The Only Way to Win

10/14/20



Writing for the ABA Litigation Journal, Faith Gay and Joy Odom explore how to turn difficult cases into coherent, winning stories for judges and juries.

The start of any case—particularly a complex one—can be overwhelming. You may find yourself dealing with multiple claims and defenses, hundreds of thousands of documents, dozens of witnesses, and a complicated set of facts. You will be tempted to triage—addressing only the emergency on your desk. But working this way leads to ballooning costs and often results in disaster.

How do you rise above the fray of everyday litigation and turn your mess of a case into a coherent, winning story for your judge or jury? Especially in these days of extreme economic pressure, how do you win your case without blowing your budget? Where do you begin?

From the day a case begins, imagine standing in front of a judge or jury, explaining why the facts and law require a win for your client. To do that, you will need to be completely conversant with the facts in your case, understand the applicable law, and build a record that guarantees success. Never forget that the attorney who tells the most compelling story wins. Of course, that is easier said than done. But with a solid plan that accounts for your eventual turn at trial, you will be on your way.

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Complex Commercial Disputes