

JOHN LEO WALTER, ESQ.

Mr. Walter — how does it feel to be voted a Leading Lawyer in the area of Litigation on the Eastern Shore for the second year in a row? In addition, you were also singled out in the area of Criminal Law on the Eastern Shore in the 2015 Peer Review.

Having been voted a leader in the areas of Litigation and Criminal Law on the Eastern Shore is extraordinary. I have a deep respect for all of the attorneys that practice here on the Shore; I am very fortunate and privileged to work with so many fine talented lawyers — to be recognized as outstanding by my peers is a profound honor. My friend said this vote makes me the Eastern Shore's "go to" lawyer when it comes to litigation and criminal law — if that's the case, I can promise you one thing, I will work my heart out to prove him right.

Can you explain to the readers what a litigation attorney does?

Yes. A litigation attorney is a lawyer that focuses primarily on court room trial work — A litigation attorney defends and represents Plaintiffs and Defendants in the Maryland Court system. Under the category of litigation, there are sort-of subcategories, so to speak, lawyers that focus on certain areas of the law. For instance, some lawyers do family law; some do real estate. My firm focuses mostly on criminal and traffic defense — as well as personal injury cases (serious auto accidents, medical malpractice, premises liability, etc.) and breach of contracts.

What makes a good trial lawyer?

Preparation and client communication. With regard to preparation — there is always the advice of a very senior Circuit Court Judge — who's name shall remain anonymous, that coached me during one of my first jury trials almost 18 years ago — he said "Counselor, always remember when you prepare for trial you should come to court with a belt *and* suspenders." I'll never forget that advice. In essence, the Judge was saying always be over-prepared — but now that I think about it, maybe he was telling me that I don't want to get caught with my pants down...

As for client communication — if your client is well informed and understands what's going on — meaning the lawyer tells the client all of the possible ups and downs and ins and outs of the case — the client will undoubtedly be more comfortable in Court and will almost always be satisfied with the outcome. I am of the opinion that if you keep your client informed of all the potential outcomes (good and bad) the client will be happy.



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