

## ***Week Four-Learning Practical Skills We need to Argue in a Courtroom***

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We are almost halfway through the summer, and time is flying by. This was my busiest week yet with a seminar, multiple workshops, new projects, and a visit from the other summer associates!

In the Motion Practice Workshop, we each presented a mock argument to persuade the judge to grant or deny a Motion to Compel Arbitration. It was such a great experience that allowed us to gauge what judges look for during a motion hearing.

We also learned from partner Rob Blank about what juries look for in opening and closing statements. Presenting to a judge requires a totally different skillset than presenting to a jury. Most lawyers must have a keen ability to do both. Law school does not always teach you the practical skills needed to argue in a courtroom after graduation, so it is very advantageous to get exposure to these topics from attorneys who have experience.

I also observed a mediation with two attorneys from the Miami Office, associate Brittany Polo and partner Suzanne Singer. It was great to interact with attorneys from a different office. I was exposed to different presentation styles and a different type of case. I also assisted partner Leonard Dietzen, from the Tallahassee Office, with writing an article, which allowed me to do some research in a different area of law.

On Friday, the other six summer associates visited the Tampa Office for our Opening/Closing Statement Workshop. It was great to see everyone and swap stories from our first couple of weeks in the different offices. We each presented an opening or closing statement. This was a nerve racking experience, but also highly rewarding. We got practice preparing our statements, which gives us a baseline for when we actually need to do this for the first time in practice. This workshop also gave us the opportunity to develop our own styles as trial attorneys. I was thoroughly impressed by all of the other summer associates. It is great to be around colleagues who are so bright and challenge you to sharpen your skills. Afterwards, we celebrated our progress with some of the Tampa attorneys over sangria at the Columbia Restaurant. Next week will get even busier, since our writing competition prompt will be released.