Down from the Bench, Up from the Trenches…Judges and Law Enforcement Speak Out.

By Cris Schneider, ADA Atlantic Judicial Circuit

Overview

In this session you will be presented with survey findings from our Georgia Superior Court Judges. The objective of the survey was to identify areas of trial presentation and technique which we as prosecutors could improve upon. [1]

The Survey

The Survey was conducted via letter and the Sidebar list server. A copy of the letter is attached hereto. Feedback exceeded a 20% response rate and was accompanied by unfettered support of this initiative. Based on the Judges' overwhelming reference to law enforcement preparation, Phase II of this study was initiated. Phase II is still ongoing and involves interviews with regional GBI offices in an attempt to devise methods to help facilitate a more productive relationship between ADAs and Law Enforcement. As with the Judges, the Georgia Bureau of Investigation Regional Offices were eager to participate and provide support of this initiative.

Survey Results

By analyzing survey results, we have categorized feedback into several meaningful areas including:

- I'm Too Sexy
- Your Mama is Watching
- My Nemesis
- "When it comes to procedure, I'm not a patient man…"
- "Somewhere Out There is a song from An American Tail, not a legal argument."
- "Psst…If you tell them you're a cop, you get a discount…"
- "You have parts and we have parts, we need to put our parts together."

Each of these categories will be discussed in detail and the primary recommend areas of improvement will be presented along with proven best practices specific to each.

[1] Siskel & Ebert have given this presentation two "digits" up. Please attend to uncover which two digits.

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Dear Judge ,

My name is Cris Schneider and I am an Assistant District Attorney in the Atlantic Circuit.

The Prosecuting Attorneys' Council of Georgia has asked me to speak to the majority of Assistant District Attorneys in the State of Georgia at our Annual Summer Conference which is to be held on Jekyll Island, July 27-29th. The topic of the presentation will be how to properly prepare a case for trial.

As part of my presentation, I believe it would be most beneficial to address with my fellow ADAs constructive comments from the perspective of the judiciary as to those areas of trial presentation and technique our Superior Court Judges would like to see prosecutors improve upon, change, or more fully develop.

In this regard, I am using this letter to canvass Superior Court Justices throughout the State and, accordingly, I respectfully request your brief and thoughtful input regarding one thing you would like to see prosecutors do better in your courtroom. Of course, any response you provide will be held in the strictest confidence, and will only be used in connection with my presentation. No names or circuits will be identified in any manner.

You may communicate your comments to me via facsimile @ 912-876-4305, or email at cris.schneider@libertycountyga.com. Additionally, if you feel so inclined you may call me at (912) 977-1798.

In advance, I thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedule to share your insights with me. I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Very truly yours,

Cris Schneider

ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY