

An aerial view of a city skyline at sunset, with the sun low on the horizon, casting a warm glow over the buildings. The sky is a mix of orange, pink, and blue. The city is densely packed with skyscrapers and other buildings. The water is visible in the foreground, reflecting the colors of the sky.

## WORDS OF WISDOM FOR Law School Graduates

Bob Clifford, founder and partner at Clifford Law Offices, wrote a letter for his daughter Erin after her graduation from DePaul University School of Law and upon being sworn in as a member of the Illinois bar. He included many words of wisdom to help guide her into the law profession. We want to share those words with you and wish you all the best as you graduate from law school and embark on your new journey as an attorney.

- Don't forget that our judicial system is the best and fairest method for settling disputes.
- Always defend the right to trial by jury. Citizen fact-finders are at the heart of the justice system.
- Support the Rule of Law. It is what keeps our country stable and free of tyranny and insures liberty for all.
- Vigorously defend our free and independent judiciary from political encroachment.
- Know that your reputation is what is most important. Your integrity in the legal community is your calling card.
- Always do what is right. The cliché "do the right thing" has meaning; the end does not always justify the means.
- You are the guardian of your morals as well as the gatekeeper of those of your clients. Return phone calls and e-mails promptly. Communication with your clients and community is essential to success.
- Get involved in the bar associations. That will make you a better lawyer. You will learn a great deal, stay on top of what is happening and make friends for life.
- Never stop learning. Always be inquisitive. Seek the truth. There are no stupid questions, and discussing issues with your colleagues is one of the best ways to grow.
- Build relationships and learn to network with other people. Be especially good at this.
- Read "To Kill a Mockingbird" again. Get to know and understand your clients' needs and goals so you can better represent them.
- Be proactive. Make your own opportunities. Nothing stays the same. View change as a vehicle for growth.
- Do pro bono work. Give back. Give as much as you get. Then give some more.
- Make your mother proud. Whatever you do, assume your mom knows all about it.
- Stay healthy so you can practice law for the rest of your life. Only time and commitment will determine your level of success.
- Be honest. Love what you do. Your life's work will not be a "job" if you do.
- Like the famous Apple computer saying goes, "think different." Think out of the box for solutions. Ideas can be powerful.
- Be willing to share what you know. As you gain experience, the concept of mentoring will become clear.
- Don't forget the importance of loyalty. Learn to laugh. Have fun!
- Focus on what you can control. Don't worry about what you can't; and
- While the law will let your dreams come true, always make time for family and friends.