

THE PARAVIEW

Quarterly Publication of the
Metrolina Paralegal Association



2010

FOURTH QUARTER
EDITION

*P.O. Box 36260
Charlotte, NC 28236
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THE PARAVIEW
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ADVERTISING RATES

The Metrolina Paralegal Association publishes *The Paraview*, which includes substantive legal articles of interest and general news for the career paralegal. This publication is distributed to approximately 250 members of the MPA in the Charlotte area. The membership of the MPA includes paralegals from private law firms, corporations, title companies, government agencies, local community colleges, educators, and paralegal students. Advertising is available in *The Paraview*, which is the only local professional publication of this type in the Metrolina area. Our magazine will keep your display advertisement circulating in the legal community for a three-month period.

Our display ad rates per issue are as follows:

1/8 page size (business card)	\$35.00
1/4 page size	\$60.00
1/2 page size	\$110.00
Full page size	\$150.00
Back cover inside	\$175.00

For more information contact: Paraview Editor c/o: Metrolina Paralegal Association
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MARK YOUR CALENDARS 2nd Quarter 2010



October 2010

Oct. 6-MPA Executive Committee meeting

Oct. 11-Columbus Day 

Oct. 14-MPA Monthly Mtg

Oct. 16-National Boss Day



November 2010

Nov. 2-Election Day

Nov. 3-MPA Executive Committee Mtg

Nov. 7-Daylight Savings Time starts

Nov. 11-Veterans Day/MPA Monthly Mtg/Evening reception for MPA members and NALA CLA/CP Short Course participants

Nov. 25-Thanksgiving



December 2010

Dec. 1-Hanukkah begins/MPA Executive Committee Mtg



Dec. 7-Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day

Dec. 9-MPA Holiday Luncheon

Dec. 21-Winter Begins

Dec. 25-Christmas Day

Dec. 26-Kwanzaa Begins





REPORT FROM THE MPA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



First Vice President (Membership): There are currently 218 MPA members.

Second Vice President (Programs): Thanks to everyone that attended the MPA Fall Fest. We hope that you enjoyed the speakers and the variety of topics that were discussed as well as the delicious lunch. We hope to see you at the Annual Seminar in February 2011.

NALA Liaison: On Thursday, November 11, 2010 from 5:30-6:30 pm, there will be a MPA members only networking event for participants in the NALA Short Course review as well as Charlotte area MPA members. The reception will be held at the Renaissance Charlotte Suites Hotel, 2800 Coliseum Centre Drive, Charlotte. Meet MPA members and attendees of NALA's Short Course. Attendees will be traveling from all over the country. Cash bar available. Please RSVP to MPA NALA Liaison, Candace Russell at CLRussell@nexsenpruet.com.

Student Liaison: The MPA is sponsoring the Meredith R. Pollette Annual Scholarship contest. A \$500 scholarship will be awarded to a paralegal student from the paralegal program at either CPCC, Kings College, Duke University (Charlotte Campus), SPCC, Gaston College, or UNC Charlotte. See pg. 7 for scholarship contest requirements.

As you can see from the above, the MPA Executive Committee is hard at work for you and the organization.

STAY ON TRACK WITH THESE HELPFUL TOOLS



SECRETARY OF STATE PAGES FOR ALL 50 STATES

If you need to conduct corporate research from the Secretary of State's offices for states other than North Carolina, check out the Sec States website.

(<http://www.secstates.com/>)

You can search for Secretary of State corporate information for all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

LEXIS/NEXIS NEW COURT CONTENT IN SOUTH CAROLINA

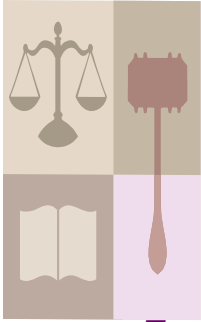
Lexis/Nexis had added 24 new counties in South Carolina as well as two new courts. Lexis/Nexis now has the total number of South Carolina counties at 38 of the 46 counties in South Carolina.

In addition, name and case searches, alerts, tracks, profiles and Single Search access is available for South Carolina Circuit Courts.

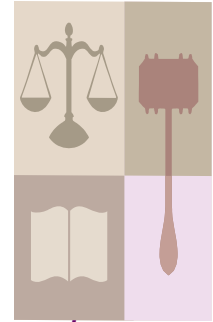
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“Workload management” is half showing that you're competent and half hiding that you can handle more work.



A DAY IN THE LIFE... OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL RISK PARALEGAL



This quarter's participant is Tammy Foster, NCCP who is an Environmental Risk Analyst with Environmental Risk Innovations, Inc.

I am a North Carolina Certified Paralegal (NCCP) who is employed as an Environmental Risk Analyst for Environmental Risk Innovations, LLC (ERI), an environmental risk management consulting firm that specializes in risk management services for commercial lenders. One of my primary duties is to review environmental due diligence documents to identify and mitigate environmental risk in connection with real estate collateral. These documents are usually in the form of a Regulatory Database Report (RDR) or a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA).

A typical workday for me can begin anywhere from 7:45 – 8:30 am and go until 4:45 – 5:30 pm. ERI is a family friendly firm that offers work-schedule flexibility. However, there are times when workload requires a longer work day especially at the end of the quarter when a larger number of commercial real estate loans generally close. I begin each day by reviewing and responding to emails. I am responsible for processing all requests that come in for environmental due diligence, so every morning I check a number of secure websites to download any requests that we received. Our clients can also submit requests via email, fax or our website. Once a request has been processed, I must enter it into a spreadsheet and our internal tracking system.

Certain requests require that I order an RDR. An RDR is used to determine if a property or adjacent properties are listed on any state, local or federal databases and identifies any environmental listings. Ordering an RDR involves accurately plotting the property using a mapping application provided by a third-party vendor. Often the property address or location must be verified by accessing county records using the internet. My duties also include reviewing RDRs and Phase I ESAs for low to medium risk properties. Depending upon the level of environmental due diligence being requested, my evaluation may include an examination of the current and former uses of a particular property. This involves a review of historical information such as city directories, aerial photographs and Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps as well as a telephone interview with a site contact. After I have reviewed all necessary items, I prepare a summary of my findings which includes a determination of the potential environmental impact to the subject property. All of our work is Peer Reviewed and cross checked for accuracy and applicability.

There are many things that I love about being a NCCP/Environmental Risk Analyst. One of my favorite parts is my interaction with our clients. Our clients consist of national, regional and community banks, loan officers and other institutions. They depend on us for our expertise, efficiency and our ability to follow-up on outstanding issues. A number of our clients have admitted that ERI is the only one they will turn to if they have a very large review to complete or if they need a review completed on an expedited basis. Some of our clients do not fully comprehend how environmental risk impacts their loans and we have to walk them through the process. It's very fulfilling to know that we meet and exceed the needs of our clients. Another aspect of my position that I enjoy is the group of people that I work with. As a paralegal, I never imagined that I'd be working with scientists. My colleagues consider me as their professional equal and have patiently helped me to expand my knowledge of environmental risk and hone my skills as a paralegal.

My most rewarding experiences as a paralegal usually occur when I am periodically contacted by an attorney to assist on a pro bono assignment. I have had the privilege of assisting in certain aspects of cases involving foreclosure avoidance and personal injury. Most recently, I conducted research for a minority business owner who is expanding her company. Helping an individual who is going through a traumatic experience or assisting someone to realize a dream brings me a deep sense of satisfaction.

If I could try another paralegal specialty for a day, I would choose to be a Patent Paralegal. I have always been interested in intellectual property law and I would love to learn more about the process of protecting your creative works, inventions, etc.



ATTENTION PARALEGAL STUDENTS EARN A \$500.00 SCHOLARSHIP

The Metrolina Paralegal Association is sponsoring the Meredith R. Pollette Annual Scholarship Contest. Any student enrolled in the following paralegal programs is eligible.

- Central Piedmont Community College
- Duke University (Charlotte Campus)
- Gaston College
- Kings College
- South Piedmont Community College
- University of North Carolina at Charlotte

The scholarship will be awarded through an essay competition. The essays must be typed, double spaced, on letter sized paper, and three to four pages in length. The essay topic is “Why I want to be a paralegal and practice _____ law.”

Grammar and punctuation will be evaluated using The Elements of Style, Fourth Edition. All essays will be judged anonymously, so do not include your name, program, or other personal information in the essay.

Submit your essay via email or U.S Mail with a cover sheet containing your name, address, telephone number, email address, and the paralegal program you are attending.

Email address is micah.decamp@gmail.com. U.S. Mail address is:

Metrolina Paralegal Association
Attention: Scholarship Committee
Post Office Box 36260
Charlotte, North Carolina 28236

All essays must be email stamped or post-marked by October 29, 2010.

In addition to the \$500.00 scholarship**, the winner will receive a one-year associate membership in the Metrolina Paralegal Association.

The winner will be notified by November 24, 2010 and will be formally recognized at our membership meeting on December 9th.

** The scholarship will be paid either to the educational facility or to the student’s lender.

LOOKING FOR A JOB (OR NOT) - IT'S TIME TO UPDATE YOUR RESUME BY VICKI VOISIN, ACP

September was 'International Update Your Resume Month.' This initiative is spearheaded by Career Directors International to promote the importance of having your resume updated at all times.

Why is this so important? You should always be prepared to submit your resume at the drop of a hat. If you're not, you'll be rushing to update and submit the resume and you may end up with a sub-par document.

Keep this quote in mind as you think about your resume: "It pays to plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark!"
~Unknown

Planning and preparation are always important. Here are additional circumstances you should consider:

-Your current job responsibilities have changed, you have new training and skills, you've recently completed a degree program or obtained a certification from a professional association

-You're happy with your job and have no intentions of leaving. Out of the blue a recruiter comes calling with a terrific opportunity but your resume needs to be submitted NOW. Would you be able to do that?

-It's time for your annual performance review and you intend to ask for a raise. Is your resume updated to demonstrate your value to the firm?

-You haven't looked at your resume in forever

Resumes don't just jump out of a hat. It takes time, effort and good organizational skills to gather information, choose format, write good content and to draft the perfect cover letter. If you don't have a powerful resume to work with in the first place, you'll be in big trouble if you need that resume by tomorrow morning.

What steps should you take to update your resume? Working from your last update, note of all of your accomplishments. Do be specific:

Did you work on a special project? Were you instrumental in initiating a new system that improves productivity? Have you surpassed goals? Have you gone above and beyond? Did you learn any new skills? Be brief while including as much detail as possible.

List all continuing education events you attended. Did you train in any new practice area? Did you obtain a certification? Did you finish your education?

Is your personal information current? Have you changed your name? Have you moved, changed your telephone number or email address? Incorrect personal information means no one will be able to find you for that important interview

Consider your format very carefully. Many standard formats found on the Internet will not work because they turn into gobbledy gook when uploaded to a future employer's electronic system. Also you need to carefully place the information regarding your skills and employment history so that there is not too much white space. It is critical that the reviewer's eye be drawn to your content, not to blank space.

The content is also critical. Resume reviewers will not take the time to read a long diatribe. Your content must be clear and concise. It must also be presented in a way that it can be easily read. If everything is lumped together in one paragraph, your resume will end up in the circular file. If at all possible, your resume should be only one page in length.

Your Challenge: Begin updating your resume today using the tips above. In the future, use your computer as your 'resume diary' where you keep careful notes of everything you do. There's no doubt that this is work, but once your update is completed and if you keep your 'resume diary' updated it will be simple to bring your resume current it on a moment's notice. It will, in fact, take care of itself.

Vicki Voisin, "The Paralegal Mentor", delivers simple strategies for paralegals and other professionals to create success and satisfaction by achieving goals and determining the direction they will take their careers. Vicki spotlights resources, organizational tips, ethics issues, and other areas of continuing education to help paralegals and others reach their full potential. She publishes a weekly ezine titled Paralegal Strategies and co-hosts The Paralegal Voice, a monthly podcast produced by Legal Talk Network. More information is available at www.paralegalmentor.com.



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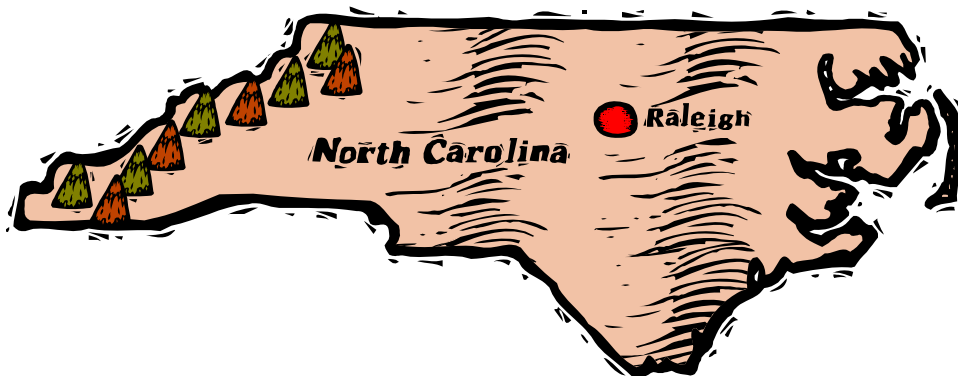
CASE IN POINT

by Tom Fishburne



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CASECENTRAL.COM/CASEINPOINT



NORTH CAROLINA NEWS

NC BAR ADOPTS GUIDELINES FOR USE OF PARALEGALS

The North Carolina Bar recently (on July 23, 2010) approved guidelines for the use of paralegals in rendering legal service. There were ten guidelines approved. One of note is that a lawyer “should facilitate the paralegal’s continuing self improvement. . . by encouraging and promoting . . . continuing education. . . “ Details on the ten guidelines as well as of other information relating to this can be found at the following link:

<http://www.nccertifiedparalegal.gov/guidelines.asp>

CHARLOTTE CHAPTER OF WOMEN IN EDISCOVERY

Charlotte recently formed a local chapter of Women in EDiscovery. Women in EDiscovery is an organization formed in 2007 and which currently has 5,000 members worldwide. It was formed to bring together women interested in technology related to the legal industry. Members include general counsel, partners, associates, CEOs, paralegals, IT personnel, litigation support personnel, and e-discovery professional.

The Charlotte chapter meetings are held on the second Wednesday of every month.

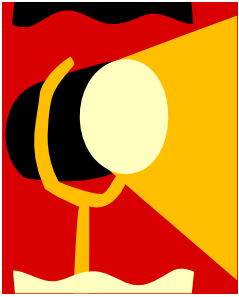
To find out more or to join the Charlotte chapter, go to <http://www.womeninediscovery.com>

FOUR NORTH CAROLINA TOWNS/CITIES NAMED REGIONAL SITES FOR VETERANS DAY 2010

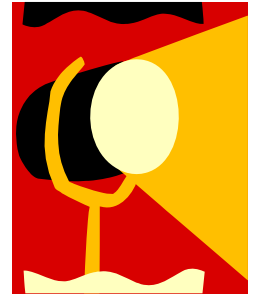
The Secretary of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs announced that the Veterans Day National Committee selected four North Carolina locations are Regional Sites for the Observance of Veterans Day 2010, which is November 11, 2010. Charlotte, Fayetteville, Morehead City, and Warsaw were the selected sites. There are currently almost 800,000 veterans residing in North Carolina making a \$25 billion impact on the state’s economy.

Source: North Carolina Department of Administration (<http://www.doa.nc.gov>)





MPA SPOTLIGHT



Beverly P. Isenhour, NCCP is a paralegal at Ringler Associates.

Beverly came to the paralegal field because she felt stagnant in the accounting job she had been doing for several years and determined it was time for a change. She had always been interested in the law so she decided to take “Introduction to Paralegal Study” at CPCC. After taking that first class she knew being a paralegal was what she wanted to pursue.

Beverly obtained her Post-Baccalaureate Diploma from CPCC in May of 2008 and received her NCCP certification in November 2008. She’s been working for Ringler Associates for five years.

Working for the structured settlement company Ringler Associates has given Beverly the unique opportunity to work along side many different law firms. She helps the attorneys’ clients structure their settlement proceeds into annuities. Her favorite thing to do is attend mediations and meet the clients face to face. At that point she is able to talk with them one on one and plan an annuity specifically for their future financial needs.

Working with personal injury cases a paralegal can get bogged down with all the bad things that he or she sees. On the flip side she knows the huge benefits of being able to help these people by using a structured settlement. The most memorable ones are where the parents have purchased a structure for their child to be paid out periodically starting at age 18. It was gratifying for Beverly to see those children turn 18 and have money to go to college where otherwise they couldn’t have gone.

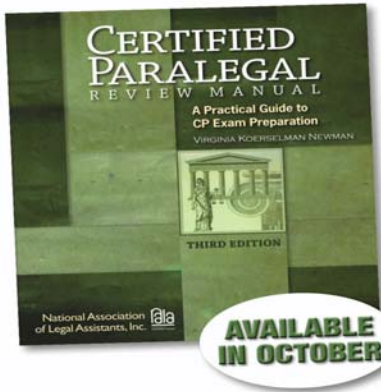
She attended the MPA Annual seminar in February and was very impressed at the quality and organization of the seminar. Attending that event was why she decided to join MPA a few months ago. She looks forward to getting to know everyone and becoming involved in the MPA!

Beverly and her husband Sam have been married for 13 years. They have one son who is 4 years old and are expecting a baby girl due on October 15th.

Beverly’s favorite thing to do is spend time with her husband and play cars and trucks with her son. She loves to read and watch TV game shows! She’s even attended a taping of the Price is Right during the Bob Barker years. She and her family attend church at Diamond Hill Baptist in Statesville, NC where she serves as the Embrace Women’s Ministry leader and Vacation Bible School Director.

NALA NEWS

Newly revised and thoroughly updated, this is a must-have resource for anyone preparing to take the NALA CLA/CP Exam!



CLA/CP REVIEW MANUAL:

A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO CLA/CP EXAM PREPARATION, 3RD EDITION

Like the exam itself, this comprehensive manual is known in the field for high standards of paralegal professionalism and excellence. The introduction of the third edition describes the exam including policies and eligibility; the 16 chapters focus on specific content areas of the test. **Key features include:**

- Tips for efficient study, including group study suggestions.
- Positive test performance suggestions, including tips for controlling stress and answering specific types of questions.
- Extensive outlines with law summaries, illustrative examples, sample questions, and charts for review.
- UPDATED realistic Self-Tests at the end of each chapter.
- NEW Section on Ethics discussing the fundamentals of email communication and computer use.



Watch the NALA Website for ordering details!

[NALA Campus Live! CLE Courses for October-November 2010](#)

Wednesday, October 20th 3 – 5 pm (CST)	Civil Litigation: Part I by Karen Sanders-West, ACP, JD
Friday, October 22nd 11 am – 1 pm (CST)	Legal Research by Virginia Koerselman Newman, Attorney
Tuesday, October 26th Noon – 2 pm (CST)	Trademark Prosecution by Deborah Hampton, IP Manager
Tuesday, November 2nd Noon- 2pm (CST)	H-1B Visas by Nikki Mehrpoo Jacobson, Attorney
Wednesday, November 3rd 3 – 5 pm (CST)	Civil Litigation: Part II by Karen Sanders-West, ACP, JD
Wednesday, November 10th Noon – 1:30 pm (CST)	Real Estate Closings by Glenn Leier, Attorney
Tuesday, November 16th Noon – 1:30 pm (CST)	Corporations: Mergers and Acquisitions by Sharon Werner, ACP
Wednesday, November 17th 3 – 5 pm (CST)	Civil Litigation: Part III by Karen Sanders-West, ACP, JD
Thursday, November 18th Noon – 1:30 pm (CST)	Time Management Techniques and Strategies by Vicki Voisin, ACP

**** Please note that this is an abbreviated listing of the course offerings. There are many other courses available. Contact NALA Headquarters at (918) 587-6828 for registration information.**

The 5 Easiest Ways to Boost Paralegal Productivity

By Gloria Koss

Today's paralegal is looking to squeeze the most out of every workday minute—sometimes even weekend minutes—in order to stay on top of caseloads, contacts, and callbacks. With this fact in mind, there are some simple things paralegals can do to boost their work productivity even more.

1. Discontinue Disruptions

For many paralegals, one of the main speed-bumps to higher productivity is disruptions. Sometimes such disturbances cannot be avoided; for all others, there are some simple tactics paralegals can use to stay “in the zone.”

Eradicate the Egress

While this seems very common sense, it truly is surprising how many paralegals leave their office door open while they work. By closing the office door, co-workers know that they should come back another time.

Close Calls

Sending calls to voicemail or having another co-worker take messages is another great way to stay in the flow and increase productivity. Set aside a specific part of the day to make and return telephone calls, and stick to that schedule.

Internet Interlude

There is no law anywhere that says paralegals must check, read, and deal with each email that comes through their inbox on an individual basis throughout the day. Try closing the email program and setting aside some time to specifically deal only with email, just like with phone calls.

2. Decrease Dawdling

Procrastination really can be a paralegal's worst enemy. Whether there is not enough free time, there seems to be no good place to start, or the task looks too daunting, there are ways to manage the seemingly unmanageable.

Create Crumbs

For tasks that will take a lot of time, instead of putting them off until there will be a large enough chunk of free time to complete them in one fell swoop, think about how to break them down into smaller, more manageable tasks that can be accomplished over a series of days.

Chunk Chapters

Work in small chunks. Break an already small task—which is ideally part of a larger job—down into smaller bits. Set a timer for 10 to 15 minutes, no more than half an hour, and work at the task. When the timer goes off, decide whether to stay on the current task or to pick another. Either way, tasks get worn down, one small chunk at a time.

Separate Starts

All large tasks are really the same; when cleaning a house, start with one room. When finished, move on to the next room. Before long, the entire house is clean. Caseloads and client files are

5 EASY WAYS-CONT.

no different. Start with one; when it is finished, move on to the next. One by one, until the entire task is complete.

3. Tap into Tools

There is a plethora of tools available to today's paralegal. Technology can help organize time, allocate resources, delegate duties, and more; making the best use of the tools at one's disposal is perhaps the most important key to increasing productivity.

ServeNow.com

One of the duties that befalls paralegals is that of arranging for legal service. Many firms rely on third-party servers to deliver service, trace skips, conduct investigations, and other tasks. ServeNow.com provides firms with access to a vast network of trusted, pre-screened local process servers. This service saves paralegals the time required to hunt down a worthy process server by doing all of the legwork for them. How easy!

ServeManager

Another service provided by ServeNow.com is ServeManager. This program gives paralegals the ability to assign, track, and manage serves, much like shipping companies provide one location to manage and track all packages. This is a very convenient way to save time and stay organized.

Combined Contrivances

By combining tools such as ServeNow.com and ServeManager, paralegals can ensure that all of their process serving information is in one place, and that with very minimal effort and time, they can find all of their service information in one place.

4. Open up to Organization

Staying organized is a challenge for many individuals, not just paralegals. Whether it is the desk, filing cabinet, in/outboxes, or computer files, being organized saves time.

A Place for Everything ... and Everything in its Place

Although an old saying, it holds truth to this day. By organizing the items on a desktop, a person's mind creates a traffic pattern to the location of each item. By putting regularly used items in specific places and keeping them there, when a paralegal reaches for the item his/her brain learns the path to that item. Each time the action is carried out, that pathway becomes cemented harder and harder. Pretty soon, grabbing the stapler without looking, answering the phone while stapling, and grabbing a sticky note will all be second nature.

Find a File Formula

Client files can be a nightmare; organizing and keeping their contents organized can be even worse! Develop a pattern for case file contents. For instance, make it a rule to put the client information sheet in the bracket on the left side of the file, first item, followed by the retainer agreement on top, and any pertinent case opening documents from the court on top of that. On the right side, place discovery. Try filing the most recent additions to the front, so they are easy to find when preparing motions. After finding a succession that works, stick to it. Doing so will save time in the long run and eliminate lengthy searches for documents.

5 EASY WAYS-CONT.

Kick Clutter to the Curb

Go through inboxes and outboxes, filing cabinets, and seldom-used desk drawers. Anything that is outdated, no longer used, or irrelevant, shred and throw away. Pens that no longer work, pencils without erasers, calculators with dead batteries: pitch 'em. There is absolutely nothing wrong with a little spring cleaning year-round!

5. Find the Flow

Great paralegals know how their office works, and how their lawyers work. Putting that knowledge to good use by creating a proficient flow-through system for handling documents will increase productivity in the office, guaranteed!

Copy Cornucopia

Keep a good-sized stack of copies of a variety of regularly used documents readily at hand. For instance, if a firm requires a client intake sheet to be filled out for each potential client, having a tall stack of them copied and ready to grab on the way to a new consultation is extremely helpful.

Promptly Prioritize

Identify what tasks have to be done in what order, or what tasks must be completed by when. For paralegals who work with more than one lawyer, this can be tricky. Try keeping a weekly calendar that both lawyer and paralegal have access to in order to update meetings, hearings, and other items so that prioritization is always current.

Repeat the Routine

Once a routine is established, if it works, keep at it. Try not to deviate from the schedule unless absolutely necessary. This will help co-workers know when to stay out, clients to know when to expect an email response or phone call back, and the neural pathways will hum with efficiency!

Boosting productivity is challenging, especially in the paralegal profession, because working diligently all day and feeling exhausted at the end of it must mean that a great deal was accomplished, right? In truth though, arriving back at the office the next morning reveals that very little was completed. Trying these simple ideas to streamline the office and the way work is done can help conquer such a defeating and vicious cycle.

Gloria Koss is a former paralegal and a staff writer for ServeNow.com, which is a trusted network of local, pre-screened process servers. Learn more at www.ServeNow.com.

MPA Board Members and Chairpersons 2010-2011

If you have any questions or comments concerning the MPA or its activities, please feel free to contact any one of the following MPA Board Members.

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WE WISH TO THANK OUR 2010-2011 PATRON MEMBERS FOR ALL OF THEIR SUPPORT

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