

What Board Certification Means to Your Marketing

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The Rigorous Road to Board Certification - and Why It's All Worth It



Has your legal career stalled in recent years?

Then it may be time to rethink your marketing plan, or better yet, consider **becoming board certified**.

Board certified attorneys are among an **elite group of lawyers** who have met the rigorous requirements - beyond the bar exam and continuing education - to be recognized as legal specialists in a specific area of practice.

A board certification credential can:

- Enhance marketability
- Allow you to charge a higher hourly rate
- Help build a bigger book of business
- Strengthen networking ties
- Increase direct referrals.

Board certified attorneys carry a **distinction of excellence** and, more often than not, are more **attractive to prospective clients and to referring attorneys**.

Why?

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Clients are looking for **differentiators**....what makes one lawyer a better choice over another? Board certification is that differentiator. In choosing between unknowns, clients tend to make the safest choice.

Referring attorneys know that clients are relying on the reliability of the referral. So making a referral to a board certified lawyer over one who is not is a no-brainer.

Unfortunately, the road to board certification isn't easy. The process can be time consuming and incredibly stressful.

Only **attorneys with a desire to excel in a particular specialization** will become board certified. Popular areas include personal injury law, civil trial law, criminal and family law.

Attorneys who work in a general practice area often don't qualify for board certification simply because they don't have enough specialized work to build up credentials for certification.

The Board Certification Process

The process of becoming board certified is strictly voluntary.

First time attorneys must meet a number of eligibility requirements, such as practicing law for a minimum of five years, with 25-35% of the last three years of practice devoted to a certifiable specialty field.

An attorney is also required to perform certain tasks related to their field of practice, including:

- Trials
- Will probates
- Real estate contracts
- 60 hours of continuing education classes in the specialty area during the three years prior to apply for board certification

Furthermore, applying attorneys must receive favorable peer reviews, and pass a **six-hour written exam**.

Keeping your Credential

Getting credentialed is one thing - keeping it, however, is another feat.

After becoming certified, you must continue working in your specialty area, and take an average of 20 hours of continuing education classes in that area every year.

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After the first certification, attorneys can re-apply every five years to become re-certified and, again, must receive favorable peer reviews.

Excel in What you Do Best!

Join the ranks of other board certified attorneys in your field by ***GOING THE DISTANCE!***

Push yourself to become board certified in your field of practice - then **reap the rewards** as your business grows.

Becoming board certified may be the best thing you can do for your career - and yourself. Make that your goal in 2010!

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