

Learning from Great Trial Lawyers

Harris Blum, University of Miami

Time flies when you're having fun--I can't believe it's been five weeks already. Last week, partner Steve Smith lectured on direct and cross-examination. I had heard that Steve was an excellent trial lawyer, and that makes plenty of sense, given his attention to detail. Steve diagnosed the many personality types displayed by witnesses. His ability to understand those factors and use them to his advantage when asking questions and evoking the answers he wants is beyond impressive. I enjoyed trying to emulate that strategy while cross-examining during the workshop last Thursday, although I admittedly have a lot of room for improvement.

Aside from learning how to question a witness last week, I also spent a lot of time trying to wrap up a motion for summary judgment for Josh Lerner. Someone once told me that writing ability is like a muscle--if you don't use it, you lose it. Safe to say that I've been flexing my writing muscle a lot this summer. Hopefully, it pays off during the next two weeks for the summer associate writing competition!

To that end, I am looking forward to the writing competition and mock trial on tap for July. From what I've heard so far, everyone around the firm enjoys these competitions and, in particular, the bragging rights awarded to the office that houses the winners. I hope Andres and I will make the Miami Office proud!