and Jude wants to watch the court shows because he wants to see if daddy will be on TV. (I won't be.). To keep the peace, the girls are watching TV in the kitchen while Jude watches TV in the family room, and I'm roaming back and forth because I just can't get enough Mickey and court TV. (Attention Disney executives! If you're reading this, I have a great idea for a new show – Judge Mickey! Call me to hammer out the details.)

Lawyer Slogans and Taglines²:

"Leadership. Creativity. Results."
For a firm that prides itself on creativity, you'd think it would have a more creative tagline.

"Great lawyers. Great law firm."
And the survey says . . . ?

"It begins with service." No. It begins with a problem.

"Results matter." Really? Lucky for you, every lawyer gets "results."

"Think results." I'd rather think of how to solve my problem.

"I eat insurance companies for breakfast." I eat Frosted Flakes. They're Gr-r-r-eat!

We've watched about 20 minutes of Judge Judy so far, and I've already seen 11 lawyer commercials. 11! In 20 minutes! And they all say essentially the same thing:

- *Call me. I'm THE Injury Lawyer, and I'll fight for you. FREE consultations! Ask about my No Fee Guarantee!*
- *Call me. I'm THE Accident Lawyer, and I'll vigorously fight for you. FREE consultations! I get paid only if you get paid!*
- *Call me. I've been standing up to the insurance companies for more than 20 years, and I'll stand up to them for you, too. FREE Consultations! No fee unless I recover money for you!*
- *Call me. I'll go after every penny you deserve. FREE consultations! No fee unless you get paid!*

Blah, blah, blah.

² These slogans and taglines, and thousands more like them, are used by real lawyers and law firms around the world. The witty commentary, however, is all mine.

Have you ever seen a lawyer ad that says “*I graduated last in my law school class!*” Or “*I failed the bar exam 5 times³!*” Perhaps “*I’ve never tried a case, but I’ve settled lots!*” What about “*I’ll refer you to a better, more qualified lawyer than me!*” No? Me neither. And why haven’t we seen such lawyer ads? Don’t answer. That was a rhetorical question.

I’m going to let you in on an industry secret, but you can’t tell anyone I spilled the beans:

“*All we do is work.*” They must be exhausted. Too tired for your case?

“*Clear, concise advice.*” Advice about what? It’s concise, but not very clear.

“*Everything matters.*” Sounds like a jack of all trades, master of none.

“*Legal experience with you in mind.*” Do we know each other?

**EVERY LAWYER WILL VIGOROUSLY FIGHT FOR YOU.
THAT’S OUR JOB!**

MOST LAWYERS OFFER FREE CONSULTATIONS.

**MOST (IF NOT ALL) PERSONAL INJURY LAWYERS
ONLY CHARGE YOU A FEE IF THEY RECOVER MONEY FOR YOU!
IT’S CALLED A CONTINGENCY FEE (IT’S *CONTINGENT* ON RECOVERY).**

So how do these “*Call me because I’m super awesome, will vigorously fight for you, and I offer a FREE consultation*” lawyer ads actually help you find the right lawyer for you? They don’t. And they’re not necessarily designed to. They’re designed to get your attention. They’re designed for name recognition.

For more than 30 years, I’ve occasionally found myself inexplicably singing “My bologna has a first name. It’s O-S-C-A-R. My bologna has a second name. It’s M-A-Y-E-R.” Why? Because I saw the commercials so often as a kid that the message is indelibly engrained in my memory (it’s a pretty catchy jingle, too). Brilliant marketing, and it has nothing to do with the taste of Oscar Mayer bologna. Lawyer ads are designed with the same concept – deliver a simple message so often that you can’t forget it (so you’ll call when you do need a lawyer).

Forget the lawyer ads. Do a little research, ask a few good questions (see Chapter 6), and find the right lawyer for you⁴.

³ Remember *My Cousin Vinny*? Great movie, but I’d pass on hiring Joe Pesci as my lawyer.

⁴ Just remember to call me first because I’m super awesome, have lots of experience, will vigorously fight for you, and will give you a FREE consultation! Sorry. Couldn’t resist.

CHAPTER 2: THE TRUTH ABOUT LAWYERS – NOT ALL CREATED EQUAL!

Court Transcripts⁵:

Lawyer: Doctor, before you performed the autopsy, did you check for a pulse?

Witness: No.

Lawyer: Did you check for blood pressure?

Witness: No.

Lawyer: Did you check for breathing?

Witness: No.

Lawyer: So, than, is it possible the patient was alive when you began the autopsy?

Witness: No.

Lawyer: How can you be so sure, Doctor?

Witness: Because his brain was sitting on my desk in a jar.

Lawyer: But could the patient have still been alive nevertheless?

Witness: Yes, it is possible he could have been alive and practicing law somewhere.

Lawyer: Were you alone or by yourself?

Forest Gump said it best – lawyers are like a box of chocolates. . . . Wait. That’s not right. Life. Life is like a box of chocolates. Well, lawyers are, too. You just never know what you’re gonna get – unless you do the research, and ask a few good questions.

It should go without saying, but not all lawyers are created equal. There are hundreds of different practice areas and subpractice areas⁶ in which lawyers can “focus”⁷ their practice. And once we chose that focus, that’s generally all we do.

I’m a personal injury lawyer. What does that mean? It means I can help if you’ve been hurt in an accident. It also means you’re going to jail for a long time if I handle your burglary case, and your spouse gets the kids, house, cars, and cash if I handle your divorce case. I know what I know, not what I don’t.

Every lawyer’s training was essentially the same in law school. It’s the training we get after law school that sets us apart. To become the super awesome personal injury lawyer with lots of experience that I am, I needed a lot of specialized training. Every year, I take Continuing Legal Education classes geared specifically

⁵ Every so often, friends send me e-mails with quotes claiming to be “real courtroom transcripts.” I have no idea if they’re real, but some are pretty darn funny. Would you want one of these lawyers as your lawyer?

⁶ See Appendix A at the back of this book for a *partial* list.

⁷ Oddly, Pennsylvania lawyers aren’t allowed to tell you they “specialize” in a particular practice area because that would imply they’re “specialists.” So I can’t tell you I “specialize” in personal injury law even though I only represent people hurt in accidents. My friend John can’t tell you he “specializes” in family law even though he only handles divorce and custody cases. And my buddy Leon sure as heck can’t tell you he “specializes” in criminal defense even though he only defends criminals. Uhhh, I mean *alleged* criminals.

to car accidents, work accidents, slip and fall accidents, dog bites, medical malpractice, and so on. I also have my Master's Degree in trial law, and now I teach other lawyers and law students how to try cases. Some lawyers have similar training (some have even more); most lawyers don't.

Not all lawyers have the same experience, either. A license to practice law is nothing more than written permission to practice law. Look not at the length of time in service, but at the service in the length of time. Is it better to have a lawyer who's been practicing for 30 years and never been to court, or a lawyer who's been in practice for a year and been to court 30 times? Depends on why you need the lawyer.

As you sift through all the lawyer advertising, know that some lawyers advertise for the sole purpose of referring cases to someone else (in exchange for a big, fat referral fee). Surprised? You shouldn't be. Their disclosure is hiding in plain sight. Next time you watch a lawyer's commercial, try to read the tiny, barely legible print at the bottom of the screen. They often say something like "Cases may be referred to another law firm for principal handling." Radio commercials often say something similar at the very end (usually at lightning speed so you can't understand it).

Also remember that you're not just hiring the lawyer; you're hiring the lawyer's firm. That means the lawyer's partners, associates, paralegals, and secretaries may also work on your case. This is pretty typical, but you should certainly know about it. So ask right at the outset.

Lawyer: Doctor, how many autopsies have you performed on dead people?

Witness: All my autopsies are performed on dead people.

Witness: He was about medium height and had a beard.

Lawyer: Was this a male or a female?

Lawyer: I show you Exhibit 3 and ask you if you recognize the photo.

Witness: That's me.

Lawyer: Were you present when that picture was taken?

Lawyer: Do you recall the time that you examined the body?

Witness: The autopsy started around 8:30 p.m.

Lawyer: And Mr. Johnson was dead at the time?

Witness: No, he was sitting on the table wondering why I was doing an autopsy.

Lawyer: You were there until the time you left, is that true?

Lawyer: The youngest son, the 20 year old, how old is he?

Lawyer: How many times have you committed suicide?

Witness: Seriously?

Also remember that not all lawyers go to trial. Believe me; it's true. Do you want a settlement attorney, or a trial attorney? Depends. A trial lawyer with an established history of kicking butt *may* get better results than a settlement attorney, but a trial lawyer with an established history of getting their butt kicked *may* get worse results.

It's also vital you understand that a lawyer who's super awesome in one practice area is not necessarily super awesome in another. Look for the master of one, not the jack of all.

Considering a lawyer *rating* service? Alright, but you still need to do your own research, and ask your own questions. Read chapter 4 to find out why.

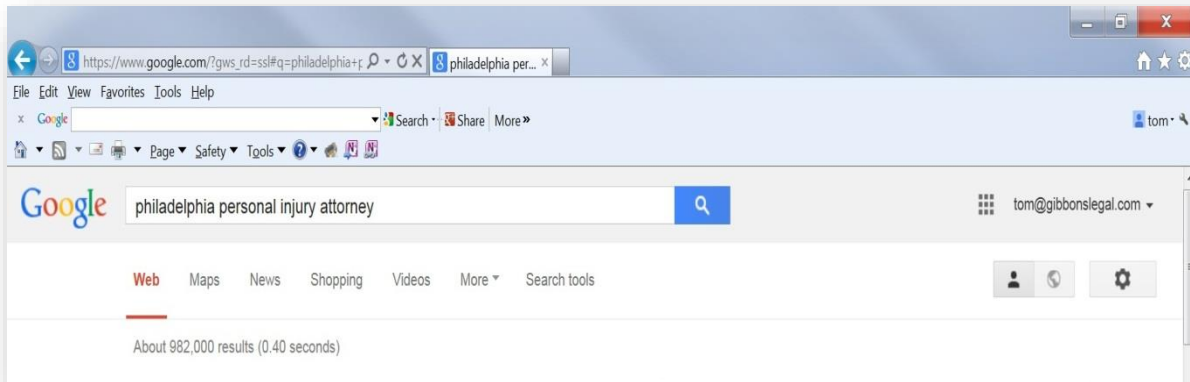
Considering a lawyer *referral* service? I don't recommend it. I'll explain why in chapter 5.

Lastly, you must, must, must know that not all lawyers carry malpractice insurance. Scary, but true. No matter how much you trust your lawyer, always ask. They're required to tell you.

As you look for the right lawyer, just remember we all have different training, different styles, different experiences, different points of view, and, most importantly, different skills. Don't let someone else do the research for you. Do your own research, and ask your own questions (see Chapter 6).

CHAPTER 3: THE INTERNET – INFORMATION OVERLOAD!

The quickest, easiest place to begin your search for a lawyer is the internet. There are lots of great sites, but you have to be specific and be willing to spend some time on there. I just googled “Philadelphia Personal Injury Attorney,” and I got 982,000 results (websites) in 0.40 seconds. Are you really supposed to check 982,000 websites?



Google, Bing, Yahoo!, and the other search engines don’t list websites in order of best to worst. The top few listings, and the listings in the right-hand column, are paid listings (called “non-organic listings,” or “pay-per-click listings”). They’re advertisements. The top 3 biggest budgets get the top 3 listings. The rest of the paid listings are in the right-hand column. The listings in the main body of the page are the non-paid listings (called “organic listings”). The non-paid listings are listed in order of “relevance” to your search. Relevance is determined by, among other things, how many times the words you’re searching appear on the site. All the big search engines have algorithms (fancy talk for “code”) to sort out the fluff a little for you, though. They punish (with lower listings) the sites that keyword stuff, or arbitrarily load their site with key words just to get a higher listing. I have no idea what these algorithms are, and I probably wouldn’t understand them even if I did.

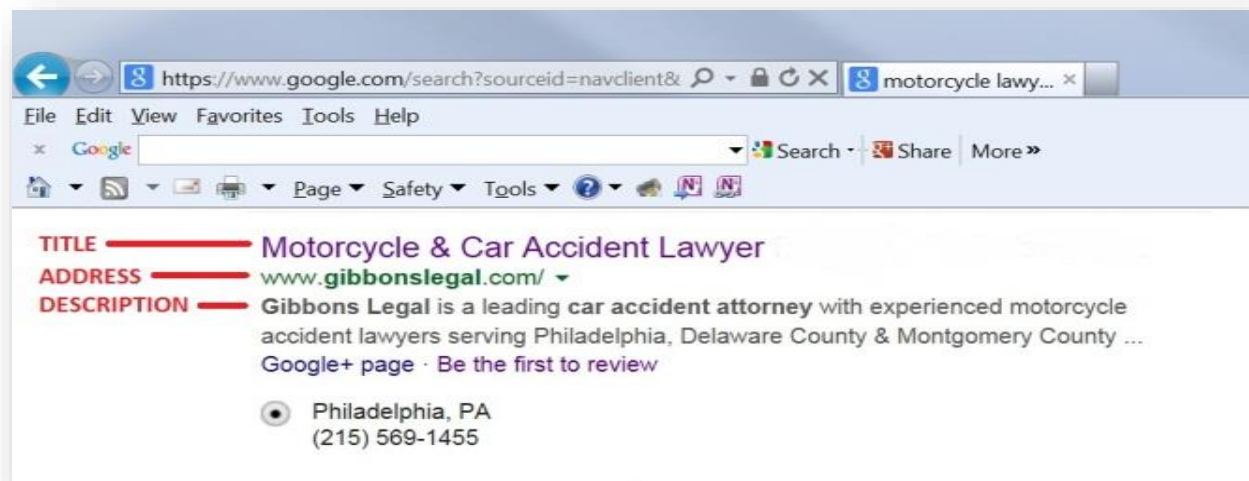
There are two types of searches – keyword searches and natural language searches (sometimes called long-tail searches).

Key word searches look for the specific words or phrases you’re searching. For example, if you search for “personal injury attorney,” you’ll get every website in the world that says “personal injury attorney” on it. Not very helpful considering there could be millions of such

sites. So be specific with your keyword searches. If you're looking for a lawyer who handles offshore oil rig explosions off the Gulf coast of Florida, search for "offshore oil rig explosion lawyer Florida Gulf coast." If you need a lawyer who's handling the Ford ignition switch cases in Bangor, ME, search for "Ford ignition switch lawyer Bangor Maine." And so on. Be specific, and don't bite at the first hook you see.

Natural language searches, or long-tail searches, are exactly as they sound – they're searches in our everyday lingo. "I need a car accident lawyer near Philadelphia, PA" is an example. Natural language searches tend to give more results, and more vague results, than keyword searches because it looks for the individual words rather than the specific phrases. Natural language searches tend to be little less reliable as a result.

As you look at the search results, read the page titles and descriptions to find the most relevant sites for your search. You're searching the internet for information. The page titles and descriptions can help you weed out the product endorsements and sales pitches to find what you're looking for.

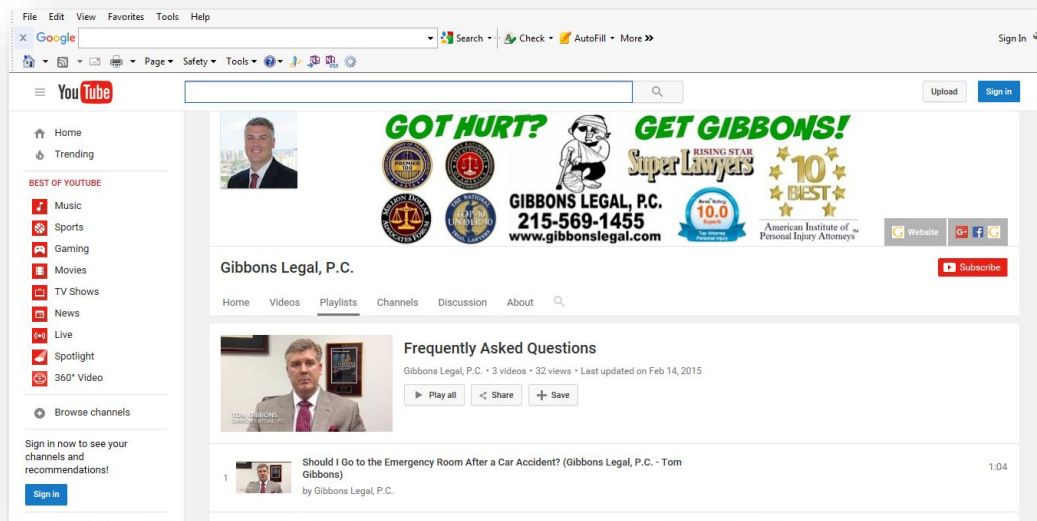


As you click on the links and cycle through the actual sites, first thing you should look at are the firm's practice areas. Why? Because you want to make sure it actually handles cases of the type for which you need help. If it doesn't, move on. If it does, make sure the site gives you useful information about these practice areas, not just a vague overview. You want answers to your questions, not a useless sales pitch for why you should hire the firm.

Next, look for Frequently Asked Questions⁸. This is part and parcel to making sure the firm actually handles cases of the type for which you need help. More importantly, information is king. The answers to these Frequently Asked Questions will educate you enough to interview the lawyer for the job, and, hopefully, will ease your mind a little until you do. No Frequently Asked Questions? Move on. The site is a glorified sales pitch. It's there for self-promotion, not for helping you with your problem.

Lastly, look for client testimonials to see how past clients liked the firm. Obviously, the firm is only going to post the good testimonials, so take these with a grain of salt. But look to make sure former clients found the lawyers to be down to earth, friendly, hard-working, knowledgeable, skilled, easily accessible, etc. Also look to make sure they were really written by past clients and not the firm's marketing team. Do the testimonials look too formal; like they were written by a lawyer or someone working for a lawyer? If so, they probably were.⁹

Don't forget to search YouTube, too. Yes, YouTube is a search engine (owned by Google, in fact). You can find a ton of great stuff on there, and since it's all videos, you don't even have to read anything. Better yet, you actually get to see and get to know the lawyer you're researching. I put some client video testimonials and Frequently Asked Questions videos on my website, and on my YouTube channel.



⁸ I make short videos answering the Frequently Asked Questions, and I put them on my YouTube channel.

⁹ I recently started asking my clients for video testimonials (so you'll never have to question whether they're real). Clients love doing them, too, especially when I put them on YouTube.

Once you've compiled your list of lawyers and law firms, you should check the disciplinary board's website¹⁰. Here you can enter the name of the lawyer you want to search and learn if they've ever been disciplined for losing files, missing deadlines, stealing money from clients, or anything else. If they have, you can actually read the entire opinion detailing their actions, excuses, and discipline. Some of it's pretty shocking. I've read opinions of lawyers being suspended (not disbarred) for "borrowing" clients' settlement money – without their permission – to pay personal credit card bills, mortgages, car loans, vacations, etc. I've also read opinions on lawyers suspended (some disbarred) for rampant drug or alcohol abuse, tax fraud, staging false accidents, forging client signatures, and so much more.

You should also check the local civil dockets ("civil docket search") to see if the lawyer or law firm has ever been sued for legal malpractice. Check the docket in your county, but, more importantly, check the docket in the counties in which the lawyer or firm has offices. Look for the lawyer and the lawyer's firm.

Wouldn't you research a doctor before s/he does open heart surgery on you or a loved one? Researching a lawyer is no different. Do the research. Ask the questions (see Chapter 6). Find the right lawyer for you.

¹⁰ Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania: www.padisciplinaryboard.org

CHAPTER 4: LAWYER RATING SERVICES?

There are lawyer rating services all over the place. Some good; some not so good. Here are the ones I'm asked about most often. Should you decide to rely on one of these sources, you still have to interview the lawyers you find, and ask the right questions, before you'll know if the lawyer is *right* for you.

MILLION DOLLAR ADVOCATES FORUM



Great place to start your search. “The Million Dollar Advocates Forum is one of the most prestigious groups of trial lawyers in the United States. Membership is limited to attorneys who have won million and multi-million dollar verdicts and settlements. There are over 4,000 members throughout the country. Fewer than 1% of U.S. lawyers.”¹¹

“Membership is by invitation only, and invitations are extended only after a very rigid screening process. Members must be a current member of the Bar in good standing, and have acted as the lead lawyer in a case that resulted in a final (non-appealable) jury verdict, arbitration award, or settlement in excess of \$1,000,000.”

Bottom line is that members have handled significant, often very complex, cases. Not every lawyer can handle cases like that, because of which members of the Million Dollar Advocates Forum are often referred the big cases. Do you want the lawyer who handles and wins the significant, complex cases, or the lawyer who refers to the lawyer who handles and wins significant, complex cases?

The Million Dollar Advocates Forum website has a searchable list of members in each state. Check it out, but understand there's more research and interviewing to be done.

¹¹ www.milliondollaradvocates.com



Another great place to start. “Super Lawyers selects attorneys using a patented multiphase selection process. Peer nominations and evaluations are combined with third party research. Each candidate is evaluated on 12 indicators of peer recognition and professional achievement. Selections are made on an annual, state-by-state basis. The objective is to create a credible, comprehensive and diverse listing of outstanding attorneys that can be used as a resource for attorneys and consumers searching for legal counsel.”¹² Here’s a nifty little graph Super Lawyers has on their website:



Super Lawyers has two lists – Super Lawyers and Rising Stars. The Super Lawyers list is for the top 5% of *all* lawyers older than 40, and the Rising Stars list is for the top 2.5% of *all* lawyers younger than 40 (or who have been in practice for 10 years or less). Are the lists legit? Yes.

The New Jersey Supreme Court recently asked Retired Appellate Judge Robert Fall to research whether the Super Lawyer selection process is, in fact, legitimate. After 15 months of scouring through 1,800 pages of documents and 8 days of live testimony, Judge Fall wrote his 304-page opinion, saying:

¹² www.superlawyers.com

The Super Lawyers selection process “is a comprehensive, good-faith and detailed attempt to produce a list of lawyers that have attained high peer recognition, meet ethical standards, and have demonstrated some degree of achievement in their field.”

“The selection procedures employed by [Super Lawyers] are very sophisticated, comprehensive and complex.”

“It is absolutely clear from this record that [Super Lawyers does] not permit a lawyer to buy one’s way onto the list, nor is there any requirement for the purchase of any product for inclusion in the lists or any quid pro quo of any kind or nature associated with the evaluation and listing of an attorney or in the subsequent advertising of one’s inclusion in the lists.”

The Super Lawyers website has a searchable list for each specific practice area and geographic location (city and state). Check it out, but understand there’s more research and interviewing to do.

AVVO



Avvo is a big player in the lawyer rating game, but, in my opinion, it’s a bit misleading. Avvo is, among other things, a Q&A website that allows visitors to post legal questions, hoping to get legal advice without actually having to hire a lawyer. It also allows clients to review their super awesome lawyer, and it allows lawyers to endorse their super awesome lawyer friends. Sounds great, right? If it weren’t for the actual lawyer ratings, it might be.

Avvo rates lawyers on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being “Extreme Caution” and 10 being “Superb.” Avvo won’t disclose its criteria, but admits it does not evaluate a lawyer’s “actual knowledge of the law, past performance in individual matters, personality, or communication skills.”¹³ Aren’t they among the most important qualities of a lawyer?

¹³ www.avvo.com

Strangely, client endorsements are not considered in the lawyer ratings, but peer endorsements are. Why? “Because peer endorsements — one lawyer endorsing another — are a form of industry recognition.”¹⁴ So a lawyer with no client endorsements, little experience, little knowledge of the law, few positive results, little personality, little communication skills, etc. can have a perfect 10 rating with Avvo simply because his peers – his lawyer friends – endorse him. Is that the lawyer you’re looking for?

“Client ratings provide a very important but different kind of perspective, which [Avvo] concluded did not belong in the Avvo Rating. However, in [Avvo’s] research, consumers told [Avvo] that client ratings are very important to them. So [Avvo] includes them in a lawyer’s profile but does not include them in the Avvo Rating.”¹⁵ So, to be clear, consumers *told* Avvo that client ratings are *very important* to them, but Avvo *chooses* not to include them in the lawyer’s Avvo rating. Why?

I have a friend, who we’ll call “Patty.” She’s a great girl. I really like her a lot. Within a year of graduating law school, she decided to hang her own shingle. To my knowledge, she’d never tried or arbitrated a case, or even deposed (interviewed) a witness. She began soliciting lawyer endorsements, and, not too long thereafter, had a perfect 10 rating – and still virtually no experience.

There’s another guy, who we’ll call “Franklin,” who’s on Avvo so much that I don’t know where he finds time to actually practice law. I’ve never heard of him, and have never seen him on the news or in the papers, but he has a perfect 10 rating, too. He has a few client reviews, and over 1,500 lawyer endorsements. 1,500! I don’t even know 1,500 people, let alone 1,500 lawyers. He’s also answered nearly 60,000 Avvo questions. 60,000! And nearly every answer I read recommends the asker contact a lawyer. Brilliant advice, right?

Before writing this chapter, I hadn’t really spent much time on Avvo. So, I decided to actively participate for a few days just to see what would happen. I answered a few questions, solicited a few reviews from clients, and asked a few lawyer friends to endorse me. My rating skyrocketed. I was even awarded the “2015 Clients’ Choice Award”! You definitely want to hire me now, right? Of course! How could you not? I’m a super awesome lawyer with lots of

¹⁴ www.avvo.com

¹⁵ www.avvo.com

experience who will vigorously fight for you and give you a FREE consultation, and now I'm also Avvo's "2015 Clients' Choice Award" recipient!

You can, of course, include Avvo in your research, but not as a substitute for real research, asking questions, and interviewing lawyers.

BEST LAWYERS IN AMERICA

"Inclusion in Best Lawyers is based entirely on peer-review. The methodology is designed to capture, as accurately as possible, the consensus opinion of leading lawyers about the professional abilities of their colleagues within the same geographical area and legal practice area. Best Lawyers employs a sophisticated, conscientious, rational, and transparent survey process designed to elicit meaningful and substantive evaluations of the quality of legal services. Our belief has always been that the quality of a peer-review survey is directly related to the quality of its voting pool."¹⁶

Lawyers are *asked* not to nominate themselves, but the Best Lawyers website says a lawyer's own firm or "marketing team" can nominate them. The nominations go into a database, which is then distributed to the lawyers already on the Best Lawyers list. These "best lawyers" then assign 1 to 5 points to the nominees, even if the nominees are siblings, spouses, neighbors, best friends, or lawyers within the same firm. When the points are tallied, those that make the cut make the list.

There are some absolutely phenomenal lawyers on the Best Lawyers in America list, but there are just as many – if not more – absolutely phenomenal lawyers not on the list. Unlike the Million Dollar Advocates Forum, membership in the Best Lawyers in America seems to be popularity driven rather than results driven. And, unlike Super Lawyers, I'm not aware of a judicial decision or opinion confirming the legitimacy of the Best Lawyers in America selection process. That's not to say there isn't one out there, though.

MARTINDALE-HUBBELL

Martindale-Hubbell's website says "Some lawyers request not to have any rating published, while others may not be rated due to the length of time in practice, the size of the Bar, or other reasons unrelated to their legal abilities or ethical standards, such as a legal practice that

¹⁶ www.bestlawyers.com

involves few peers.”¹⁷ And because some lawyers aren’t rated, Martindale-Hubbell says “The absence of a rating should not be construed as unfavorable.”¹⁸ If the absence of a rating shouldn’t be construed as unfavorable, doesn’t it follow that the presence of a rating shouldn’t be construed as favorable?

CONCLUSION

There are lawyer rating services all over the place. Some good; some not so good. Don’t fall for the hype. Finish your research, and interview your top few choices. I’ll give you the most important interview questions in Chapter 6, and you can add whatever other questions you want. Find the right lawyer for you, not the right lawyer for someone else.

¹⁷ www.martindale.com

¹⁸ www.martindale.com

CHAPTER 5: LAWYER REFERRAL SERVICES?

I have a license to practice law. I also have a credit card, a telephone number, and an e-mail address. That qualifies me for some, if not most, lawyer referral services. And because I'm so qualified, I get lots of e-mails and phone calls telling me there are countless clients just waiting for me to call them (after, of course, I buy their contact information from the lawyer referral service).

Here are two e-mails I got this morning from two different lawyer referral services, both with cases to refer. I wonder how many hundreds of other lawyers got the same e-mails, and whether the people who looked to these referral services for guidance knew their contact information was being indiscriminately distributed to lawyers.

Thomas Gibbons

From: referrals@[REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, January 06, 2015 9:50 AM
To: Thomas Gibbons
Subject: Potential Client - Action Requested by Wednesday 10.00 AM

[REDACTED] received a new client inquiry in Pennsylvania.
[View images?](#) Having trouble viewing this message? [View web version](#)

Need Help?
[REDACTED]

Thomas Gibbons,

[REDACTED] generated a Potential Accident & Injury Client.

[Click for Case Details](#)

[Click for Case Details](#)

There is no cost or obligation to review this Potential Client inquiry. If you would like more information regarding [REDACTED] referral service, please [click here](#) or call us at [REDACTED].

If you would like to update your referral preferences please [click here](#). By providing Potential Clients with more information regarding your practice, you will increase the likelihood of retaining new clients through [REDACTED]. Again, there is no fee for this service.

Sincerely,
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

If you need any assistance, please reply to this email or contact [REDACTED] your Member Representative, at [REDACTED] or call [REDACTED] [Unenroll](#) from our free referral service.

[REDACTED]

Thomas Gibbons

From: Mark B [REDACTED]@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 06, 2015 12:28 PM
To: Thomas Gibbons
Subject: Truck Accident Case - Barbara
Importance: High

Hello Tom,

I've tried reaching you because we've had two cases come in for your area this week from people needing an attorney for their truck accident case.

The case we received yesterday is below:

"I was hit by a semi truck and trailer making an illegal pass. I was in the turning lane and it was a hit and run. After investigating the accident, the police have found the man that hit me. I have a concussion, nerve damage to my neck and back."

I wouldn't try to reach you if there weren't people that needed help. We're not a referral service but we need a firm to handle all of the potential truck accident cases for your area. 187 people have come to our site, [REDACTED] in the past 6 months looking for a truck accident attorney.

They're finding my website #1 organically nationwide when they go to Google and type in: [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] I have too many potential clients falling to the floor and no one to handle them.

I need to fill these spots immediately and I am willing to do what I can for you to make this work for both of us. Let me know as soon as possible if you can handle these cases.

For more information, please call or email me – thanks.

Sincerely,

Mark B
[REDACTED] – Truck Accident Division
Phone: [REDACTED]

This message is a commercial advertisement from [REDACTED]. If you no longer wish to receive such communications in the future, please reply to the email with "REMOVE" in the subject line.
If you are currently working with a [REDACTED] representative regarding any of our services (Exclusive, SEO, Social Media, Website Management or Video Optimization), please disregard this email.

The 2nd e-mail – the one from Mark B – is particularly disturbing to me. It says he's "not a referral service, but we need a firm to handle all of the potential truck accident cases in your area." If they're not a referral service, but need a law firm to handle trucking cases in my area, what are they?

"187 people have come to our site [] in the past 6 months looking for a truck accident attorney. They're finding my website #1 organically nationwide when they go to Google I have too many potential clients falling to the floor and no one to handle them." That's 187 people who have asked this guy for help, and "too many" of them haven't gotten it because he can't handle their cases and doesn't have enough referral lawyers to handle them.

“I need to fill these spots immediately and I am willing to do what I can for you to make this work for both of us.” That’ right – he wants it to work for *both of us*! What about the person who asked for the help? Who cares as long as it works for *both of us*, right? No!

Should you stumble upon any of the websites, TV or radio commercials, or other ads claiming to have a “list of qualified lawyers” for you, proceed with caution. For some, the sole qualifications are a license to practice law, a credit card, a telephone number, and an e-mail address.

Don’t let someone else do the research for you. Do your own research. Ask your own questions (see Chapter 6). And forget the lawyer referral services.

CHAPTER 6: THE JOB INTERVIEW (REMEMBER – YOU'RE THE BOSS!)

Good lawyers understand that you've got questions, and you'd like answers. So ask as many questions as you need to.

Also remember that this is an employment relationship. You're the employer, and the lawyer is the perspective employee. *You* are interviewing *the lawyer* for the job. When was the last time you went on a job interview and the potential employer didn't ask you any questions? Probably never. There's no difference here. You need to interview the lawyers¹⁹. Don't be intimidated by this. It's really pretty simple, and, again, the good lawyers expect it.

Here are the questions I think are most important. Even when potential clients don't ask me these questions, I volunteer the answers because I believe they're so important. You don't have to ask all these questions, but you should ask at least a few lawyer specific questions and a few case specific questions.

LAWYER SPECIFIC QUESTIONS:

1. *How long have you been practicing?* Don't look solely at the length of practice. Focus more on what the lawyer has done thus far.
2. *How long have you worked for this firm, and where did you work before?* If the lawyer has worked at a lot of different firms, ask why. They may have difficulty working well with others.
3. *Have you ever been disciplined by a court or bar association?* This one is pretty self-explanatory.
4. *What kind of hours do you work?* Work ethic and time management are important. Some lawyers are 9-5'ers; some work until the wee hours of the morning. One is not necessarily better than the other. What matters is how the lawyer manages their work time.
5. *Can I get ahold of you after hours and on the weekends?* Remember that lawyers are people, too, and often have families. Don't expect a lawyer to be available 24/7, except for emergencies.
6. *How many cases is your firm currently handling? More importantly, how many cases are you currently handling?* The more files, the less individual attention you might get.

¹⁹ Understand that the lawyer also needs to interview you. They need to know what your case is about, and what your expectations are. Just because you're interviewing them for the job doesn't mean they have to accept it if offered. More importantly, they won't really be able to answer your case specific questions without first knowing what happened.

7. *Do you regularly handle cases like mine?* You don't want a jack of all trades; you want a master of one.
8. *Have you ever lost a case?* Lawyers who don't lose don't handle difficult cases. Do you want a lawyer who cherry picks the easy stuff and runs away from the hard stuff?
9. *What was your most difficult case, and how did you handle it?* Regardless of whether the lawyer won or lost, the point of this question is to find out how much fight the lawyer has in them, and the extent of their skills.
10. *Do you have legal malpractice insurance?* Lawyers aren't required to carry malpractice insurance, so some lawyers don't. Always ask.
11. *Do you teach or lecture about the law?* This is pretty self-explanatory, too. They wouldn't be teaching if they weren't good at what they do.
12. *Have you written any books or articles on the law?* If so, ask for a free copy. And read it. The book will show whether the lawyer really knows what they're doing.
13. *How often do you take classes to hone your skills or stay up-to-date on the law?* Lawyers are required to take Continuing Legal Education (CLE) classes, but they're not required to take classes in their particular field. They're also not required to pay attention in class, and aren't tested on what was taught. Make sure the lawyer's taking classes applicable to the type of case for which you need them, not just for meeting the CLE requirements.
14. *Do you do any work for an insurance company?* You need to know where the lawyer's allegiance lies.
15. *Can you recommend another lawyer I should talk to; a lawyer you'd talk to if you needed one?* If the lawyer won't name someone, forget them and move on. Good lawyers aren't afraid of your hiring someone else. Good lawyers believe their personal and communication skills and reputation will win out.

CASE SPECIFIC QUESTIONS:

1. *What's the hardest part of my case?* Better to know up front than to find out the hard way after years of waiting.
2. *What's the process for handling my case?* Always best to make sure everyone is on the same page right from the start.

3. *Who else will be working on my case – partners, associates, paralegals, secretaries, clerks?* Lawyers can't, and shouldn't, do everything on their own. The good lawyers have a team of people working on cases, which team the lawyer oversees and directs.
4. *How often will you be in touch with me?* You and your lawyer may need to be in touch every week. You may not need to be in touch for months on end. It really depends on the type of case for which you hired the lawyer.
5. *How long will my case take?* Again, it's best to be on the same page right from the get go. Some cases are over in days or weeks after hiring a lawyer. Others last years.
6. *Will I have to go to court?* Depends on your case. You want to know the likelihood of going to court because knowing will help put you in the right mindset right from the start.
7. *What's my case worth?* This is a trick question. Lawyers have absolutely no way of knowing what your case is worth at the initial meeting. They need to do their own due diligence and research before giving you a range. You should be cautious of any lawyer who gives you a figure at the initial meeting.

Remember, *you* are interviewing *the lawyer* for the job. Good lawyers understand that. So ask as many questions as you need to ask.

CHAPTER 7: FINAL THOUGHTS

Remember that every lawyer is different. We all have different training, different styles, different experiences, different points of view, different philosophies, and, most importantly, different skills. Lawyer advertising isn't necessarily designed to help you distinguish lawyers from one another. It's designed to get your attention. It's designed for the lawyer's name recognition. It's designed to deliver a simple message so often that you can't forget it (so you'll call when you do need a lawyer).

There are hundreds of different practice areas and subpractice areas in which lawyers can "focus" their practice. And once we chose that focus, that's generally all we do. In what practice area do you need a lawyer? Do you want a jack of all trades, or a master of one? Do you want a settlement lawyer, or a trial lawyer? You need to answer these questions before you can really focus your search.

There are literally millions of websites to help you find the right lawyer, and plenty of lawyer rating and referral services, too. But they should be only a small part of your search. Simply put, there is no substitute for actually interviewing lawyers. Getting to know them. Figuring out for yourself with whom you want to work; who you want working for you.

"Millions recovered for clients just like you." "Rated by *whomever*." "Decades of experience." "As seen on *local news*." "I'll fight for you!" "Aggressive representation!" Lawyer advertising is always the same, and none of it means a darn thing if it doesn't lead you to the right lawyer for you and your case.

FORGET THE SILLY LAWYER ADS

**Do the research. Ask the questions.
Find the right lawyer for your case.
(Even if it's not me.)**

GOOD LUCK!

APPENDIX A: PROOF IS IN THE PUDDING (NOTABLE VICTORIES)

Most lawyers brag about their biggest recoveries, but these big recoveries don't tell you the true nature of the case or the legal skill required to lock down the win. If someone is killed in a car accident clearly caused by the defendant, does the case require a lot of legal skill and know-how? Does it require an aggressive, hard-nosed, ass kickin' litigator?

Rather than brag about my biggest recoveries, I'll brag a little about *some* of my most difficult victories²⁰. Victories that required legal skill and know-how coupled with aggressive, hard-nosed, ass kickin' representation. After all, you don't want to know how well I handled the easy cases. You want to know how well I handled the difficult cases.

Confidential Settlement in Philadelphia County, PA (Bad Faith Insurance Practices)

Confidential settlement with a major insurance company for bad faith insurance practices resulting from the insurance company's failure to negotiate the settlement of a car accident claim in good faith.

\$1,100,000 Verdict in Montgomery County, PA (Motorcycle Accident)

\$1,100,000 verdict for an unlicensed, drunk motorcyclist who suffered a brain injury when he was cut off by a car exiting a parking lot, forcing him to dump his motorcycle and strike his head on the pavement. My client was not wearing a helmet as required by state law, and he was more than double Pennsylvania's legal intoxication limit. I was able to preclude this damning information from being admitted into evidence, which ultimately sealed the victory. Believing my client's drunkenness caused the accident, and his failure to wear a helmet caused his injuries, the defense chose not to make any pre-verdict settlement offers, making the win all that much more satisfying. This verdict was a featured story in *The Legal Intelligencer*, *Pennsylvania Law Weekly*, and *Verdict Search: Pennsylvania*.

²⁰ **DISCLAIMER:** The results are specific to the facts and legal circumstances of each case and should not be used to form an expectation that the same results could be obtained in other cases, even if inherently similar.

\$500,000 Settlement in York County, PA (Slip and Fall)

\$500,000 settlement for a man who broke his ankle when he fell from the second floor balcony of his rented apartment in York, PA. My client had lived in the apartment for nearly 2 years, during which time the balcony was in such disrepair that he used it only once. In fact, he bolted the door shut, and tied it to a hook in the wall, so his 3-year old daughter couldn't venture out onto it. The defense initially denied the claim, arguing our client "assumed the risk" of falling when he walked out onto the balcony knowing it was inherently dangerous, but reconsidered after my engineering expert wrote a scathing report. This settlement was a featured story in *Pennsylvania Law Weekly* and *Verdict Search: Pennsylvania*.

\$490,000 Settlement in Philadelphia County, PA (Police Brutality)

\$490,000 settlement for a drunk Irishman whose neck was broken while in Philadelphia Police custody. My client had been arrested for simple assault after punching a bartender, punching an off-duty police officer, and spitting at uniformed police officers summoned to the scene. While being transported to the precinct for processing, he alleged to have been taken on a "nickel ride" — a wild ride intended to injure him — which resulted in his broken neck. The police, however, argued he was a belligerent drunk who broke his own neck by violently banging his head against the holding cell bars. My client was initially represented by another law firm, which *lost* his case in federal court. After I was hired, I filed the case in state court (Philadelphia County), arguing alternative theories of liability, and settled the case for \$490,000 (of the \$500,000 maximum allowed under Pennsylvania law) just hours before our medical expert was scheduled to testify. The settlement also spawned the City's massive investigation into its use of Emergency Patrol Wagons and the manner in which detainees are transported. This case was a featured story on *Fox 29 News: Special Investigation with Jeff Cole* and *ABC News*, and in *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, *The Legal Intelligencer*, *Pennsylvania Law Weekly*, and *Verdict Search: Pennsylvania*.

\$313,000 Verdict in Philadelphia County, PA (Trip and Fall)

\$313,000 verdict for a man who broke his ankle after falling down a flight of stairs at his rented apartment. My client was rolling a motorcycle down the stairs, which broke beneath his feet, causing him to fall. The defense, of course, argued my client broke the stairs himself by rolling the motorcycle down, step by step. This verdict was a featured story in *Pennsylvania Law Weekly* and *Verdict Search: Pennsylvania*.

\$250,000 Verdict in Camden County, NJ (Car Accident)

\$250,000 verdict for a 60-year old man who aggravated his pre-existing neck and back injuries when he was rear ended by an SUV. Because my client had been treating for neck and back problems for years before to the accident, the defense argued his injuries weren't *caused* by the accident. For this reason, my client *lost* the case when represented by another law firm before hiring me. On appeal, I was asked to step in and try the case to a jury, which found in his favor with this incredible verdict. Because of my client's long-standing history of neck and back problems, and because the defense won the case the first time around, it didn't make any pre-verdict settlement offers, thus making the verdict that much more spectacular. This verdict was a featured story in *New Jersey Law Journal* and *Verdict Search: New Jersey*.

\$250,000 Settlement in Montgomery County, PA (Car Accident)

\$250,000 settlement for a 58-year old man who aggravated a pre-existing shoulder injury when he was rear-ended by a sanitation truck. Prior to the accident, my client had been treating for a torn rotator cuff and torn biceps muscle for nearly a year, because of which the defense initially argued the injuries weren't *caused* by the accident. This settlement was a featured story in *Pennsylvania Law Weekly* and *Verdict Search: Pennsylvania*.

\$240,000 Settlement in Philadelphia County, PA (SEPTA Bus Accident)

\$240,000 settlement for a man who broke his elbow when fell while walking to his seat on a SEPTA bus as it was pulling off from a stop. The defense initially argued my client "assumed the risk," and was therefor responsible for the fall (and resulting injuries), by choosing to walk past 19 empty seats before the bus started to move. Thereafter, the

defense argued it was immune from liability under the ill-drafted “jerk and jolt doctrine,” which provides bus companies aren’t responsible for injuries caused by the “ordinary movement of the bus.” This settlement was a featured story on *Fox 29 News: Special Investigation with Jeff Cole*, and in *Pennsylvania Law Weekly* and *Verdict Search: Pennsylvania*.

\$235,000 Settlement in Montgomery County, PA (Car Accident)

\$235,000 settlement for two motorists who suffered numerous broken bones when another car forced their car off the road and directly into a 100-year-old tree. The defense initially argued that one of my clients caused the accident by speeding and illegally passing the defendant driver on the right, but I was able to disprove this with the defendant driver’s own testimony and an accident reconstructionist. This settlement was a featured story in *Pennsylvania Law Weekly* and *Verdict Search: Pennsylvania*.

\$225,000 Settlement in Delaware County, PA (Truck Accident)

\$225,000 settlement for a woman rear-ended by a tractor trailer in Chester, PA. This was a particularly difficult case because my client did not suffer any physical injuries. Rather, she suffered post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), for which she went to a psychologist only 3 times. The trucking company defended by arguing my client's PTSD was "in her own head," because of which she shouldn't be believed. But, with the help of a highly trained psychologist and The Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI-2) test, I was able to prove the horrifying nature of the mental injury and get my client justice days before trial was scheduled to begin. This case was a featured story in *Verdict Search: Pennsylvania*.

\$210,000.00 Settlement in Philadelphia County, PA (Trip and Fall)

\$210,000 settlement for a woman who injured her back when she stepped into an uncovered 6” drain pipe in broad daylight. The defense did not offer to settle the case before trial, arguing my client should have seen (and avoided) the uncovered pipe, and that my client’s injuries were not caused by the fall. This was a particularly difficult case as my client had very minimal treatment, going to a chiropractor for just a month before

undergoing treatment with a pain specialist, who prescribed years of highly addictive pain medication. Justice prevailed, however, as I negotiated a \$210,000 settlement *during* trial. This case was a featured story in *Pennsylvania Law Weekly* and *Verdict Search: Pennsylvania*.

\$200,000 Verdict in Cumberland County, NJ (Car Accident)

\$200,000 verdict for a 20-year old woman who suffered facial scarring when the car in which she was a passenger t-boned a pickup truck that ran a stop sign. My client was thrown forward into the windshield because she was not wearing her seatbelt – a violation of New Jersey law – because of which the defense argued our client caused her own injuries (i.e., she would not have suffered the injuries had she worn a seatbelt). The highest pre-verdict settlement offer was only \$40,000.

\$175,000 Settlement in Montgomery County, PA (Slip and Fall)

\$175,000 settlement for a 45-year old woman who slipped on ice in the parking lot of her apartment complex just hours after a snow storm ended. The parking lot had already been plowed, but, because the storm had only just ended, property management had not yet had an opportunity to salt. My client, overcome by cabin fever, broke her arm when she slipped and fell as she left the building for what she hoped to be a nice walk in the fresh winter wonderland. This case was particularly difficult as I had to overcome substantial issues of my client's own negligence as well as issues with the defendant's having little time to salt the parking lot. This case was a featured story in *Verdict Search: Pennsylvania*.

\$149,000 Settlement in Delaware County, PA (Motorcycle Accident)

\$149,000 settlement for a motorcycle passenger who suffered a broken foot and minor scarring to her knees and hands when she was thrown from the back of a motorcycle after it rear-ended a car.

\$142,500 Settlement in Chester County, PA (Car Accident)

\$142,500 settlement for two motorists whose car t-boned a car that turned left directly in front of them. The driver suffered only a sprained Achilles tendon in her ankle, for which she had very little medical treatment, and the passenger suffered a partially torn meniscus ligament in her knee, for which she underwent minor surgery and three (3) months of physical therapy. The case settled just a month before trial was scheduled to begin.

\$140,000 Settlement in Chester County, PA (Work Accident)

\$140,000 settlement for a UPS driver who fractured his tibia (shin) when he fell off his truck during a routine delivery. My client had only been working for UPS for two days when he got hurt.

\$135,000 Settlement in Berks County, PA (Dog Bite)

\$135,000 settlement for a 7-year old girl who needed 6 stitches after she was bit on the arm by her neighbor's dog while at her neighbor's house. This case was a featured story in *Verdict Search: Pennsylvania*.

\$125,000 Settlement in Philadelphia County, PA (Car Accident)

\$125,000 settlement for a woman whose car was sideswiped by a UPS truck, causing only \$1,200 in property damage. The passenger in my client's car, represented by another attorney, settled her claim for \$3,500.

\$115,000 Settlement in Montgomery County, PA (Car Accident)

\$115,000 settlement for a woman who was rear-ended in Norristown, PA. My client's car had only \$400 in property damage, because of which the defense initially argued my client couldn't possibly be injured. But, with the help of a highly qualified orthopedic surgeon and a biomechanical engineer, I was able to disprove the defense and get every penny of available insurance just before trial was scheduled to begin. This case was a featured story in *Verdict Search: Pennsylvania*.

\$95,000 Verdict in Philadelphia, PA (Car Accident)

\$95,000 verdict for a motorist who suffered minor back injuries when another car side swiped his car. Being limited-tort, my client was not eligible to recover any money for his pain and suffering unless I proved he suffered a serious impairment of a body function, which I was able to do through his testimony regarding how his back injury affected his ability to work, play basketball, fish, roller skate, swim, go on amusement park rides, and play with his 10-year old daughter. The highest pre-verdict settlement offer, which came during jury deliberations, was only \$5,000. This offer was, of course, rejected. This verdict was a featured story in *The Legal Intelligencer*, *Pennsylvania Law Weekly*, and *Verdict Search: Pennsylvania*.

\$95,000 Settlement in Franklin County, PA (Truck Accident)

\$95,000 settlement for a tractor trailer driver who suffered minor back injuries when he was rear-ended by another tractor trailer.

\$85,000 Settlement in Chester County, PA (Work Accident)

\$85,000 settlement for a construction worker who fractured his ankle when he fell from scaffolding he negligently assembled (he forgot to install several screws).

\$85,000 Settlement in Philadelphia County, PA (Car Accident)

\$85,000 settlement for a disabled elderly woman who suffered minor back injuries when her parked car was hit by a car backing out of its parking spot at a Kentucky Fried Chicken.

\$81,000 Verdict in Philadelphia County, PA (Car Accident)

\$81,000 verdict for a pedestrian who was hit by a car as he was riding his bike. The verdict included \$26,000 in sanctions against the defendant driver's insurance company for failure to properly investigate the claim.

\$75,000 Settlement in Montgomery County, PA (Car Accident)

\$75,000 settlement for a man who sprained his arthritic knee when another car ran a stop sign and t-boned him. This case was particularly difficult because the defendant driver's insurance company, upon learning of the accident (before I was retained), went to my client's house and offered him \$175 in exchange for his agreement not to sue the defendant driver. My client, not understanding the offer, agreed and signed a contract waiving his right to sue. Believing my client was tricked, I sued the defendant driver anyway. Within weeks of my filing suit, I convinced the defendant driver's insurance company its claims adjuster fraudulently induced my client to sign the contract, because of which it was invalid.

\$65,000 Settlement in Berks County, PA (Dog Bite)

\$65,000 settlement for a 5-year old girl who needed 2 stitches after she was bit on the arm by her neighbor's dog while at her neighbor's house. This case was a featured story in *Verdict Search: Pennsylvania*.

\$65,000 Verdict in Philadelphia County, PA (Slip and Fall)

\$65,000 verdict for woman who slipped and fell on water she tracked into a Giant supermarket in Aldan, PA (Delaware County). This was a particularly difficult case because store video showed 27 other people walking in the area during the 6 minutes before and after the fall, and no one else slipped and fell. The store used the video footage to argue the floor was not, in fact, wet, and that it had no way of knowing a customer (my client) could track water into the store. The store also argued my client was uninjured in the fall because her visit to the emergency room failed to show any evidence of injury – there was no bruising, x-rays were negative, and the physical exam was completely normal. My client also waited a month to get additional medical treatment, which was sporadic thereafter. After an 8-day jury trial, I finally got justice for my client with a \$65,000 verdict. The defendant store did not make any settlement offers before the verdict, making the victory all that much more satisfying. The case was a featured story in *Verdict Search: Pennsylvania*.

\$60,000 Settlement in Bucks County, PA (Slip and Fall)

\$60,000 settlement for a woman who slipped on a sidewalk outside a dentist's office. I successfully argued that my client slipped because of an improper slope of the sidewalk, coupled with a wind chill below 32 degrees, which caused ice to form during a rain storm the night before my client's fall.

\$58,000 Settlement in Philadelphia County, PA (Car Accident)

\$58,000 settlement for two motorists whose car was rear-ended by a Mini Cooper. Neither car had any property damage whatsoever, because of which the defense denied an accident even happened, let alone caused my clients' injuries. The case settled while my medical expert was testifying on the witness stand.

\$50,000 Settlement in Philadelphia County, PA (SEPTA Bus Accident)

\$50,000 settlement for a drunk pedestrian who stumbled in front of a moving SEPTA bus. With the help of an accident reconstructionist, I was able to prove the SEPTA bus driver should have seen my client stumbling into the roadway at least 200 feet before he struck my client. The case settled during a pre-trial conference with the trial judge.

\$45,000 Settlement in Philadelphia County, PA (Car Accident)

\$45,000 settlement for a motorist who suffered minor back injuries when the box truck he was driving was rear-ended by a small car, causing little to no damage to either vehicle. Two days before this accident, my client was involved in an accident in which he drove his car (while drunk) into several parked cars, causing him various injuries needing emergency medical care.

\$28,000 Settlement in Philadelphia County, PA (Bicycle Accident)

\$28,000 settlement for a teenager who rode his bicycle into the side of an improperly parked mail truck.

\$26,000 Settlement in Montgomery County, PA (Car Accident)

\$26,000 settlement for two children who suffered minor brush burns from their seat belts when the car in which they were passengers was cut off by another car.

\$14,000 Verdict in Philadelphia County, PA (Car Accident)

\$14,000 verdict for a man who suffered whiplash injuries in his neck when he was scared by a motorcyclist who revved his engine too loudly and without warning right next to my client's open car window. The defense, of course, argued my client couldn't possibly have injured his neck in such a scenario, but I was able to disprove this argument using my clients' pre-existing injuries (cervical herniations) and medical testimony. As was expected, the defense did not make any pre-verdict settlement offers.

Want to see more? Check out the *Notable Victories* page on my website (www.gibbonslegal.com).

APPENDIX B: PEOPLE ARE TALKING (CLIENT TESTIMONIALS)!

I'm a bit of a sports nut, particularly baseball. I've played competitive sports all my life, and still play competitive men's softball and ice hockey. I also coach 3 – 4 youth baseball and softball teams from March through October, and coach at least one winter baseball clinic, every year. First rule I teach all my players is to play with a smile – you always play better when you're having fun. The second rule I teach my players is to let their play speak louder than their words. I hate trash talk, but I hate self-promotion even more. What does that have to do with this book? I'm a lawyer, and without clients, I'd be a lawyer without a job. So, knowing you're probably wondering whether my actions speak louder than my words, I thought you might like to hear what some of my clients had to say²¹.

Roland E. (SEPTA Bus Accident): “I was in a SEPTA bus accident. After I got on the bus, the bus driver took off like a bat out of hell. I fell and broke my arm. All the lawyers I visited or interviewed told me to see Tom Gibbons. When I met Tom, he told me the truth. He told me this case is going to be really hard. But he promised me he would fight for me, and he did. I love Tom Gibbons. He's more than a friend. He's like family to me. Anytime I was depressed, any time I was feeling low, he'd give me a call and lift my spirits. We laughed about a whole lot of things, you know. Tom Gibbons is the best lawyer I've ever met. I'd recommend him to anybody.”

Mark G. (Slip and Fall): “I was carrying a motorcycle down the steps at my apartment, and the steps broke beneath my feet. I got hurt really bad. I called another lawyer, and I asked him for help. He said he couldn't do it, and he referred me to Tom Gibbons. I was getting really depressed and thought my life was going to be over. Tom was always there for me. Every time I would start to feel down about myself, I would text or call him. He never told me not to, and never gave me an attitude about it. He would always be there for me, and talk me through things. He took care of everything from day one, and got things done for me. He's my friend, and will be a friend for life.”

²¹ Want to hear more? Check out my website or the Gibbons Legal channel on YouTube for video testimonials.

Anitra M. (Car Accident): “I was in a car accident. A guy came out of a parking space and t-boned me. His insurance company basically tried to say it was my fault. I was looking for a lawyer, and a few people recommended Tom Gibbons. He fought for me from day one. He explained the whole process to me. He wouldn’t accept that it was my fault. He made sure the driver and the insurance company were held accountable. It was never a problem getting in contact with Mr. Gibbons office or his staff, either. He even gave me his personal cellphone number for when I couldn’t get in touch with him at the office. I wish there were more attorney like him, who actually care about their clients! I’ll definitely keep in touch. I won’t take the money and run. LOL. Tom Gibbons – the lawyer who cares about his clients, not just his pay check!”

Leroy A. (SEPTA Bus Accident): “I was lost and confused, and there were a lot of things I didn’t understand. I needed a lawyer. A friend of mine recommended Tom to me. I went to Tom, and he talked to me. He understood what I was going through. He said “don’t worry; I’ll take care of it.” This man actually bent over backwards for me. He reached out to me, and he took me by the hand like a little child. He guided me back to where I felt a little safe again. If you need someone to back you up, look for Tom. He’ll help you.”

Maria W. (Car Accident): “I was picking my son up from school, and I was t-boned. I called a couple lawyers, and they referred me to Tom Gibbons. He’s an excellent lawyer. He worked hard. His staff was very courteous, and they met all my needs. I never had a hard time getting a hold of Tom, either. He called me on weekends and after hours. I even have his cell phone number. Sometimes I e-mailed him, too. He would always get back to me right away. If there was something he couldn’t help me with, or if he wasn’t there, his staff was there. They were very courteous and would help me with everything. I was offered a settlement, and I wanted to settle for it, but he kept pushing me and telling me not to settle. He kept asking me not to give in, and saying he could get me more. And he did! Right before we went to trial, I was offered a really, really nice price. Tom is an excellent lawyer, and I’d recommend him to anyone.”

Salvatore D. (Trip and Fall): “Thank you for your time and advice. It really calmed me down and made me feel a lot better, and really educated me. Your advice was terrific. You really helped me out as a friend. You’re an incredible attorney.”

Alexandro T. (Car Accident): “I had a car accident, and a friend highly recommended I call Tom Gibbons. Tom made the whole situation a lot easier. His friendly staff made the whole process a very pleasant experience. One of the things I was the most content with is that he was very, very honest. Everything was so easy with him. I’m very happy with him and his staff, and if anything were to happen to me again, I wouldn’t hesitate to call him to help me out.”

Bruce S. (Car Accident): “I was walking, and was hit by a car. Left for dead in the middle of the street. Tom Gibbons took care of everything. Throughout the whole thing he kept me informed. He let me know what was going on. Christmas, birthdays, he was always there. Something would come in the mail. I’d definitely use Tom Gibbons for anything. He was awesome”

Cedric S. (Car Accident): “I was in a bad car accident. This gentleman had road rage; I was sitting at a stop sign and got hit by him. I was referred to Tom by a fellow softball player. I had another lawyer before I got Tom, and the person just wasn’t doing the job. So when my buddy from the softball team told me to get in touch with Tom, I called him up. I was really impressed with his work ethic. He made me feel at ease. He made me feel comfortable. He made me feel like a family member who was taken care of. That was the biggest thing. It’s been great having him on my side. It’s been so easy. He’s done all the work. He explained to us what was going on, what we need to do, and where we stood on the case and how long it was going to take. And his staff was always reaching out to us, too. Very friendly, always asking if there was anything they could do for us. Really a great experience.”

Francisco S. (Slip and Fall): “I had a fall accident, and had to get my leg amputated. I was able to acquire Tom Gibbons as my lawyer. Not only is he my lawyer, but he has been

my friend. He has been there at the times I've called him. Every time that I left him a message, he has gotten back to me in a timely fashion. So if you get hurt, I say get Gibbons."

Isabelle L. (Truck Accident): "My husband, Francisco, was in an accident. He doesn't know how to speak English, so I'm here for him. Another lawyer recommended Tom Gibbons. He is a great lawyer. He told us everything; he explained to us everything. I'm so glad we had Tom Gibbons as our lawyer. I like his staff. They are real nice. They'd call me and talk on the phone about the case. I am happy here."

Jessica H. (Car Accident): "I was rear-ended on my way home from work. The driver who rear-ended me stumbled away from the accident and denied he was the driver. Tom investigated and worked very hard to make sure he and his insurance company were held accountable. He was outstanding. I would recommend him highly, and would definitely use him again."

Joyce M. (Car Accident): "I fell on the sidewalk and I broke my foot. I contacted a lawyer, and they referred me to Tom Gibbons. I'm just so happy they did."

Linda O. (Car Accident): "I was sitting, waiting for a red light, and got rear-ended. I went to a lawyer, and they referred me to Tom Gibbons. I'm so happy they referred me to Tom Gibbons. He is dedicated, honest, and very, very, very, very, very good. I would highly recommend Tom Gibbons."

Priscilla B. (Car Accident): "Tom is so good! He really had to fight for this case. He really went after the guy. He did an excellent job. And he wasn't just my lawyer, either; he was my friend. I could call him at any time. He's the best!"

Samuel H. (Car Accident): "I was t-boned by a police officer. My sister-in-law told me to get in touch with Tom Gibbons, and I did. We talked about the case. He told me it would be a tough case. They denied the case and were not trying to honor the fact that they were at

fault. Tom fought very hard and got me a very, very good settlement. In actuality, I never believed that I would have settled for this amount of money or have quite the lawyer like Tom. I really didn't know him in the beginning, but as the process went along, I came to trust and believe in him. He was a great lawyer, and is very, very good at what he does."

Julissa B. (Car Accident): "I was in a car accident, and I was referred by my previous lawyer to Tom Gibbons. He's a good lawyer; he really helped me out. Anytime Tom wasn't available, Lynne was available. She'd help me with anything. Anytime I called with questions, she was there to help. She called to make sure everything was fine and kept in touch with me during the case, and she would also send me letters to remind me of depositions and anything that was coming up or just to see how I was."

Maxine S. (Paratransit Accident): "My daughter has special needs. She rode a Connect bus going to her day program, and she came home complaining about her neck hurting and asking if I could rub it. So, for a couple days, I was rubbing her neck. Finally she said "Oh yeah. By the way, mama, I forgot to tell you our bus was hit. They just transferred me to another bus and took me to my day program." At that point, I was kind of upset and didn't know what to do because no one called me to tell me that she was in a bus accident. So what I did was call a lawyer I knew, and he told me he had a real good lawyer for me. He told me to call Thomas Gibbons, and said he'll take care of everything. Since that day, Tom has worked so hard for us. They were trying to say it wasn't their fault, and that they didn't have a recording of the accident. He just kept going at it and going at it. Mr. Gibbons always reassured me that he was not giving up on this because they were wrong. He wasn't going to let them sweep it underneath the rug. He gave us very good results. We're so very satisfied. He never gave up fighting, and we're so happy about that."

Terry S. (SEPTA Bus Accident): "I was in a bus accident. Was looking at my phone, and BOOM – bus crashed. I was recommended to Tom Gibbons by a family friend. He's the real deal. The real deal. I've been in accidents before, and dealt with a lot of lawyers. I

know about lawyers. But Tom Gibbons? Straight up and down real dude. Tom never ceased to amaze me. I recommend him to whoever. That's a real good dude right there. I'm from the streets of Philadelphia. Whenever things get crazy, I call Tom. My peoples me just sitting around at the card table talking about something that's wrong? Hey; call Tom. Real deal."

Rodney W. (Car Accident): "I was in a car accident. A car blew through a stop sign and t-boned me. A friend of the family referred me to Tom Gibbons. Hiring Tom was one of the best decisions I ever made. He's an excellent, excellent lawyer. He will fight and fight and fight until he gets you what you want. He's very good."

Willie Mae M. (Car Accident): "I was in a car accident. I had another lawyer, but he said he couldn't do anything for me. I then met Tom Gibbons. He spoke at a seminar at my church, and I thought he did a great job, so I hired him. He has been very helpful. He worked with me, and gave me good instructions. I was very impressed. He never left me alone; he always kept in contact while he was working. And he worked . . . until he worked it out. I am very happy with Tom. He is a very good lawyer."

Jason H. (Car Accident): "I was victim of a car accident. I was going through a stop sign, and whoever was driving in the other direction blew their stop sign and hit me head on. A friend of the family sent me to Tom Gibbons. He worked really hard for me. They had given us petty little officers, and Tom turned them down. He fought, and he fought, and they offered a really nice settlement right before trial. I really thank Mr. Gibbons. He did an excellent job. A wonderful job. Very patient guy, very patient. He's a really great guy. Really personable and down to earth. You can talk to him about anything. He'd sit on the phone with me for a half hour if he had the time. I'm really grateful, really thankful. It's like a dream come true almost. He's the lawyer you want. Honestly. Tom's the lawyer you want to get."

Virginia G. (Car Accident): "I was in a really bad car accident, and I hurt my back. I sought Tom Gibbons as my lawyer because my mom referred me to him. She used him a couple times before, and she was really happy with him. I met him, and I loved him. And

everyone who works for him is awesome and really friendly. He will call you to make sure everything is ok. He always keep you up-to-date with everything that is going on. I didn't really have to do anything. He did everything. He was great! He treated us like family. He always asked me about my kids and my mom and dad. He's just awesome. I loved him, and I would recommend him to anyone."

Samuel P. (Car Accident): "Mr. Tom Gibbons is my attorney. I got introduced to him when I got in this bad accident. I noticed a lot of quick actions with a lot of results. Regarding his services, Tom goes above and beyond. He goes far and beyond your expectations. He looks cool and calm, but he is action packed. He knows what he is doing."

Michael B. (Car Accident): "I was in a car accident, and a friend told me to call Tom Gibbons. He fought for me, and got me paid. I had other cases before, and the lawyers didn't fight for me at all. I ended up not getting money at all, even after four years. Not with Tom Gibbons. And he isn't just my lawyer now. He's my friend. He made me feel like part of the Gibbons family. I can call him and get advice on anything I needed. He was always there. He'd send me cards every holiday, and send me and my wife cards on our birthdays. He is a very good guy, and I would recommend him to anyone."

APPENDIX C: PARTIAL LIST OF PRACTICE AREAS

Here's a partial list of areas in which lawyers concentrate their practices. I got it from www.hg.org/practiceareas.

- A -

- Aboriginal People
- Administrative Law
- Admiralty and Maritime Law
- Adoption Law
- Advertising Law
- Aerospace Law
- Agency Law
- Agriculture
- Alcohol Law
- Alimony
- Alternative Dispute Resolution
- Amnesty
- Animal Bites
- Animals/Wildlife
- Antitrust Law
- Appellate Practice
- Arbitration
- Arson
- Art and Culture
- Asbestos Mesothelioma
- Assault
- Asset Protection
- Auto Dealer Fraud
- Automobile Accidents
- Aviation Accidents
- Aviation Law

- B -

- Bad Faith Insurance Law
- Banking Law
- Bankruptcy

- Battery
- Biotechnology Law
- Birth Injury
- Blackmail Law
- Boating Accident
- Bonds Law
- Brain Injury Law
- Bribery
- Burglary
- Bus Accident
- Business Law

- C -

- Capital Markets
- Car Accident
- Case Law
- Catastrophic Injuries
- Cell Phone Accident
- Charitable Organizations
- Child Abduction Law
- Child Abuse
- Child Custody
- Child Pornography
- Child Support
- Child Visitation Law
- Children Rights
- Citizenship Law
- Civil Rights
- Collaborative Law
- Commercial Law
- Commercial Ship Accidents
- Commodities, Futures and Options
- Common Law
- Communications
- Competition Law

- Computer Crime
- Computer Law
- Conciliation
- Confidentiality Agreements
- Conflicts of Interest
- Constitutional Law
- Construction Accidents
- Construction Injuries
- Construction Law
- Consumer Law
- Contract Law
- Controlled Substances
- Cooperatives
- Copyright
- Corporate Finance Law
- Corporate Governance Law
- Corporate Law
- Corporate Taxation
- Counterfeiting
- Court Stenography Law
- Credit Card Fraud
- Credit Law
- Creditors' Rights
- Criminal Defense
- Criminal Law
- Cruise Ship Accident Law
- Customs Law
- Cyberspace Crimes Law

- D -

- Data Protection
- Death Penalty
- Debt Recovery Law

- Defamation, Libel and Slander
- Defective Drugs Law
- Discrimination
- Dispute Resolution
- Distributorship Law
- Divorce Law
- Domain Names
- Domestic Violence
- Driver's License Reinstatement
- Drug Crime
- Drug Law
- Drug Testing - Employees
- DUI-DWI

- E -

- E-Commerce Law
- E-Discovery Law
- Economic Deregulation
- Economics and Law
- Education Law
- Elder Law
- Election and Political Law
- Electricity Law
- Embezzlement Law
- Eminent Domain
- Employee Benefits Law
- Employee Rights Law
- Employment Discrimination Law
- Employment Law
- Encryption Law
- Energy
- Enforcement of Judgments
- Entertainment Law
- Environmental Law
- Equal Protection
- Equal Rights

- Equine Law
- ERISA
- Estate and Trust
- Estate Planning Center
- Ethics
- Expropriation
- Expungement Law
- Extortion Law
- Extradition Law

- F -

- Factoring
- Failure to Diagnose Law
- Family Law
- Fashion Law
- Federal Administration
- FELA
- Felony
- Finance Law
- Financial Services Law
- Financing
- Firearms Law
- First Amendment Law
- Fisheries Law
- FLSA Overtime Claim
- Food and Beverages Law
- Foreclosure
- Forestry Law
- Franchising Law
- Fraud Law
- Free Speech

- G -

- Gaming Law
- Gas Law
- Gifts
- Government
- Government Affairs
- Government Benefits

- H -

- Health Care and Social Law
- Health Care Law
- Homeowners Association
- Homicide
- Human Resources Law
- Human Rights Law

- I -

- Identity Theft
- Immigration
- Immigration Amnesty
- Indian Law
- Indigenous Peoples
- Industrial Injuries
- Industrial Law
- Information Services
- Information Technology Law
- Informed Consent Law
- Inheritance Law
- Insolvency Law
- Insurance
- Insurance Fraud
- Intellectual Property
- International Law
- Internet Law
- Investment Companies Law
- Investment Law

- J -

- Job Safety
- Joint Ventures
- Jones Act
- Juvenile Crime Law
- Juvenile Law

- L -

- Labor and Employment
- Land Transport
- Land Use
- Landlord and Tenant
- Larceny Law
- Leasing Personal Property
- Leasing Real Property
- Legal Ethics
- Legal Malpractice
- Legal Theory
- Leisure Law
- Lemon Law
- Licensing Law
- Litigation

- M -

- Mail Fraud
- Maintenance Law
- Malpractice Law
- Manslaughter Law
- Manufacturing Law
- Maritime
- Marketing Law
- Marriage
- Mass Tort
- Media
- Mediation
- Medical Law
- Medical Malpractice
- Medicare and Medicaid
- Medication Errors Law
- Mergers and Acquisitions
- Mesothelioma
- Migration Law
- Military Law
- Minerals
- Mining Regulation
- Money Laundering
- Mortgage Law

- Motor Vehicle Law
- Motorcycle Accident
- Murder Law
- Mutual Funds

- N -

- Native People
- Natural Resources
- Naturalization Law
- Negotiable Instruments
- Newspapers
- Non-profit Organizations
- Nuclear Law
- Nursing Home Abuse

- O -

- Obscenity Law
- Oil and Gas Law
- Outsourcing Law

- P -

- Patent
- Paternity
- Pension
- Perjury
- Personal Injury Law
- Personal Property
- Pharmaceutical Law
- Police Law
- Politics and Law
- Practice of Law
- Pre-nuptial Agreement
- Premises Liability
- Price Control
- Printed Media
- Prison Administration Law
- Prisoner's Rights Law

- Prisoners of War Law
- Privacy
- Private Equity Law
- Private Investigation Law
- Privatization Law
- Pro Bono Law
- Probate
- Procurement by Government
- Products Liability
- Professional Liability Law
- Professional Malpractice
- Profit Sharing
- Project Finance Law
- Property Law
- Property Management
- Property, Personal
- Prostitution Law
- Public Employment
- Public Finance
- Public Health Care
- Public Utility

- Q -

- Qui Tam, False Claims Act

- R -

- Radio/TV
- Railroad
- Railroad Accident
- Rape
- Real Estate - Commercial
- Real Estate Law
- Real Property
- Recreation/Leisure
- Regulatory Law

- Religious Freedom
- Remedies
- Residential Real Estate
- Retail Law
- RICO Law
- Risk
- Robbery
- Rollover Accident
- Rule of Law

- S -

- Safety, Job-related
- Sales of Goods and Services
- Scams
- Sea Law
- Secured Transactions
- Securities
- Securities Fraud
- Separation Law
- Separation of Church and State
- Sex Crime
- Sexual Harassment
- Shareholders Rights
- Ship Registration
- Shoplifting
- Shopping Centers
- Slip and Fall
- Social Security Disability
- Social Security Law
- Social Services
- Social Welfare
- Special Needs Trust

- Spinal Cord Injury
- Sports Law
- Spousal Support
- Statutory Law
- Surgical Errors
- Syndications

- T -

- Taxation
- Technology and Cyber Law
- Telecommunications
- Testament
- Theft Law
- Torts Law
- Toxic Mold
- Toxic Torts Law
- Trade Investment Law
- Trade Regulation
- Trademark
- Traffic Law
- Traffic Ticket Law
- Transportation
- Truck Accident
- Trucking
- Trusts Law

- U -

- U.S. Environmental Law
- U.S. Federal Government

- U.S. State Government
- Unfair Competition
- Urban Planning
- Utilities Law

- V -

- Venture Capital
- Visa

- W -

- Water
- Weapons
- Welfare
- Whistleblower
- White Collar Crime
- Wills
- Wire Fraud
- Women
- Work Permits
- Workers' Compensation
- Workplace Injuries
- Workplace Safety Law
- Wrongful Death
- Wrongful Termination

- Z -

- Zoning Law

APPENDIX D: LINES FROM SOME OF MY FAVORITE LAWYER MOVIES

There are a lot of really great lawyer movies out there. A lot. Here are lines from some of my favorites:

*** MY COUSIN VINNY ***

Vincent Gambini: Is it possible that the two yutes --

Judge Haller: Uh, the two what? Uh, uh, what was that word?

Vincent Gambini: Uh, what word?

Judge Haller: Two what?

Vincent Gambini: What?

Judge Haller: Did you say “yutes”?

Vincent Gambini: Yeah, two yutes.

Judge Haller: What is a yute?

Vincent Gambini: Oh, excuse me, Your Honor. Two *youths*.

Vincent Gambini: Mrs. Riley. When you saw the defendants, were you wearing your glasses?

Constance Riley: Yes, I was.

Vincent Gambini: Would you mind putting your glasses on for us, please?

Vincent Gambini: Whoa. How long you been wearing glasses?

Constance Riley: Since I was 6.

Vincent Gambini: Have they always been that thick.

Constance Riley: No. They've gotten thicker over the years.

Vincent Gambini: So, as your eyes become more and more out of whack, as you've gotten older, how many levels of thickness have you gone through?

Constance Riley: I don't know. Over 60 years, maybe 10 times.

Vincent Gambini: Maybe you're ready for a thicker set?

Constance Riley: Oh no. I think they're okay.

Vincent Gambini: You sure? Let's check it out. (Grabs a tape measure from his briefcase and brings it over to Mrs. Riley.)

Vincent Gambini: How far away were the defendants when you saw them enterin' the Sac-o-Suds?

Constance Riley: About 100 feet.

Vincent Gambini: A hundred feet. (Hands Mrs. Riley the end of the tape measure.)

Vincent Gambini: Would you mind holding this, please? (Walks to the courtroom door.)

Vincent Gambini: All right, this is 50 feet, that's half the distance.

Vincent Gambini: (Holds up 2 fingers on his right hand.) How many fingers am I holding up?

(Mrs. Riley is squinting, trying to see the fingers.)

Judge Chamberlain Haller: Let the record reflect that the counselor is holding up 2 fingers.

Vincent Gambini: Hey! Your Honor! Please, huh?

Judge Chamberlain Haller: Oh, sorry.

Vincent Gambini: Now, Mrs. Riley, and only Mrs. Riley.

Vincent Gambini: (Holds up 2 fingers on his right hand again.) How many fingers am I holding up now?

Constance Riley: (Squinting, trying to see the fingers.) 4.

Vincent Gambini: (Walking back to Mrs. Riley.) What do you think now, dear?

Constance Riley: Thinkin' of gettin' thicker glasses.

*** LIAR, LIAR ***

Fletcher Reede: Your honor, I object!

Judge Stevens: And why is that, Mr. Reede?

Fletcher Reede: It's devastating to my case!

Judge Stevens: Overruled.

Fletcher Reede: Good call!

*** A FEW GOOD MEN ***

Lt. Cdr. Galloway: The doctor's wrong.

Lt. Kaffee: What a relief. I was afraid I wouldn't be able to use the liar-liar-pants-on-fire defense.

Lt. Weinberg: (*Thinking out loud*) "I strenuously object?" Is that how it works? Hm? "Objection." "Overruled." "Oh, no, no, no. No, I STRENUOUSLY object." "Oh. Well, if you strenuously object then I should take some time to reconsider."

Lt. Kaffee: Colonel Jessep. Did you order the Code Red?

Judge Randolph: You don't have to answer that question!

Col. Jessep: I'll answer the question!

Col. Jessep: You want answers?

Lt. Kaffee: I think I'm entitled.

Col. Jessep: You want answers?

Lt. Kaffee: I want the truth!

Col. Jessep: You can't handle the truth!

Col. Jessep: Son, we live in a world that has walls, and those walls have to be guarded by men with guns. Who's gonna do it? You? You, Lt. Weinburg? I have a greater

responsibility than you could possibly fathom. You weep for Santiago, and you curse the Marines. You have that luxury. You have the luxury of not knowing what I know. That Santiago's death, while tragic, probably saved lives. And my existence, while grotesque and incomprehensible to you, saves lives. You don't want the truth because deep down in places you don't talk about at parties, you want me on that wall. You need me on that wall. We use words like honor, code, loyalty. We use these words as the backbone of a life spent defending something. You use them as a punchline. I have neither the time nor the inclination to explain myself to a man who rises and sleeps under the blanket of the very freedom that I provide, and then questions the manner in which I provide it. I would rather you just said thank you, and went on your way. Otherwise, I suggest you pick up a weapon, and stand a post. Either way, I don't give a damn what you think you are entitled to.

Lt. Kaffee: Did you order the Code Red?

Col. Jessep: I did the job I...

Lt. Kaffee: Did you order the Code Red?!

Col. Jessep: You're Goddamn right I did!

*** **THE FIRM** ***

Mitch McDeere: You want to know something funny? You actually made me think about the law. I managed to go through three years of law school without doing that.

*** **LAW ABIDING CITIZEN** ***

Nick Rice: It's not what you know. It's what you can prove in court.

*** **TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD** ***

Atticus Finch: If you just learn a single trick, Scout, you'll get along a lot better with all kinds of folks. You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view; until you climb inside of his skin and walk around in it.

*** ERIN BROKOVICH ***

Erin Brockovich: Ya' know why everyone thinks all lawyers are back stabbing, blood sucking scum bags? 'Cause they are! And I cannot believe you expect me to go out, leave my kids with strangers, and get people to trust you with their lives while all the while you're screwing me! You know, Ed, it's not about the number! It's about the way my work is valued in this firm... *(She looks at the two million dollar bonus check)*

Ed Masry: Like I was saying. I thought that the number you proposed was inappropriate, so I increased it. *(He turns to walk away, but turns back to look at her)*

Ed Masry: Do they teach beauty queens to apologize? Because you suck at it!

Erin Brockovich: *(Long pause as Erin looks at the check)* Uh. Ed. Uh... Thank you...

*** THE VERDICT ***

Frank Galvin: *(On the church's \$210,000 offer)* How did you settle on the amount?

Bishop Brophy: We thought it was just.

Frank Galvin: You thought it was just?

Bishop Brophy: Yes.

Frank Galvin: Because it struck me, um, how neatly 'three' went into this figure: \$210,000. That means I would keep seventy.

Bishop Brophy: That was our insurance company's recommendation.

Frank Galvin: Yes, that would be.

Bishop Brophy: Nothing we can do can make that woman well.

Frank Galvin: And no one will know the truth.

Bishop Brophy: What is the truth?

Frank Galvin: That that poor girl put her trust into the . . . into the hands of two men who took her life. She's in a coma. Her life is gone. She has no home, no family. She's tied to a machine. She has no friends. And the people who should care for her – her doctors, and you and me – have been bought off to look the other way. We've been paid to look the other way. I came here to take your money. I brought snapshots to show you so I could get your money. I can't do it; I can't take it. 'Cause if I take the money, I'm lost. I'll just be a . . . a rich ambulance chaser. I can't do it. I can't take it.

ABOUT TOM GIBBONS



A nationally acclaimed trial attorney, Tom is the founder of Gibbons Legal, P.C., where he is the firm's managing partner and lead trial attorney.

Locally, Tom has been recognized as one of the Top 10 personal injury attorneys in Pennsylvania by the National Academy of Personal Injury Attorneys, the American Institute of Personal Injury Attorneys, and the American Jurist Institute. SuperLawyers consistently ranks him among the top 2.5% of all Pennsylvania attorneys younger than 40, and the National League of Renowned Attorneys has ranked him in the top 1% of all Pennsylvania attorneys.

Nationally, Tom has been recognized as one of the top 40 attorneys younger than 40 by the National Trial Lawyers, and as one of the top 100 attorneys of all ages by America's Top 100 Attorneys and the American Academy of Trial Attorneys. The Distinguished Justice Advocates has recognized him as being among the top 1% of all attorneys, and The National Trial Lawyers, Rue Ratings, and the Million Dollar Advocates Forum has recognized him among the nation's top trial lawyers. Avvo has also rated Tom a Perfect 10: Superb, named him a Top Personal Injury Attorney and Top Car Accident Attorney, and awarded him the "Clients' Choice Award" for his tireless dedication to his clientele.

Many of Tom's cases have been featured by local, national, and international news outlets, including Fox News, ABC News, CBS News, CNN, MSNBC, Inside Edition, The Associated Press, The Los Angeles Times, The Philadelphia Inquirer, The London Times, The Daily Mail (United Kingdom), and countless law blogs. One such case, a police brutality claim against the City of Philadelphia, resulted in \$490,000 settlement and the City launching a massive investigation into its use of Emergency Patrol Wagons and the manner in which detainees are transported.

In addition to his trial practice, Tom teaches trial strategy and technology at Temple University School of Law's prestigious LL.M. in Trial Advocacy program, where he earned his Master's Degree in trial law (with honors) in 2014.

Tom began his legal career prosecuting criminals and protecting victims' rights with the Montgomery County (Pennsylvania) District Attorney's Office. He thereafter spent several years working for the insurance companies, defending their insureds who hurt others in car accidents, slip and fall accidents, and work accidents. That work, however, was very unsatisfying, because of which he redirected his efforts to helping those hurt by others.

Outside the courtroom, Tom is a devoted husband to Maria and dad to Jude, Abby, and Penny. He enjoys coaching little league, hosting magical imaginary tea parties, and otherwise playing with his kids. He's the world's "#1 Dad," as voted by his awesome kids, who gave him the world's greatest homemade trophy. He's also an avid sports fan, particularly baseball, and still plays competitive men's slow-pitch softball. As the manager and power hitting first baseman, he helped his team win the Pennsylvania state championship, and finish 9th at the national championship, in 2014.

Tom received his Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from Bloomsburg University, where he was a faculty-appointed tutor and teaching assistant for the Constitutional Law and Political Science departments, and where he was a member of the Political Science National Honor Society. He received his law degree from Thomas M. Cooley Law School, where he received several awards for excellence in trial and appellate advocacy, and received his Master's Degree (LL.M.) in trial law – with honors – from Temple University School of Law.



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Tom Gibbons

Licensed in PA and NJ

Master's Degree in Trial Advocacy

America's Top 100 Lawyers: Top 100

Pennsylvania Super Lawyers: Rising Star

Rue Ratings: The Best Attorneys of America

The National Trial Lawyers: Top 40 Under 40

American Jurist Institute: Top 10 in Pennsylvania

American Academy of Trial Attorneys: Premier 100

The National Trial Lawyers: Top 100 Trial Attorneys

Distinguished Justice Advocates: Top 1% in Pennsylvania

National League of Renowned Attorneys: Top 1% in Pennsylvania

Million Dollar Advocates Forum: The Top Trial Lawyers in America

American Institute of Personal Injury Attorneys: Top 10 in Pennsylvania

National Academy of Personal Injury Attorneys: Top 10 in Pennsylvania