

SABA SYED RECOUNTS ON ABA “TOP FIVE LESSONS LEARNED” FROM HER FIRST JURY TRIAL

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Bell Nunnally attorney Saba F. Syed authored the American Bar Association (ABA); Section of Litigation, Real Estate, Condemnation and Trust Litigation Committee “Practice Point” article titled, “Top Five Lessons from My First Jury Trial.” The piece breaks down Syed’s first career jury trial, a case that spread across two decades with more than 400 filings.

Here is an abridged version of her “Top Five Lessons:”

1. Be Prepared and Be Organized – A key part of being prepared is being organized....I saw that being organized, somewhat unexpectedly, also helped us handle surprises by allowing us to have access to the information we needed when we needed it.

2. It’s a Race to Credibility – Every attorney aims to be the person the judge trusts in the courtroom... An attorney can gain credibility at the pretrial conference by raising disputed and legitimate limine items, stipulating to facts, and withdrawing unnecessary objections.

3. Listen and Pay Attention – While televised legal dramas tend to glamorize grandstanding attorneys or powerful concessions (“You can’t handle the truth!”), I found that listening astutely and paying attention helped us win our most important victories.

4. Keep It Simple, Stupid – During trial, we made the decision to go low-tech by using the ELMO projector rather than the court’s state-of-the-art technology system. Our low-tech approach ultimately proved to be a sound decision because our attorneys could freely refer to critical documents during the witness examinations, creating fluidity during trial.

5. It’s Not Personal, It’s Just Business – Putting some emotional distance between us and the trial helped us better serve our clients and ultimately secure a favorable outcome.

To read the full article, please click [here](#).

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