



Introducing “Redlines and Deadlines”

A New Series for New Lawyers

BY MARTINE VENTELLO AND KENDALL GODLEY

Welcome to the inaugural “Redlines and Deadlines,” a new series dedicated to creating a supportive and informative platform where newer attorneys can share their experiences, learn from one another, and stay up to date on the latest trends and developments in the legal field. Through this column, we hope to foster stronger legal communities across the state by providing a valuable resource for junior attorneys.

This first article introduces series authors Martine Ventello and Kendall Godley and provides an overview of the topics they’ll be touching on in future articles. As young lawyers practicing in Denver, Martine and Kendall each bring a unique perspective and shared commitment to helping others navigate the early years of their legal practice. We hope you find their insights and experiences valuable,

and we look forward to bringing you a wide array of informative articles that support and empower up-and-coming lawyers.

Martine Ventello



My name is Martine, and I’m an associate attorney at Davis Graham & Stubbs LLP, in my second year of practice. I grew up in rural Towanda, Pennsylvania, and am a first-generation lawyer. I’m a corporate transactional attorney working to specialize my practice in investment funds, securities, and regulatory compliance matters. I took a circuitous route to law, working as a paralegal and compliance officer before becoming an attorney.

The first years of practice have been a paradox. Some days, I feel like I might be “getting

it”; others, I want to smash my laptop in the street, quit lawyering, and go off the grid. But if there’s a lesson here, it’s that my experience is not unique. While all new attorneys must get comfortable with being uncomfortable, we don’t always appreciate the disproportionate impact this discomfort has on the confidence, performance, and progress of certain lawyers, particularly for diverse and first-generation attorneys. Although on paper Kendall and I took similar paths to practice—we both studied law at the University of Denver, work in the corporate group at Davis Graham, and even have offices on the same floor—our experiences have been profoundly different.

The goal of this new series is to share a variety of attorney experiences, successes, and hardships. We hope to provide our readers with access, resources, and support to help remove barriers that otherwise might discourage a new lawyer’s success.

Kendall Godley



My name is Kendall, and I’m also an associate attorney at Davis Graham & Stubbs LLP. I was born in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, but moved all over when I was a kid (New Mexico, Texas, Germany, and Colorado) because my parents were both in the Air Force. I’m a corporate transactional attorney specializing in corporate governance, mergers and acquisitions, and securities law. Prior to enrolling in law school, I played professional basketball in Italy and worked as an engineering recruiter for government contractors.

Like Martine, the early years of my law practice can accurately be described as a “learning experience.” Law school was challenging but did not prepare me for the mental, emotional, and professional ups and downs of practicing law. Adjusting to the intellectual rigor and cultural norms of legal practice is no easy task, especially as a Black attorney. Committing to a growth mindset is always discussed in law school, but it is difficult to keep this mindset day in and day out. I think I’ve done a good job navigating my career so far, but it wasn’t (and still isn’t) always easy.

We started this column to help others overcome the challenges of being a new lawyer by sharing our experiences, giving other new lawyers the platform to share their experiences, and covering topics that are timely and relevant to our peers. We also want this column to be a sounding board for the successes and accomplishments of Colorado's newest lawyers. Overall, we hope this column increases the happiness and success of our peers as they work through the early stages of their legal practice.

Upcoming Articles

This series will cover a range of topics, including:

Getting your career started: Navigating the early stages of your legal career can be both thrilling and overwhelming. We'll delve into strategies for identifying your niche, making a lasting impression at your firm, and setting strategic professional goals. Moreover, we'll provide tips on networking and building professional relationships that can serve as a cornerstone of your success.

Mastering legal research: Proficiency in legal research is vital for any lawyer. We'll explore advanced research techniques, from effectively using digital databases to navigating Google to mastering Boolean operators. Distinguishing between reliable and questionable sources in the digital age is a skill you will find indispensable. We'll also discuss the emergence of artificial intelligence and how it may impact legal practice.

The art of legal writing: Clear and persuasive communication is the hallmark of exceptional legal writing. Our column will provide you with the best practices for drafting compelling briefs, memos, and other legal documents. You'll also learn how to convey complex legal arguments in a coherent and accessible manner, catering to both legal experts and laypersons.

Navigating courtroom dynamics: For those pursuing a career in litigation, understanding courtroom dynamics is crucial. We'll offer insights into the anatomy of a trial, effective courtroom communication, and strategies for managing client expectations during the litigation process. From presenting evidence persuasively to honing your skills in oral arguments, you'll be introduced to best practices that will help you face the courtroom with confidence.

Client management: Building and maintaining strong client relationships is a cornerstone of successful legal practice. Our column will guide you in active listening, transparent communication, and ethical considerations that foster trust and rapport with clients. We'll also explore strategies for managing challenging clients in a professional manner.

Negotiation and mediation skills: Many legal matters are resolved through negotiation and mediation. You'll learn strategies for effective negotiation, including understanding power dynamics, deciphering nonverbal communication, and creating solutions that benefit all parties. We'll also explore the nuances of mediation as an alternative dispute resolution method.

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Work-life balance: Maintaining a healthy work-life balance is essential for your well-being and long-term success. We'll provide strategies for preventing burnout, managing stress, and carving out time for personal pursuits and relationships.

Embracing diversity and inclusion: The legal field is increasingly recognizing the importance of diversity and inclusion. We'll delve into the significance of creating an inclusive legal

community, addressing unconscious biases, and championing equitable practices.


Upholding professional ethics: Upholding the highest ethical standards is non-negotiable for lawyers. We'll discuss common ethical dilemmas faced by young lawyers, such as conflicts of interest and confidentiality.

Business development for lawyers: For those in private practice, business development skills are indispensable. We'll discuss how to attract clients, build a strong personal brand, and leverage networking opportunities. From using social media for professional growth to making a lasting impression at industry events, you'll gain insights into practical business strategies for legal professionals.

Call for Interviewees!

By exploring these and other important topics, we hope this new series will serve as a valuable resource for newer lawyers as they embark on their legal careers. We also invite and encourage fellow new lawyers to contribute to future "Redlines and Deadlines" articles.

If you have experiences, insights, or strategies to share with readers, please let us know. We welcome stories about finding your legal niche, excelling in legal research, honing your writing skills, navigating courtroom dynamics, building strong client relationships, mastering negotiation techniques, achieving work-life balance, promoting diversity and inclusion, upholding ethical standards, developing business acumen, or any other topic that might provide value to our readers. Your unique perspective can inspire and guide those who are just starting their legal careers.

To volunteer to be interviewed, please reach out to Jacqlin Davis at jacqlin.davis@dgsllaw.com with a brief overview of your experiences and the topics you're passionate about. Together, we can build a stronger, more informed legal community in Colorado. 

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