CONTENTS

Introduction: Welcome to Law School 1
Letter to a 1L on the First Day of Law School 3

1L MIND-SET
1. There Is a “Law of Law School” 13
2. Discover Your School’s Legal Culture 14
3. Law Is Personal 15
4. Flip Your Thinking 16
5. Think like a Lawyer 17

PLANNING TO PLAN
6. Plan for “Day One” of Law School 21
7. There Is No “Day Two” 22
8. Visualize the Full Semester 23
9. Don’t Forsake Free Help 24
10. Plan for Exams from the Start 25

BOOKS
11. Buy the Books 29
12. Read Hornbooks and Treatises 30
13. Use Study Aids 31
14. Study the Legal Dictionary 32
15. Find Time for Outside Critical Reading 33
STUDYING

16. Prepare for Class like an Appellate Argument 37
17. Read Supplements First 38
18. The Secret Structure of Casebooks 39
19. Studying Means Translating 40
20. Ask “Why” for Each Case 41

READING

21. Read! 45
22. Read on Three Levels 46
23. Find the “Takeaway” of Each Case 47
24. Read the Footnotes, the Concurring Opinions, and the Dissents 48
25. Simplify Sentences as You Read 49

BRIEFING CASES

26. Briefing Means Decoding and Encoding 53
27. Train Your Mind—See the IRAC Pattern 54
28. “Frame Out” Your Cases 55
29. Use Briefs as a Self-Test 56
30. Briefing for Context 57

IN CLASS

31. Class Is like Oral Argument 61
32. Ban Your Own Laptop 62
33. Notes Should Be Reflection, Not Transcription 63
34. Engage, Don’t Hide 64
35. Appreciate Teaching-Style Federalism 65

HABITS OF SUCCESS
36. Undergraduate Study Habits Must Die 69
37. Checklist Each Day 70
38. Find Solitude to Study 71
39. Ignore Social Media 72
40. Prioritize Time Management 73

CONFIDENCE
41. Get Your Mind Right 77
42. You Belong in Law School 78
43. Accept the Learning Curve 79
44. Law’s Disorienting Effect 80
45. Lift Others Up 81

OUTLINES
46. Distill, Distill, Distill 85
47. Begin Outlining Immediately 86
48. Collaborate on Outlines 87
49. A Mind Map 88
50. The Front Page 89

APPLICATION, APPLICATION, APPLICATION
51. Test Yourself 93
52. Find Hypotheticals in Life 94

CONTENTS | VII
53. Mastery Requires Repetitive, Iterative Practice  95
54. See the Connecting Thread  96
55. If There Is an Answer, They Don’t Need to Hire a Lawyer  97

LEGAL WRITING/RESEARCH
56. Pay Attention in Legal Research Class  101
57. You Cannot Write  102
58. Proofread for Precision and Perfection  103
59. See Infra the Importance of Citations  104
60. Law Librarians Are Wizards  105

PROFESSORS
61. Meet with Your Professor  109
62. To Impress, Engage the Law  110
63. Understand What Law Professors Really Do  111
64. Understand Your Professors’ Interests  112
65. Professors Do Not Represent the Law  113

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES
66. Motivate Yourself with Idealism  117
67. Focus on Law-Related Projects  118
68. Extracurricular Internships Do Not Track Law School Time-Lines  119
69. Attend Law School Events  120
70. To Be a World-Changing Lawyer, You Have to Become a Lawyer First  121
CULTURE/COMMUNITY

71. The Rule of Professional Reputation 125
72. Expectations of Excellence 126
73. Civic Health 127
74. Build Bridges to the Community 128
75. Represent the Legal Profession and Your Law School 129

SELF-CARE

76. Remove the Drama 133
77. Find Perspective 134
78. Find Balance Every Day 135
79. Avoid the Temptations 136
80. Help Is Here 137

MIDTERMS

81. Understand the Purpose of a Midterm 141
82. Carve Out Time to Study 142
83. Trick Your Memory 143
84. Understand Issue-Spotting Exams 144
85. Review Your Midterm 145

READING PERIOD

86. Focus on the Future, Not the Past 149
87. Practice Taking Practice Exams 150
88. Strategize Flow 151
89. Create Issue Checklists 152
90. Pre-write Answers 153
FINAL EXAMS

91. A Word about Stress  157
92. The Call of the Question  158
93. Think “Where,” Not “What”  159
94. Packaging an Exam Answer  160
95. Time for an A  161

SECOND SEMESTER AND BEYOND

96. Review the Semester  165
97. Professional Advancement  166
98. Law Review and Other Leadership Positions  167
99. Congratulate Yourself  169
100. Repeat  169

Conclusion  171

Authors’ Stories  173
About the Authors  181