

WHAT I HAVE LEARNED IN 30 YEARS OF
LAW PRACTICE
50 LESSONS ABOUT
LAW, LIFE, LOVE AND LUCRE

1. You don't look like what I thought you'd look like, either.
2. A description of the great and incisive wins which prove how very smart and able I am would extend our stay here together not more than probably another 10-15 seconds.
3. "As one ages, litigation replaces sex." –*Gore Vidal*
4. "If at first you don't succeed, then skydiving definitely is not for you." - *Unknown*
5. Learn from the mistakes of others. You can never hope to live long enough to make them all yourself.
6. "You can get by on charm for about 15 minutes. After that, you'd better know something."
- *Thomas H. Blaske*
7. When the chips are down, the buffalo is empty.
8. If you show off, you are distracting the jury from the evidence in your case.
9. "Continue to learn." - *Thomas H. Blaske*
10. A great lawyer is a good lawyer one witness at a time.
11. "If we had no faults of our own, we should not take such pleasure in noting those of others."
- *La Rochefoucauld*
12. You were smarter before you walked into the courtroom or the deposition room. Do what you planned.
13. Always note your order for a deposition transcript on the notice.
14. Chance favors the prepared mind.
15. "Attend meticulously to the details and the war will win itself." - *Napoleon Bonaparte*
16. Use trial techniques before trial.
17. "If you don't know where you are going, any road will do." - *an old Jewish saying*
18. He who laughs last thinks slowest.

19. Cross examination is more interesting to everyone in the courtroom than direct examination.
20. "A harbor is a safe place for a ship, but that is not what ships are for." - *Unknown*
21. "It is easier to get things done with a kind word and a gun than with a kind word alone." - *Al Capone*
22. On cross-examination, do not chase the direct examination.
23. "Cow tipping works, except when it doesn't." - *Thomas H. Blaske*
24. "The shaft of the arrow had been feathered with one of the eagle's own plumes. We often give our enemies the means of our own destruction." - *Aesop, The Eagle and the Arrow*
25. A fact in contradiction of a conclusion will always defeat a conclusion because a fact is a solid image while a conclusion is an abstraction.
26. Tact in litigation sometimes consists of saying "nice doggy" while you are looking around for a really big stick.
27. Sometimes they really are nice doggies, and will prove it if only they are treated that way.
28. Any time you affirm the worth of others, you serve.
29. There is a very good reason God gave trial lawyers two ears and two eyes but only one mouth. - *Thomas H. Blaske*
30. Tom's Rules of Relevance (Rules of Evidence):
- a. If it's interesting, it's coming in.
 - b. Quick trumps hearsay.
 - c. A lawyer on a roll gets to stay on a roll.
31. More cases are lost than are won.
32. "If your enemy is weaker than you, surround him. If stronger, invade." - *Lao Tze, in The Art of War*
33. "For every problem there is a short and simple solution, and it is wrong." - *Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain)*
34. "Some people are too stupid to have rights." - *Anthony M. Calderone, a trial lawyer*
35. "When you come to a fork in the road, take it." - *Yogi Berra*

36. "You live life for many years by practicing law for a few, if you will only pay attention." -
Edmund R. Blaske
37. "You have to live by the rules, not just know them." - *Thomas H. Blaske*
38. "A life is unimportant except as it impacts other lives." - *Jackie Robinson*
39. "One can never pay in gratitude; one can only pay in kind somewhere else in life."
- *Anne Morrow Lindbergh*
40. Many acts of service cost nothing and take little time: encouragement, compliments,
listening, gratitude and compassion.
41. "He who increases knowledge, increases sorrow." - *Ecclesiastes*
42. "Manners are more important than laws. Upon them, in a great measure, the laws depend.
The law touches us but here and there, and now and then. Manners are what vex or soothe,
corrupt or purify, exalt or debase, barbarize or refine us, by a constant, steady, uniform,
insensible operation, like that of the air we breathe in." - *Edmund Burke*
43. "Beware the man whose stomach does not move when he laughs." - *Confucius*
44. Don't tell lawyer jokes. Don't laugh at them, either.
45. "You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say will be misquoted, then used
against you." - *Anonymous*
46. "Don't go around saying the world owes you a living. The world owes you nothing. It was
here first." - *Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain)*
47. "Good men need no monument; their deeds are their shrines." - *Mishne Sheklim; 52*
48. "The doors we open and close each day decide the lives we live." - *Flora Whittemore*
49. "Now Kitty, let's consider who it was that dreamed it all." - *Alice, in Through the Looking
Glass*
50. "Blah blah blah." - *Thomas H. Blaske*