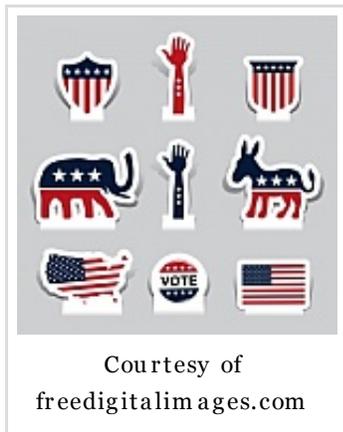


BowTieLawyer

10/16/2012 · 9:13 PM | EDIT

The Great Debate? Not in Court.

If you or I answered questions in Court like the presidential candidates do at the recent town hall debate we would be running the risk of being held in Contempt!



Courtesy of
freedigitalimages.com

In Court parties/witnesses must answer the question asked. It is preferred that the answer be “yes” or “no” and then an explanation offered if necessary. Obviously if it’s not a “yes or no question,” answer the question asked. This can be very difficult to do and takes practice to get this right. One of the things that can aid this is to practice or rehearse the actual questions with your attorney. By way of example, one of the candidates was asked does the Dept of Energy consider its roll to work to reduce gas prices. The answer given was not “yes” or “no.” I am actually not sure what the answer was...and I listened to it.

If you find yourself in Court, not answering the question asked may result in the Court to conclude you are being deceptive. This is not an impression you want to create.

Another thing to be sure of is to answer only the question asked. Do not answer what is not asked and do not offer more than what is asked. The best example I can think of is when a party was asked if they had committed an affair with “Mary” since the separation. The answer was, “I have not committed an affair with ‘Mary’...since the separation.” There was an awkward pause. The awkward pause resulted in the follow up question of when did you commit your affair with Mary. The party told on himself by not just saying “No” which would have been a completely truthful answer to the question asked.

Answer Yes or No. Explain if necessary. Sometimes less is more.

Matthew Thompson

Thompson Law Firm, PLLC (601) 850-8000

Matthew@wmtlawfirm.com

Share this:

1