

Winning at Persuasion for Lawyers: The Art and Science of Public Speaking at Hearings and Trials

Shane Read

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Winning at Persuasion for Lawyers is a compelling career guide that suggests clear means of excelling at courtroom speaking.

Shane Read's career guide *Winning at Persuasion for Lawyers* coaches its audience through various facets of public speaking.

Read's approach to persuasion is measured and begins with the basics—suggesting means, for example, of overcoming the fear of public speaking, which it calls pervasive, and naming central spoken and linguistic techniques. It also addresses practicalities like notes and visual aids, which it says can make or break a lawyer's case. And its references span the gamut of the legal profession, helping its work to be applicable to all lawyers.

Further, this is multidisciplinary work: it covers in-depth persuasion strategies like descriptive language and storytelling, but also neurological scientific information. Quotes from Dale Carnegie and Maya Angelou are included for inspiration. These engaging elements reveal interactions with the work of a wide variety of teachers, helping the audience to reach beyond common stumbling blocks and understand the multifaceted roots of a strong rhetorical craft.

Still, while much of the instruction is adaptable to general public speaking contexts, the examples and explanations shared throughout focus on courtroom contexts. The text works toward instructive case studies that show its persuasion techniques in action. These showcase the work of everyone from Winston Churchill to a high profile lawyer, Mark Lanier. In these thorough latter portions, all of the book's preceding information and advice is shown in action, giving Read's recommendations added credence.

With restrained passion, the book and its recommendations balance reason with emotions. They are direct and blunt, aiming only to equip fellow lawyers with as much information as is possible. Read's infectious love for legal professions—and for the art of public speaking—is made apparent; the book champions the virtues of both disciplines, ensuring fellow lawyers that excellence in speaking and integrity go hand in hand.

Further, this is organized, thoughtful work in which each part builds on what came before. Its pace is careful and consistent, ensuring meticulous coverage of every topic. Its case studies feature keen observations to both educate and motivate the audience to replicate their examples. Read highlights what is in a lawyer's control, saying that every person can study their craft and develop their techniques; but he also acknowledges that, because a person can't control the facts, focusing on what is in one's power is crucial. Thus, though the book's tools are many, the expectations it generates for their implementation are realistic, too.

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MELISSA WUSKE (December 3, 2021)

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