

Steven Burton: Co-workers provide the best new ideas

Tips of the Trade

How do you organize your workday? I organize it in writing at the beginning of each day, and usually it's substantially changed by clients' needs by day's end.

How do you keep yourself current in your field? The Legislature, Congress and judges continue to change, modify and explain the law, and we review these changes daily. Staying current is essential to survival as an attorney.

Where is the best source for new ideas? In all facets of the practice, the best ideas clearly come from employees, attorneys and partners in my firm. Listening to my people has constantly yielded fruit in my career.

Tell us about a workplace challenge and how you dealt with it: One workplace challenge that comes to mind is a trial I handled in

New York City that lasted one year. My team lived in New York three weeks of every month for the hearings. We returned to Florida for about six days a month. I juggled running my local practice, handling the trial as lead defense counsel, and did the best I could to help my pregnant wife at home on bed rest with our second child. There was no Internet then, so everything was done by fax and phone. I tried the case during the day and worked for other clients at night. I handled it by working harder than I thought I could, and praying a lot. I also handled it through the help of some of the best attorneys I've ever known.

How do you measure your own success? I measure my success by my ability to juggle pressures for my time with work, family, friends, spiritual and for myself. I'm still not very good at it.

Who is a mentor and why? My mentors include Lee Moffitt, Judge Catherine P. McEwen, Larry Stagg, David Brown, John Wilcox, Steve Osher, and Glenn and Dan Burton. They helped me understand what it takes to be an attorney and a professional.

Background Check

What was your first paid job? Picking watermelons in July 1973.

What did you want to be when you grew up? I always wanted to be an attorney.

What was a turning point in your life? When it dawned on me that the most important thing in people's minds are themselves and what they are doing that day, not me and my needs. I then learned to try to merge my agenda with theirs.

What is your favorite activity with your family? Anything involving baseball.

If you could have dinner with one person you've never met, who would it be and why? I'd most like to have dinner with Mayor Bloomberg and pick his brain for as long as he would allow.

Who are your heroes in the business

EXECUTIVE PROFILE

WHO AM I?

NAME: Steven G. Burton

TITLE AND COMPANY: Managing partner, Tampa office and executive committee member, Broad and Cassel, Attorneys at Law

YEARS WITH THE COMPANY: Seven

YEARS IN TAMPA BAY AREA: All 46 years of my life, other than the first three months in Orlando

NATURE OF BUSINESS: Attorney, business litigation

EDUCATION: University of South Florida, bachelor's in mass communications; Stetson University College of Law, JD

WHERE YOU GREW UP AND

WHAT IT WAS LIKE: I grew up in the Bay area, predominately Hillsborough County. Many more lakes and orange groves back then, as compared to today.

world and why? Mayor Bloomberg is my hero in the business world. Ethics, savvy, hard work, excellence, success, then public service.

What keeps you awake at night? The next five- and 10-year business plans.

Words to the Wise

What advice would you give to someone starting out in your field? I advise my young attorneys to constantly remember to keep the clients' interests ahead of all others; and be perfect as no one pays us to lose.

How could Tampa Bay change to be more business friendly? Tampa is very business friendly and will continue to do so as people remember "business" is us: mothers and fathers working for their families.



KATHLEEN CABBLE