

Making Law Review

Making Law Review

The Expert's Guide to Mastering the Write-On Competition

Wes Henricksen

CAROLINA ACADEMIC PRESS

Durham, North Carolina

Copyright © 2008
Wes Henricksen
All Rights Reserved.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Henricksen, Wes.

Making law review : the expert's guide to mastering the write-on
competition / by Wes Henricksen.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 978-1-59460-520-8 (alk. paper)

1. Legal composition. 2. Law students--United States--Hand-
books, manuals,
etc. 3. Law reviews--United States. I. Title.

KF250.H46 2008
808'.06634--dc22

2008002613

Carolina Academic Press
700 Kent Street
Durham, North Carolina 27701
Telephone (919) 489-7486
Fax (919) 493-5668
www.cap-press.com

Printed in the United States of America.

For Natalia

Contents

Acknowledgments	xi
Introduction	3
Chapter 1 · What Is the Law Review?	7
A Little Historical Context	9
Some Global Context	11
Strange but True ...	12
Chapter 2 · Should You Be on Law Review?	15
Benefits	16
1. Increased Employment Opportunities	16
2. A Credential You Can Talk About	17
3. Develop Relationships with Classmates and Professors	18
4. Honing Your Lawyering Skills	19
5. Unique Opportunity to Publish	20
6. Potential Future Benefits—The Unknown Variable	20
Drawbacks	21
1. Time Consuming	21
2. Tedious	22
3. Obscure and Theoretical	23
4. Law Review Backlash	24
Chapter 3 · Methods of Getting onto the Law Review	25
Method #1: Grade-On	26
Method #2: Write-On	26

Method #3: Composite-On	27
Method #4: Note-On	28
Method #5: Walk-On	28
Chapter 4 · An Overview of the Write-On Competition	31
The Main Assignment	31
Casenote vs. Comment	33
Casenotes	33
Comments	34
Other Possible Tasks	36
Chapter 5 · Preparing for the Write-On Competition	39
Activity #1: Attend the Law Review Informational Meeting	39
Activity #2: Clear Your Schedule	40
Activity #3: Maximize Your Knowledge of the Bluebook	41
Other Common Bluebooking Errors	43
Bluebooking Quiz	45
Activity #4: Read Old Submission Papers and Published Student Casenotes and Comments	47
Casenote Excerpt	47
Activity #5: Read the Papers You Wrote for Your First Year Legal Writing Course	52
Activity #6: Create an Appropriate Atmosphere	53
Chapter 6 · Writing Your Submission Paper:	
12 Steps to Success	55
Step #1: Read and Re-Read the Instructions	56
Step #2: Focus on the Prompt	58
Step #3: Read All the Materials	58
Step #4: Select a Claim	60
a. Best Supported	61
b. Most Original	62
c. Politically Correct	62
d. All Else Being Equal, Flip a Coin	62

Step #5: Write a First Draft	63
a. Follow the Instructions Regarding Structure and Format	63
b. Make Effective Use of the Authorities	63
i. Make sure that seemingly inapplicable authorities are not somehow useful to your argument	64
ii. Differentiate between binding and persuasive authority	64
c. Add Footnotes or Endnotes as You Write, and Use All the Space Allowed for Citations	65
d. Keep Paragraphs Short and Vary the Sentence Length	66
e. Make Sure to Include Headings	66
f. Use Active Voice	67
g. Politically Correct (Again)	68
h. Avoid Humor and Sarcasm	68
i. Address Counterarguments	69
j. Mind the Page Limit	69
Step #6: Do the Editing Exercise and Draft Your Personal Statement, if Your Competition Includes These	70
Step #7: Revise and Organize Your Paper	71
a. Improve the Paper's Uniformity and Flow	72
b. Make Sure There Is Consistency of Argument	72
c. Avoid Redundancy	73
d. Adhere to the Page Limit	73
e. Save the Deleted Material	74
f. Include an Introduction and a Conclusion	74
Step #8: Proofread	75
a. Citations, Including Case Names	75
b. Quotes	76
c. Footnotes/Endnotes	76
d. Style & Structure	77
Step #9: Give Your Paper a Title	78
Step #10: Maximize Your Paper's Aesthetic Quality	79
a. Which Legal Document?	80
b. Headings	80

c. Body Text and Footnotes/Endnotes	81
d. Use a Laser Printer	81
Step #11: Do a Final Proofread Before Submitting Your Paper	82
Step #12: Have Someone Review Your Submission Paper, If Allowed	82
Chapter 7 · The Editing Exercise	83
1. Follow the Instructions	83
2. If the Editing Exercise Is Paper-Based ...	83
3. If the Editing Exercise Is Computer-Based ...	84
4. Try to Find an Error in Every Footnote	85
5. Don't Get Comfortable After Making a Few Edits	85
6. Insert Notes if Allowed	85
7. If You Don't Know It, Look It Up	86
Chapter 8 · The Personal Statement	87
1. Follow the Directions	87
2. Write Well	87
3. Portray Yourself as Interesting and Likeable	88
4. A Note on Specialty Journal Personal Statements	88
5. Have Someone Review Your Personal Statement, If Allowed	89
Conclusion	91
Appendix	93
Endnotes	97
Chapter 1	97
Chapter 2	98
Chapter 3	98
Chapter 4	99
Chapter 5	99
Index	101

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank the following former law review members for generously contributing their time and knowledge to help make this book as complete and useful as possible: Janna Aginsky, Adam Breneman, Marianne Hogan, and Charles Walsh. Their intelligent and thoughtful advice improved the book immeasurably.

I would also like to thank Bob Conrow for giving my manuscript a chance, Karen Clayton for helping me polish it up, and everyone else at Carolina Academic Press who helped make this book a reality. Many thanks, as well, to the numerous law review members who took the time to discuss their law schools' write-on competitions with me. *Making Law Review* would have been incomplete without their assistance.

And finally, my biggest thank-you goes to my wife, Natalia, without whose patience, support, and love this book would never have become more than an idea in my head.

The anecdotes included in this book do not necessarily reflect the experience of individuals. While most of the illustrations are drawn from personal accounts, some are composites while others are representative examples.