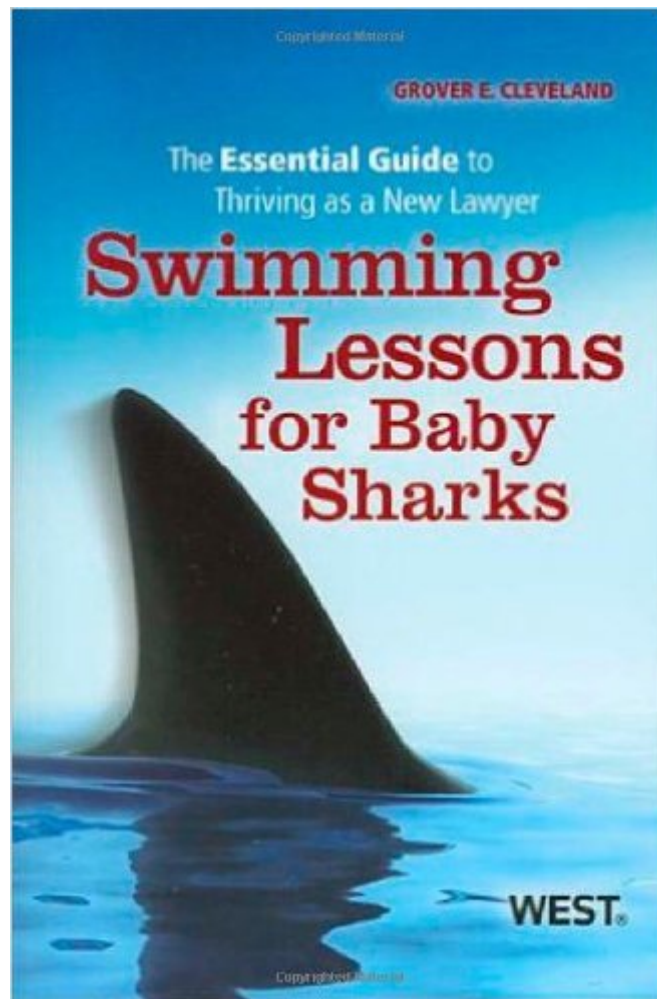


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# Swimming Lessons For Baby Sharks: The Essential Guide To Thriving As A New Lawyer



## Synopsis

This book contains hundreds of tips from attorneys throughout the country with the critical advice new lawyers need to ensure their success. The book is current and comprehensive, providing useful, practical advice that law schools don't teach. It starts with important steps graduates can take even before they begin work. With an easily readable style, *Swimming Lessons for Baby Sharks* continues to teach new lawyers the ropes from their first day on the job. Humorous, real-life examples illustrate the lessons along with useful checklists that provide comprehensive advice quickly. More information is available on the *Swimming Lessons for Baby Sharks* website.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Swimming Lessons" is a great guide for new and aspiring lawyers. In it, Cleveland lays out the realities of professional practice in a clear and candid manner. The book is mainly geared towards those who are interested in "Big Law" -style private practice, and provides many key insights for how to thrive in that setting. This leads to much discussion of the Big Law business model, firm structure, and how a new lawyer can succeed in this highly specialized environment. Hence, there are useful tips such as the importance of always billing one's time (it is better to seem inefficient rather than lazy), and how to be strategic in the selection of non-billable work. While the focus is on Big Law, much of Cleveland's advice also translates well into other types of practice settings - such as non-profits and government. For example, his advice on building successful relationships with more senior attorneys applies to almost any type of practice (your superiors are more likely to invest valuable resources in you if you can show that you'll make their lives easier). Likewise, his thoughts

on utilizing support staff, improving the quality of one's work, and successful organization transfer equally well. Some of the details may differ in implementation, but the core principles are valid in almost any professional setting. As such, "Swimming Lessons" is an excellent resource for anyone pursuing a legal career.

This book is an absolute must-read for law students and new lawyers. Grover's clear, direct advice definitely helped me to make partner in a large Northwest law firm. Later in my career, revisiting Swimming Lessons assisted in keeping me grounded and re-orienting to a new career as a government attorney. Having been a member of the firm's hiring committee and supervised many young attorneys (and having made my own share of mistakes), I can vouch first-hand for Grover's book as a key aid to smoothing the learning curve of professional life in the law. Swimming Lessons was also fun to read with great real-life examples of the issues junior lawyers are likely to face. I've given this book as a gift to several law students and young attorneys because I believe so strongly in the usefulness of its content.

While the book is intended for newly minted attorneys, it's an invaluable resource for law students approaching the interview process. One learns many things in law school, but how a law firm operates isn't one of them. Because I read Grover's book during my 1L summer, I walked into my OCI process much more informed than the majority of my peers about how firms are structured, what qualities are sought out and valued, and what causes otherwise smart and capable lawyers to flounder. Consequently, I was able to give knowledgeable answers that clearly signaled that I would be an asset to a firm. I'm convinced that, in a punishing economy, "Swimming Lessons" helped distinguish me from hundreds of other applicants and secure a summer position at the largest firm in town. I recommend it without qualification to any law student considering firm employment.

It made me feel better, but I don't know that I actually learned anything substantive from it. Mostly I gained a sense that everyone flounders a bit at the beginning and it's normal to feel overwhelmed. Also since most of the information is common sense, it relieved some of my anxiety because it seemed to indicate that most of doing well is common sense. The information applies mostly to large law firm associates. Since I'm at a small law firm, I needed more practical advice about how to get things done without a staff of secretaries or paralegals. So if that's the kind of advice you need...this is not the book for you. If you are at a large firm and need to know how to delegate tasks to your staff or get work from partners, then this book would be more helpful.

Mr. Cleveland has created an authoritative handbook for aspiring attorneys that will stand the test of time. As a young professional, I wish I had read this book long ago. Indeed, I learned much of the advice given by Cleveland the hard way. Cleveland's writing style is clear, concise, and yet comprehensive--it is very clear that the author is a skilled technical writer. The book is an easy read and you will find yourself breezing through the wonderful insights and top-notch advice. I will return to this book throughout the years when I encounter a relevant topic, and that, in my opinion, is the mark of an excellent manual.

Long recognized as one of the finest attorneys in the Pacific Northwest, Grover Cleveland now shares his wisdom and wit on how to succeed in the law in *Swimming Lessons for Baby Sharks*, the essential guide for new lawyers and the people who love them. Mr. Cleveland leads his reader through a series of lessons that address the everyday problems facing the young lawyer. Designed primarily for attorneys entering the competitive underworld of corporate law, *Swimming's* lessons work equally well for a much broader range of readers: attorneys pursuing government, nonprofit or public interest work, those studying, aspiring to, or merely considering the law, and folks who want to get ahead in business, gain a better understanding of the legal profession, or just enjoy a good read. Not afraid to provoke or unsettle, Cleveland, who turned to county government after a decade in corporate law, lays it on the line in this unflinching look at a challenging and controversial profession. What's more, his advice is sound and often insightful. Some of us wish this book had been around when we started out.

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