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Bar of Other States

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BAR OF OTHER STATES

*The Lawyer's Merchandise**

By KAYWIN KENNEDY

Executive Committee, Section on Fees and Schedule of Charges.

A lawyer has something to sell. This statement may sound commercial rather than professional. However, we attorneys-at-law are usually poor business men. We advise our clients as to their problems but take little time to solve our own. We sell our services and advice to clients every day but

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find it difficult to determine the value of our own efforts. A business man, who is successful, takes time off periodically to inventory his business. Why shouldn't we, at least one day each month, devote our time to our profession or business in order to put our own house in order? If a lawyer were asked how much it costs him per day to run his office he would have trouble in answering the question. He should know enough about his business to know whether his profession is making money for him or whether he is the loser in maintaining a law office for his clients.

An approved solution of the problem is as follows: At the close of this year find out what the gross income has been in 1934, then determine what your gross expenses have been. Naturally your profit will be evident. Prepare a budget for 1935. Base your income on your 1934 gross and set a mark to "shoot at" a little higher than 1934 has shown.

Examine your 1934 expenditures and allow more or less as you determine for salaries, postage, rent, etc., and then budget your total expense for 1935. Be sure to live within that amount in 1935. You will then know what to expect in the coming year and will work toward that end.

In the "daily grind" at the office and in court keep account of the hours spent on each client. You may say, "What's the difference. I'll only get \$50.00 anyway." The answer is that if you keep account you will be more fair to your client and to yourself because if you do more than \$50.00 worth of work you won't be fooled again when you make a contract with a client. If you do less than \$50.00 worth of work, then you can be more liberal in the future with similar charges.

The above is an approved solution which has worked and will greatly assist the lawyer in running his profession and business.

*Experienced Lawyer Service Works Both Ways**

Lawyer Jones recently found himself faced with a difficult problem in the field of corporate reorganization. It was a field in which he was fairly experienced, but this particular question was one he had never had an opportunity to solve. It took him weeks to master the line of research into which his problem led, but he finally drew up a brief covering the points thoroughly, in a manner entirely satisfactory to his clients. As he viewed the results of his labors, the thought occurred to him that he had possibly spent more time on the case than its importance in his practice would warrant. He wondered if his hours of research and his efforts in getting to the bottom of the problem would ever be of service to him in the future. Problems as technical as this one had been rare in his practice. He felt that within another month he might forget the details of this special knowledge, and he asked himself if it was really worth the time and effort.

Turning to his morning mail, he found an announcement of the Experienced Lawyer Service. As he read over the leaflet, he was reminded of the brief that lay on his desk. Here might be a way to put the results of that study to further practical use. He filled out the questionnaire and sent it in, listing himself as experienced in the field of corporate reorganization, and especially in the features which had been the basis of his brief.

A few days later, Lawyer Brown, in a city fifty miles away, interviewed a client who presented to him a problem quite akin to that studied by Lawyer Jones. The corporate reorganization field was entirely new to

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Lawyer Brown, but he remembered the Experienced Lawyer Service leaflet which lay on his desk, and decided to try it. Assuring his client that he would be able to handle the case, he immediately got in touch with the office of the Illinois State Bar Association, and presented his request for a consultant in corporate reorganization. Within a few hours, he had on his desk a transcript of Lawyer Jones' questionnaire. Learning from it Jones' consultation fee, he arranged for a conference, and in thirty minutes time Lawyer Jones, with his knowledge of the background of corporate reorganization, was able to give Lawyer Brown the exact information he needed in working out his client's problem.

A few months later, Lawyer Brown's case had reached a point where he felt that he would need the assistance of an associate lawyer in working out the more intricate details of the reorganization. Recalling the service Lawyer Jones had rendered him, he approached him with an offer to join as counsel in the work of the case. Together they worked out the problem to the client's complete satisfaction; Lawyer Brown retained the confidence and business of his client; while Lawyer Jones saw his efforts in delving to the bottom of this technical subject amply repaid.

It is such service that the Association is daily giving its members. Are you getting your full share of the benefits of your membership?
