

# Just OK Is Not OK: Why Employing Experts Is Essential for Success

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In my practice as a personal injury trial attorney, I have learned that it's important to know when you need an expert. I can read a traffic crash report, speak to witnesses and the investigating police officers, and analyze photographs, but an accident-reconstruction engineer is the only person truly capable of piecing it all together, synthesizing the data and telling me what really happened. In a slip-and-fall case, I may be able to conduct a similar investigation, but only a true building engineer can break down the floor's slip-resistance and the potential building code violations.

Additionally, I need experts *outside* the traditional context of an injury case, as well. In fact, there are many things we encounter in our law firm's office, *every day*, that require a certain level of experience and specialized training in order to achieve the maximum desired results. You may be able to handle the task, solve the problem, and get it done, but will it be done *right*? Could it have been done better by someone else? To quote that AT&T commercial, "Just OK is not OK."

Recognizing your strengths and weaknesses – while understanding that someone may be better qualified for a particular job – is an essential leadership tool. Surrounding yourself with the right complementary people is vital to your success. I can research which computer and file-management system to buy online, but a true IT professional may have steered me in a completely different direction that I had not considered. His knowledge from working with similar clients, and the way his mind is trained to work, give him a level of

insight into our current and future needs, as well as the market, that far exceeds my own understanding.

In my office, even though we are a small, successful trial firm of just three attorneys, we proudly employ a business coach and a marketing team comprised of social media and public relations experts to ensure our continued success. Whereas I am certainly capable of drafting and posting a quick piece on Facebook about a recent firm success or promoting an upcoming charitable event that we are sponsoring, I am not the best person to perform those tasks. Instead, we defer to these communications experts to strategically guide us in the right direction and execute on their own areas of expertise, respectively, doing everything necessary to grow our firm. In turn, this delineation enables us to focus on our true mission – clients and legal matters.

Our business-marketing team understands there is a right way and a “less right” way to deliver our message. They, undoubtedly, possess a better understanding of how to reach our target audience. They are able to siphon through endless streams of information, determine where the best use of our resources (including *time*) may be, and have the data to support their recommendations and convince the attorneys that their way is the *best* way. Sometimes, these talented individuals know answers to questions that I didn’t even know to ask!

True leadership requires the ability to understand your role, your limitations, and the abilities of those around you. Hiring and building a team of experts, finding the right people with specialized knowledge, and allowing them to do what they do best, has been an integral part in the recent success and growth of our firm. Remember: Just because you *can* do a certain job, does not mean that you *should*.



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