



## In This Issue

**President's Message**  
**Certification Review -Ethics**  
**Trial Procedure Quiz**  
**Professional Development**  
**Chat GPT**  
**Career Strategies**  
**Cognitive Development**  
**NALS & Chapter News**  
**Code of Ethics**  
**Contact Us**

**DON'T FORGET TO VOTE FOR  
NALS BOARD OF DIRECTORS BY  
MARCH 6**

Hello, everyone! We had some unseasonably warm weather in February which I enjoyed after my retirement. I was able to get out and do some hiking, walking, and bicycling. I hope that some of you were also able to enjoy the calm before the storm. As I write now, we are enduring the first major snow storm of the winter.

There are some interesting cases scheduled to be argued at the U. S. Supreme Court in March on the topics of election law, doctrine of judicial estoppel, interstate commerce/Federal Arbitration Act, venue, and birthright citizenship. Here is a link to the full schedule, <https://www.scotusblog.com/case-files/terms/ot2025/>. You can listen to a live-streamed audio of the arguments from the Court's website at [https://www.supremecourt.gov/oral\\_arguments/live.aspx](https://www.supremecourt.gov/oral_arguments/live.aspx).

Our next meeting is scheduled via Zoom at noon on March 4, 2026. Our speaker will be Bruce Hahn, Assistant Bar Counsel, State Bar of Nevada. Mr. Hahn will give an ethics presentation. I hope you will be able to join us for this meeting.

Our May meeting is scheduled for May 6 at noon on Zoom. We will be viewing "Classrooms to Courtrooms: The Story of Kids' Court." 30 minutes CLE credit given.

Sharon Coates, PP, CLP  
President



## **DCLP LIVE !!-- No Reservation Needed**

Via Zoom - **Wednesday, March 4** and  
**Wednesday, May 6**, 2026 at 12 p.m.

Meeting ID: 922 280 3023. Passcode: 412889

No charge for non-members



**ALL ATTENDEES ARE ELIGIBLE FOR THE GIFT CARD DRAWING AT THE  
CONCLUSION OF THE MEETING**

**Congratulations to Dee Beardsley, our January winner!**



## Douglas-Carson Legal Professionals

Presents

### CERTIFICATION REVIEW

Part 4 of 4

### ETHICS



### Bruce Hahn

Assistant Bar Counsel, State Bar of Nevada

Mr. Hahn has served as Assistant Bar Counsel for the State Bar of Nevada since 2020. He served with the Washoe County District Attorney's Office from 1994-2020 as a felony-level prosecutor, felony team chief and the Criminal Division chief. Prior to joining the State Bar, he served as a Formal Hearing Panel Chair for the Northern Nevada Disciplinary Board.

As an educational speaker, Bruce has taught ethics on various subjects for the State Bar. He formerly served as adjunct faculty for the University of Nevada Reno, and guest lecturer for Truckee Meadows Community College. He has also taught Constitutional Law and Search & Seizure as a guest lecturer at the Northern Nevada POST academy and is a regular lecturer for the Northern Nevada Law Enforcement Academy.

#### ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF LEGAL SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS:

- They are bound by the same core ethical obligations of attorneys, focusing on confidentiality, competence, and avoiding the unauthorized practice of law.
- They must maintain confidentiality, avoid conflicts of interest, and work only under attorney supervision to ensure professional integrity

# Quiz on Trial Procedure

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. When an appellate court sends a case back to a lower court for further proceedings, it is referred to as:
- A. reversal
  - B. remand
  - C. affirm
  - D. none of these choices
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. A challenge to exclude a potential juror from serving on the jury without any supporting reason or cause is a:
- A. peremptory challenge
  - B. challenge for cause
  - C. voir dire
  - D. both A and B
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Voir dire includes:
- A. peremptory challenge
  - B. direct examination
  - C. challenge for cause
  - D. both A and C
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. This motion requests that certain evidence not be brought out at the trial:
- A. Motion for judgment notwithstanding the verdict
  - B. Motion for new trial
  - C. Motion for a directed verdict
  - D. Motion in limine
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. A \_\_\_\_\_ puts in force a court's decree or judgment and allows the sheriff to seize and sell assets to satisfy the court's decree or judgment.
- A. charge
  - B. judgment creditor
  - C. writ of execution
  - D. verdict



## Strengths and Weaknesses of ChatGPT

### STRENGTHS

- Phrasing doesn't matter when you put a question to ChatGPT. It has a remarkable ability to work out what you mean, even if you made typos or didn't express what you meant perfectly. Furthermore, you can ask follow up questions or seek clarification if you didn't understand the initial response. Think of it more as picking the brain of your smartest friend or colleague rather than as a search engine.
- ChatGPT is your friend when you're emailed a 50 page report at 11pm that you need to digest before an 8am meeting. Upload the file and ask ChatGPT to summarize the document or ask questions about its contents and it will spit out its answer in seconds. AI is far more reliable when you're asking it questions about a specific document (see weaknesses).
- You can create your own chatbots (GPTs) dedicated to a specific task or trained on a specific set of documents. For example, you can upload the owner's manual for your car and ask GPT maintenance questions.

### WEAKNESSES

- AI can be both the smartest genius since Stephen Hawking and as dumb as a tea biscuit in the same conversation. It can get rudimentary questions wrong which can undermine confidence in AI answers.
- AI has built-in biases or cultural stereotypes depending on its training data which is constantly improving.
- Aside from getting stuff wrong, it can make up stuff and present it as fact (recall the attorneys who have submitted fake cases to support their arguments).
- It doesn't know what it doesn't know and doesn't know its limits. AI may give an answer to questions that are beyond its comprehension, i.e., it hallucinates.
- ChatGPT likes to nap. If you're not a paying subscriber, you go to the back of the line during periods of peak demand. Have a contingency plan in mind in case that happens when you're working on a deadline.

**Editor:** I asked Google what it knew about me. It said I am “a multifaceted creative professional known as a producer, writer, and director for projects like *Radio Story Hour* (2023) and *Secrets of Harridge House* (2020). She is also recognized as a writing mentor, specifically within the *Bonanza* fanfiction community. A deeper dive brought up my NALS certifications and that I am a Certified Zentangle Teacher. There was also a link to my LinkedIn profile. Surprisingly (or maybe not) there was reference to a presentation on the Pony Express that I won't give until March 19. Try asking Google what it knows about you!

# TIPS FOR ACHIEVING THE BEST RESULTS

**Did you know ChatGPT was made by a woman?** Mira Murati is the Chief Technology Officer at OpenAI and the driving force behind the creation of ChatGPT as a tool to augment human capabilities, not replace them.

The “30% rule in AI” is a guideline suggesting that AI should handle about 30% of tasks in complex roles, automating repetitive work while humans focus on the 70% requiring creativity, judgment, and ethics or conversely, that AI should generate no more than 30% of a final output, with humans providing the remaining 70% of original thought to ensure learning and responsible use.

## Key principles:

**Augmentation, Not Replacement:** AI should support human work, not replace human intellect.

**Human Oversight:** Crucial for ethical decisions, complex problem-solving, and nuanced judgment.

**Skill Development:** Prevents over-reliance on AI, ensuring humans maintain fundamental skills and critical thinking.

## Two common interpretations:

**Task Allocation:** AI handles about 30% (repetitive, routine) while humans handle 70% (high-value, complex, creative).

**Content Creation:** AI contributes up to 30% of a final piece, with humans providing the core 70% of original ideas and work, preserving learning.

## TIP #1

The accuracy of AI tools has improved greatly in since it was launched on November 30, 2022. But while ChatGPT is capable of interpreting long prompts, the likelihood of something going wrong increases with the more you ask it to do in a single prompt. For example:

**Draw a graph showing my average run time for each calendar month. Also work out my median run time for each month, and produce a table ranking the months in order, from fastest median run time to slowest.**

You will have greater success in achieving the desired result if you break up the request into separate steps:

**Draw a graph showing my average run time for each calendar month.**

**Work out my median run time for each month.**

**Produce a table ranking the months in order, from fastest median run time to slowest.**

Don't give up if the result is not what you expected. You can ask AI to make refinements, such as changing the Y axis to minutes and starting at 0.

# TIPS FOR ACHIEVING THE BEST RESULTS

## TIP #2

Another way to minimize the risk of errors is to insert “Do you understand?” at the end of a prompt.

**I want you to write a basic set of instructions, showing new hires at my office how to add the firm’s logo to cell A1 of an Excel spreadsheet. Do you understand?**

With this kind of command, AI will often explain back to you what it’s about to do before going on to complete the task. If the explanation is incorrect or it has misunderstood, it’s easy to rectify at this stage rather than discovering a flaw at the end.

## TIP #3

ChatGPT now provides links at the end of its results which shows its source. If not, you can ask it to identify its source.

**What is the population of Papua New Guinea? Name your sources.**

**Editor’s note: If you know for certain that the response is incorrect or incomplete, you can provide AI with a correction. For example, I recently asked if Half Dome was visible from California State Route 4. The answer was “no,” but I have seen it. I provided the date, time, weather and specific location near Ebbetts Pass from where I viewed it. It will be interesting to see if the response is amended.**

## TIP #4

What's the difference between free and paid ChatGPT?

ChatGPT's free version offers GPT-4o for general use with usage caps, while paid plans (Plus/Pro) provide priority access, faster speeds, more powerful models (like GPT-4.5), higher usage limits, and exclusive features like advanced data analysis, custom GPTs, and video generation (Sora), making them better for heavy users and professionals needing reliability and advanced tools. The free tier is great for casual users, but paid tiers unlock full potential for work, research, and complex tasks.

### Free Version

- Model: Access to GPT-4o (multimodal), but with limits.
- Performance: Can slow down during peak hours, with potential downgrades to simpler models.
- Features: Basic chat, limited file uploads, web browsing, vision, and data analysis.
- Best For: Casual users, brainstorming, light research.

The paid Version (ChatGPT Plus) offers priority access to advanced models like GPT-4o/GPT 5, faster response times, higher usage limits for features like image generation and data analysis advanced tools (Projects, Tasks, Custom GPTs), longer memory, and early access to new features, making it ideal for power users who need more capacity and capabilities than the free version provides.

# TIPS FOR ACHIEVING THE BEST RESULTS

## TIP #5

Technology moves at Warp speed.

Released on August 7, 2025, GPT-5 is OpenAI's flagship artificial intelligence model, described as their "smartest, fastest, and most useful" system yet. It serves as the core, default model for ChatGPT, replacing previous versions like GPT-4o with enhanced reasoning, lower hallucinations, and better multimodal capabilities.

Here is a breakdown of what GPT-5 is and its key features:

### Core Capabilities and Improvements

- "PhD-Level" Reasoning: OpenAI CEO Sam Altman described the leap in capability as moving from "talking to a college student" (GPT-4) to a "PhD-level expert" (GPT-5).
- Reduced Hallucinations: The model is approximately 45% less likely to produce factual errors compared to GPT-4o.
- "Thinking" Mode: GPT-5 uses a "reasoning model" that can think through problems step-by-step, making it superior for complex, multi-step logic in math and coding.
- Unified System with Routing: Instead of forcing users to switch between models, GPT-5 acts as a unified system. A "real-time router" automatically decides whether to use a fast, efficient model for quick queries or a deeper "thinking" model for complex tasks.

- Improved Coding ("Vibe Coding"): It can generate, debug, and prototype functional websites, apps, and games from simple prompts.
- Expanded Context Window: The model can process around 256,000 tokens (up to 400,000 in the API), allowing it to analyze, summarize, or work across entire books, long videos, or large codebases without losing context.
- Multimodal Integration: It has improved, native, and more stable integration for processing and generating text, image, audio, and video.
- OpenAI +6

### New Features in ChatGPT

- Study Mode: A specialized tool designed for tutoring, guiding users through homework and complex topics in a Socratic manner rather than just providing answers.
- Built-in Personalities: Users can select different "vibes" (e.g., The Listener, The Nerd, The Cynic) to alter the tone of the AI's responses.
- Safe Completions: Instead of outright refusing to answer, the model provides high-level, safe responses on sensitive, yet legitimate topics.
- Advanced Data Integration: Direct integration with Gmail and Google Calendar to help with scheduling and summarizing.

# TIPS FOR ACHIEVING THE BEST RESULTS

## TIP #5 (cont'd)

### Availability and Pricing:

- **Free Users:** A version of GPT-5 is available for free, with daily usage limits. After the limit is reached, it switches to a faster, less capable "mini" version.
- **Plus Users (\$20/month):** Higher usage limits for the full GPT-5 model and faster speeds.
- **Pro Users (\$200/month):** Unlimited access to "GPT-5 Pro," which includes the deepest, most advanced reasoning capabilities.

GPT-5 is designed to operate as a "productive agent" rather than just a chatbot, focusing on handling complex, real-world tasks directly.

In the next issue of The Tickler we'll cover:

- Prompts
- Images
- Videos



### What other AI programs are available?

Top alternatives to ChatGPT include:

- **Claude** (excellent for writing/coding)
- **Google Gemini** (strong, integrated, and multimodal)
- **Perplexity AI** (best for research with real-time, cited answers)
- **Meta AI** (fast, free, and integrated across social platforms)
- **DeepSeek** (high-performance, free)
- **Otter AI** for meetings

## DCLP NETWORKING LUNCH



The next monthly networking lunches will be held at noon on March 24 at Red's Old 395 Grill, 1055 S Carson Street and at noon on April 16 at The Fox Brewery located at 310 S Carson Street. Guests are welcome. RSVP to [marnelson03@gmail.com](mailto:marnelson03@gmail.com) so we make sure we have a big enough table.

# Career Strategies...

by Chere Estrin, Legal Staffing Recruiter

If you are someone who stays in a job you hate, how can you get out?

## **Addicted to the paycheck**

Let's be honest, the number one reason most people stay in miserable jobs is the paycheck. You're not staying because of a deep love for the billable hour reports or because your boss truly inspires you. You're staying because the direct deposit hits like clockwork and the 401(k) has a decent match.

Here's the truth: misery is not worth a dental plan.

Sure, there's some stability in staying, but at what cost? If you're spending 40+ hours a week at a job that leaves you exhausted, demoralized, or plotting your escape to a remote cabin in Montana, no salary is worth that.

If you died tomorrow (morbid, but stay with me), the law firm would replace you faster than you can say "exit interview." So why are you sacrificing your sanity for a place that wouldn't blink twice if you disappeared?

## **You're Wearing Golden Handcuffs (and They're Cutting Off Circulation)**

High salary. Plus benefits. Generous bonus. Primo parking spot. Those perks are real and seductive, but they're also shackles. Golden, yes; but shackles nonetheless.

I've seen so many people sit in misery because, on paper, they're "living the life." And yet, they loathe every minute of their day.

Here's the kicker. If you were the last person on earth with no person to impress – no LinkedIn followers, no in-laws, no social climber friends – would you still at that job?

No, you wouldn't.

So why are you still there? Prestige and loyalty and so called "job security" isn't worth it if it comes at the expense of your happiness, health, and peace of mind.

## **You're Afraid of the Unknown**

Risk is terrifying. I get it. But guess what? So is wasting your life doing something you hate.

# Career Strategies

I hear it all the time:

- But what if the next job is worse?
- But what if I don't like my new boss?
- But what if I have to learn a new system and I just can't?
- What if I don't get the money I'm making now?

Okay, but what if the new job is better? What if your next boss is someone who actually supports you? What if learning something new makes you feel alive and happy again?

That mindset--the one that tells you to stay put because the devil you know is better than the one you don't--that's what is keeping you stuck, not to mention negative thinking.

## **You've Grown Comfortable with Complaining**

This one stings. Some people just like being miserable. They don't want to change. They want to complain. I have had one candidate from a major firm who has been on the market for 10 years. She keeps complaining about the lack of growth at her firm but when presented with a great opportunity, decides to stay where she is. Does this sound familiar?

They don't actually want a better job, they want better gossip. You know them. Maybe you are them. They're the first ones to say, "I hate Mondays and thank god it's Friday." They know every dysfunction in the office and they treat complaining like a competitive sport.

Here's the thing: Complaining is not a career strategy. It's emotional constipation. You were not put on this planet to gripe endlessly about Tom in Accounting and how much he impacts your job.

## **You Don't Want to Disappoint Others**

Your parents want you to stay because it's a "great job." Your friends are impressed because you work at a prestigious law firm. Your significant other or spouse is fearful for their own income and lifestyle. Your LinkedIn looks fabulous.

But you're miserable.

Let me tell you something: people who truly care about you don't want you to suffer just to keep up appearances. You don't need anyone's permission to walk away from misery. You're not here to impress your college roommate or your cousin Minnie. You're here to live your life.

# Career Strategies

## **You're Trapped by Lifestyle Creep**

Oh, the trap of the expensive life! The BMW lease. The designer wardrobe. The high-rise apartment. You built your lifestyle around your income, not your happiness.

Now, you're stuck. You can't imagine taking a lower-paid job, even if it means peace of mind. So you trade your freedom for granite countertops and Whole Foods groceries.

It's time to declutter your life. If your lifestyle doesn't spark joy, change it. You'd be amazed at what you can live without and how much happier you can be without all that baggage.

## **You Think You're Too Old to Start Over**

I hear this one every day:

- I'm too old to start over.
- Nobody will hire me at this age.
- I've invested too much in this path.

Nonsense.

First of all, age is not a career death sentence. It's a power tool. You've got wisdom, experience, grit. Use it. Secondly, sunk costs are not a reason to stay. Just because you've spent 10 years doing something doesn't mean you should spend the next 10 suffering through it. That's like eating a bad meal because you already paid for it. Just stop.

## **You've Developed a Seniority Complex**

You've been at your firm longer than the plants. You're proud of your tenure. That's not nothing. But don't confuse loyalty with a life sentence. Staying solely because you've been there longer than anyone else is like staying in a bad relationship because of the wedding photos. It's nostalgia, not strategy.

## **You Think Hating Your Job is Normal**

This one hurts my heart. Somewhere along the way, we've convinced ourselves that hating our jobs is just how it is. That it's normal to dread Monday, fantasize about sick days, and count down to retirement.

But here's the truth: It doesn't have to be that way. You can actually like your job. Really. You can be challenged, valued, supported, and excited about your workday. That's not a fantasy. That's a goal and it's achievable.

# Career Strategies

## **You're Living in a Negative Motivational Environment**

Psychologists call it a “negative motivational environment” where your emotions are manipulated by fear, guilt, shame, or obligation. These workplaces don't just exhaust you; they drain your soul.

They feed on your self-doubt. They make you question your worth. And worst of all, they make you believe this is as good as it gets.

It's not. You are not meant to merely survive your work life. You're meant to thrive.

## **What's the Real Reason You're Still There?**

When someone says they're “looking for a more challenging role,” it's almost never the real reason. They're bored, they're burned out, they're micromanaged, they're underpaid, they have excessive billables or they're surrounded by incompetence. And sometimes it's all of the above.

Too many people stay because they're waiting for the right moment, the perfect time to leave, the day someone gives them “permission.” One of my good colleagues has been a manager at her job for 10 years. She's not totally unhappy; just getting terribly bored with repetitious assignments and no further growth opportunities. She keeps saying, “When I am ready.” Stop waiting.

## **What to do Instead**

1. **Acknowledge that You've Changed.** Who you were when you took this job is not who you are now. Give yourself permission to change your mind.
2. **List What you Still Have if You Leave.** Your identity is bigger than your job title. You'll still have your friends, your family, your talents, your grit. You are not your paycheck.
3. **Get Real About What You Want.** Not just “a better job.” What does that mean to you? More money? More purpose? Less toxicity? Less overtime? Define it.
4. **Make a Plan.** Update your resume. Send me a draft and I'll help you with it. Start networking. Take a class. Talk to a coach. You don't have to quit tomorrow but you can start planning today.
5. **Remember: The Firm With The Job You Hate Can Replace You.** Quickly. Easily. Without remorse. So stop giving it so much of yourself.

Stop Settling. Life's too short to spend 40 hours a week watching the clock and silently screaming. You deserve work that makes you feel alive, not work that makes you feel like a hostage. So go ahead. Take off the handcuffs. The door is wide open. Walk through it.

*Looking for a new position--or thinking about it? Send me your resume and let's chat.*

***Chere@EstrinLegalStaffing.com***

# Lexicon

**Did you know?** Native English speakers learn about one new word each day until middle age. Unfortunately, that's when the learning stops. We aim to fix that!

## WEIRD ENGLISH FACTS

The word "nothing" didn't originally mean zero--it meant "not a thing." English slowly turned it into emptiness itself.

The word "strengths" is the longest English word with only one vowel.

"Uncopyrightable" is the longest English word without repeating any letters.

"Go." is the shortest complete sentence in English and it's an order.

The word "typewriter" can be typed using only the top row of a keyboard.

"Set" has the most definitions.

The longest word published in most dictionaries is:  
pneumonoultramicroscopicsilicovolcanoniosis

This 45-letter word is a type of lung disease caused by inhaling silica particles, particularly from a volcano.

Shakespeare introduced more than 1700 words to the English language.

The words *month*, *orange*, *silver*, and *purple* do not rhyme with any other word in the English language.

English is unique in having different names for the animal (cow and pig) and the meat produced from it (beef, pork).

"Queueing" is the only word with five consecutive vowels.

A pangram is a sentence that contains every letter in the language, e.g., "The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog."

An ambiagram is a word that looks the same upside down as right side up, e.g., *swims*.

The word "oysterhood" means "reclusiveness" or "an overwhelming desire to stay at home."

The term "lynch" is derived from the name of Colonel Charles Lynch (1736-96), a Virginia landowner who began to hold illegal trials in his backyard in 1790.

If you wrote out all the numbers (e.g., one, two, three...) you would not use the letter "b" until the word "billion."

Those who read fiction have a larger vocabulary than those who do not. 13



### March 2026 Ethics Word Puzzle

Circle the words from the list below. Words may appear forwards, backwards, diagonally or upside down.

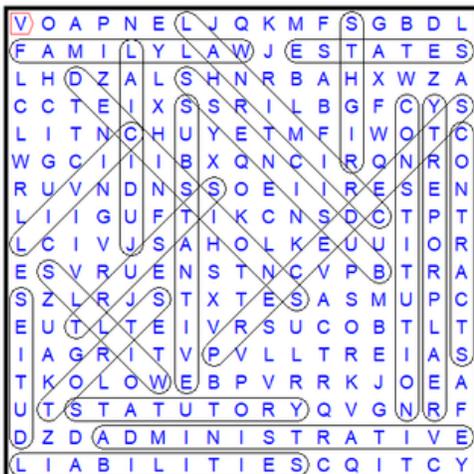
#### Answer the riddles..

- 1.If there are four apples and you take away three of them, how many apples do you have?
- 2.A couple went for a picnic with their family. They have 5 sons, and each son has three sisters. Each sister has one baby. In total, how many people went to the picnic?
- 3.I add five to nine and get two as the answer. The answer is accurate. How?

The answers appear on page 16.



#### January 2026 Solution



- |                |              |             |
|----------------|--------------|-------------|
| ETHICS         | CONFIDENTIAL | COMPETENCE  |
| PROFESSIONAL   | INTEGRITY    | KNOWLEDGE   |
| PRACTICE       | VALUES       | DEMEANOR    |
| UNAUTHORIZED   | OBLIGATION   | COMPLIANCE  |
| RESPONSIBILITY | CORE         | COMMISSION  |
| LAW            | RESPECT      | SUPERVISION |
| LEGAL          | BEHAVIOR     | ATTORNEY    |



# Lateral Thinking

**Legal support professionals are often called upon to come up with solutions to problems that elude others. One way to think “out of the box” is to skip convention and think laterally instead of vertically. To that end, we provide the following lateral thinking puzzles and riddles to solve:**

1. A man pushes his car until he reaches a hotel. When he arrives, he's bankrupt. What happened?
2. There is a cabin in the woods. There are no footprints around the cabin. Seven people inside are all dead, and they all died at the same time. There is no one else in the cabin. How did they die?
3. Two people ordered the same cocktail at a restaurant. They both drank it at difference paces, but one person died while the other survived. How?
4. A man walks up to a cactus, looks at a piece of paper pinned to it, and kills himself. Why?
5. If you were alone in a dark room with only one match and an oil lamp, a fireplace, and a candle to choose from, which would you light first?

The answers appear on page 16.

## Answers to Quiz on Trial Procedure

5. C
4. D
3. D
2. A
1. B



# Answers to Lateral Thinking Puzzles and Riddles



1. You have 3 apples because you took them.
2. Total of 13. (couple (2), sons (5), sisters (3), babies (3)).
3. When it's 9 a.m. and we add 5 hours to it, we get 2 p.m.

## Riddles

5. If you were alone in a dark room with only one match and an oil lamp, a fireplace, and a candle to choose from, which would you light first? Answer: The match!
4. A man walks up to a cactus, looks at a piece of paper pinned to it, and kills himself. Why? Answer: The man was lost in the desert. Afraid he was walking in circles, he pinned a blank piece of paper to the cactus. Finding it again proved he was right, causing despair.
3. Two people ordered the same cocktail at a restaurant. They both drank it at different paces, but one person died while the other survived. How? Answer: The cocktail contained poison in the ice. The person who drank quickly finished before the ice melted and survived while the other drank slowly and the ice melted thus allowing the poison to contaminate the drink.
2. There is a cabin in the woods. There are no footprints around the cabin. Seven people inside are all dead, and they all died at the same time. There is no one else in the cabin. How did they die? Answer: The cabin is the cabin of an airplane that crashed.
1. A man pushes his car until he reaches a hotel. When he arrives, he's bankrupt. What happened? Answer: The man is playing Monopoly and his token is the car. He lands on property with a hotel and loses all his money.

## Lateral Thinking Puzzles and riddles

# NALS Certification Update

NALS is pleased to announce an important change to our ALP credential. Beginning January 1, 2026, the **Accredited Legal Professional (ALP) certification will transition to the Certified Legal Support Professional (LSP).**

The ALP has served as a trusted entry-level credential for those starting their careers in legal support. As the legal support profession evolves, NALS is rebranding this certification title to better reflect the skills, competencies and professionalism the credential represents. The new LSP name offers clearer recognition across law firms, legal departments and the broader legal community.

Current ALP holders may continue using the ALP designation if they choose. All new credentials and recertifications issued on or after January 1, 2026, will carry the LSP title.

NALS will begin updating its website and digital materials in the coming weeks, so LSP references will appear ahead of the official transition.

To learn more about NALS certifications and upcoming updates, visit our website at [NALS.org](https://www.nals.org).

## NALS 2026 National Legal Education Conference!



Get ready to learn and network at the 2026 National Legal Education Conference taking place October 5-7, 2026, at the Hilton Jacksonville at Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville, Florida.

Join legal support professionals from across the country for three days of high-quality education, inspiring speakers and the invaluable networking opportunities.

Exhibitor and sponsorship opportunities will open in January and registration will open in May.

## **Legal Hiring in 2026: Skills, Compensation, and Strategy in a Transforming Market**

by Jake Knowlton-Parry, Larson Maddox

If 2025 was marked by volatility, 2026 is emerging as a year of strategic recalibration for the legal profession.

Last year, legal teams encountered significant challenges. AI adoption outpaced governance frameworks, labor and employment regulations shifted rapidly, and employers faced mounting compliance and litigation pressures.

These developments underscore where legal value truly lies within a business and, consequently, what that means for hiring.

This year, legal hiring is being shaped by the ability to manage risk, navigate compliance, and embed technology responsibly. Legal leaders and candidates alike must understand where the demand is growing, which skills are emerging, and what preferences are reshaping the workforce.

## **Labor and Employment Litigation Are Key Growth Areas**

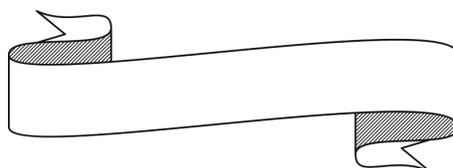
The surge in labor and employment disputes has been a primary driver of legal hiring. Unlike transactional law or M&A, labor and employment law sits at the intersection of regulatory change, employee behavior, and reputational risk.

Private practice is ramping up hiring in these areas, while in-house teams are adding specialists to manage multi-state regulations and compliance strategies.

As legal hiring priorities evolve, so too does compensation. Demand for AI-savvy talent exceeds supply, making competitive compensation essential for attracting top talent.

The hiring decisions made this year will determine whether legal teams remain reactive cost centers or transform into strategic business architects. Technology is redefining how legal work is done, but judgment, accountability, and strategic insight remain irreplaceable.

*Read the full article in **The NALS Legal NewsBrief***



## **Membership Renewals**

The first round of renewal notices was sent to members, reminding them that their memberships with both NALS and their state or local chapters expire on April 30.

## 2026 NALS Leadership Slate & Voting

NALS is proud to announce the official slate of candidates for the 2026 Board of Directors and the Nominations and Elections Committee (NEC).

Members are encouraged to make their voices heard to guide the future of NALS.

**Voting will be open from February 20 through March 6.**

**Board of Directors Candidates:** (2 positions available)

- Erica Lynn Barr
- Ed Clark, PP, SC-Civil Litigation
- Jennifer Parks
- Dara Wasalino Tremblay, PP, PLS-SC

**Nominations & Elections Committee Candidates:** (2 positions available)

- Magan Bedwell, CLS
- Traci Wolfe, PP



# CLE Clarification for Certification Recertification Extension

NALS has transitioned to a single annual recertification period, meaning all certifications will renew in January of their applicable year. To support this change, certification expiration dates have been extended for certifications earned or renewed prior to this alignment.

## Important CLE Clarification

Your CLEs will not expire or be rejected due to this extension. For active certifications, all CLEs earned since your previous renewal or earned date will continue to count, even if that window extends beyond five years. The January expiration date simply gives you additional time to complete the CLE requirements.

## What this means for you:

- All certification expiration dates have been extended to January 31 of the following year.
- For example:
  - All certifications originally expiring in 2026 now expire January 31, 2027.
  - All certifications originally expiring in 2027 now expire January 31, 2028.

This is a **one-time extension** to align all recertifications to the same expiration date. Certifications earned or renewed from this year onward will already be set to expire on January 31 and will not require an extension.

## Recertification Processing

Recertifications may be submitted early but will be processed in January as part of NALS annual recertification cycle.

If you have questions about this recertification process, **please reach out to our Certification and Events Manager, Kelsey.**

# NALS Foundation

## Events + Fundraisers

- [NALS National Conference Events](#)
- [Foundation Grants](#)

## Quick Links

- [Ways to Give](#)
- [Donor Recognition](#)
- [Sweepstakes Item Donation](#)



## Building Your Career & Future

The NALS Foundation was established in 1989 and is dedicated to ensuring a rewarding future for you and all legal support professionals. It is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit educational foundation working hand in hand with the National Association for Legal Support Professionals to enhance educational opportunities. Since its inception, the NALS Foundation has awarded grants and contributions of over \$200,000 for the benefit of chapters and states.

## Purpose

The NALS Foundation strives to ensure top-notch legal services are the norm. It funds quality education programs for legal professionals working with attorneys and the public to enhance their skills and provide them with the latest information on their profession. The NALS Foundation also keeps the good of the legal profession in the public eye, emphasizing a positive image of the profession and the importance of qualified, competent legal professionals.

The NALS Foundation is governed by a volunteer board of trustees. The board has designated the following as funding priorities:

- Educational/Research Opportunities
- Grants Keynote Speakers/Workshops
- Recognition

Please direct any questions you may have to the NALS Foundation Chair at [foundation@nals.org](mailto:foundation@nals.org).

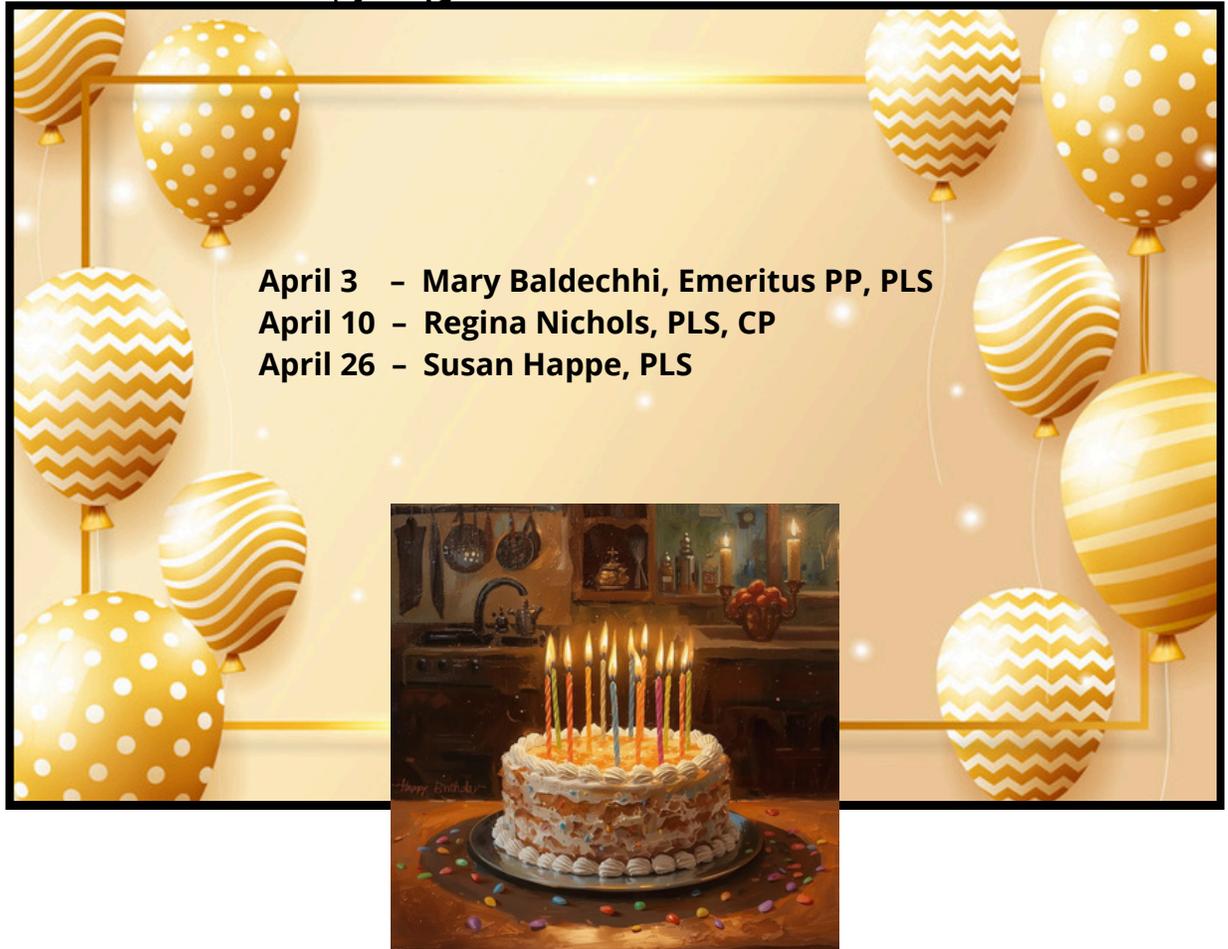
## Get Involved

Serving on the NALS Foundation Board of Trustees is a simple, fun, and rewarding way to give back to the legal support profession. [Click here](#) and select NALS Foundation Board of Trustees on your volunteer interest form. Contact any current Trustee if you'd like to discuss the possibilities!

### NALS Foundation Board of Trustees

- Tina Hurley, PP, PLS (chair)
- Kathy Hilgendorf (secretary/treasurer)
- Julie Abernathy, PP, PLS
- Stephanie Johnson  
Amylyn Riedling, PP, PLS-SC
- Judy D. Whigham, PP, PLS

*Wishing you all the best!*



**April 3 - Mary Baldechhi, Emeritus PP, PLS**

**April 10 - Regina Nichols, PLS, CP**

**April 26 - Susan Happe, PLS**

{ Three simple rules in life }

1. If you do not GO after what you want, you'll never have it.
2. If you do not ASK, the answer will always be NO.
3. If you do not step forward, you'll always be in the same place.

*May your birthday be the  
start of a year filled with new  
opportunities,  
accomplishments, and  
endless joy.*

*Happy Birthday!*

# NALS Code of Ethics & Professional Responsibility

Members of NALS are bound by the objectives of this association and the standards of conduct required of the legal profession. Every member shall:

- Encourage respect for the law and administration of justice
- Observe rules governing privileged communications and confidential information
- Promote and exemplify high standards of loyalty, cooperation, and courtesy
- Perform all duties of the profession with integrity and competence
- Pursue a high order of professional attainment

Integrity and high standards of conduct are fundamental to the success of our professional association. This Code is promulgated by NALS and accepted by its members to accomplish these ends.

**Canon 1.** Members of this association shall maintain a high degree of competency and integrity through continuing education to better assist the legal profession in fulfilling its duty to provide quality legal services to the public.

**Canon 2.** Members of this association shall maintain a high standard of ethical conduct and shall contribute to the integrity of the association and the legal profession.

**Canon 3.** Members of this association shall avoid a conflict of interest pertaining to a client matter.

**Canon 4.** Members of this association shall preserve and protect confidences and privileged communications of a client.

**Canon 5.** Members of this association shall exercise care in using independent professional judgment and in determining the extent to which a client may be assisted without the presence of a lawyer and shall not act in matters involving professional legal judgment.

**Canon 6.** Members of this association shall not solicit legal business on behalf of a lawyer.

**Canon 7.** Members of this association, unless permitted by law, shall not perform legal functions except under the direct supervision of a lawyer and shall not advertise or contract with members of the general public for the performance of paralegal functions.

**Canon 8.** Members of this association, unless permitted by law, shall not perform any of the duties restricted to lawyers or do things which lawyers themselves may not do and shall assist in preventing the unauthorized practice of law.

**Canon 9.** Members of this association not licensed to practice law shall not engage in the practice of law as defined by statutes or court decisions.

**Canon 10.** Members of this association shall do all other things incidental, necessary, or expedient to enhance professional responsibility and participation in the administration of justice and public service in cooperation with the legal profession.