Deposing & Examining Employment Witnesses

Tod F. Schleier



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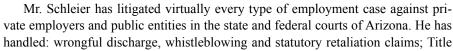
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About the Author

Tod F. Schleier is a partner in the law firm of Schleier Law Offices, P.C. (www.schleierlaw.com) in Phoenix, Arizona. He has practiced as a plaintiff's employment lawyer for thirty-five years.

Mr. Schleier graduated from Brown University, *magna cum laude*, Phi Beta Kappa and with honors in 1973, with a B.A. in Political Science and Religion. He then graduated from Arizona State University Law School in 1976 and was a member of the Arizona State University Law Journal.





VII claims for sexual, racial, and ethnic harassment and constructive discharge; gender, religion, age and disability discrimination claims; First Amendment free speech and due process claims; and disputes concerning non-competition covenants, trade secrets, wages and executive employment contracts. Mr. Schleier has fifteen years' experience as a mediator and arbitrator in employment disputes and is listed on the American Arbitration Association's mediator/arbitrator panels.

Mr. Schleier obtained one of the largest employment jury verdicts in Arizona on a sexual harassment claim, in December 1991, for \$2,385,000, in *Schallock v. Heinze et. al*, which was televised on Court TV. He handled the landmark case of *State of Arizona v. Schallock*, 189 Ariz. 250, 941 P.2d 1275 (1997), which established legal principles for vicarious liability of employers in sexual harassment and employment cases. In May 1999, Mr. Schleier obtained a jury verdict against Best Western International, Inc. in a whistleblower claim, for \$1,750,000; the verdict was upheld in *Murcott v. Best Western International*, 198 Ariz. 349, 9 P.3d 1088 (App.2000), which clarified legal principles for whistleblowing in Arizona.

Best Lawyers, the oldest and most respected peer review publication in the legal profession, has named Mr. Schleier as the "Phoenix Best Lawyers Employment Law—Individuals, Lawyer of the Year" for 2012. Mr. Schleier was also named "Phoenix Best Lawyers' Labor and Employment Lawyer of the Year" for 2010 by Best Lawyers in America, has been recognized by Chambers as one of the top employment lawyers in Arizona, has an AV rating in Martindale Hubbell, and was ranked as one of Arizona's Top 50 Super Lawyers in 2009. In 2001, he was inducted as a Fellow in The College of Labor and Employment Lawyers for his career-long achievements as an employment lawyer.

Mr. Schleier is a frequent presenter at seminars and conferences on topics of wrongful discharge, sexual harassment, and retaliation claims to public entities, human resources organizations, bar associations (including the American Bar Association Mid-Winter Employment and Civil Rights Conference 2002) for the past fifteen years. He is a member of several labor and employment law organizations including the National Employment Lawyers Association and the Arizona Employment Lawyers Association. Mr. Schleier has been licensed to practice in all Arizona state and federal courts since 1976, as well as the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals and the United States Supreme Court. He was the first Chairman of the State Bar of Arizona Sub-Committee for Employment Law Jury Instructions.

He lives in Phoenix with his wife Lisa and two dogs, and is an avid sports fan and marine aquarium hobbyist.

Dedication

Franz Kafka wrote that writing is utter solitude, the descent into the cold abyss of oneself. In my case, however, during my descent I had several guiding lights to show me the path. My late parents, Stanley and Lila, taught me the value of hard work, education, perseverance, and a job well done. My late sister, Madeleine, taught me about human courage while she valiantly faced insurmountable obstacles during her two battles with breast cancer. Brad, my brother and law partner, provided constant encouragement, and his wit ensured that I did not take myself too seriously during the task. Finally, Lisa, my best friend, wife and soul mate for now 35 years, encouraged me to write this book, sacrificed countless weekends while I toiled away and shared her extraordinary intellect, perspective, sense of humor and love each day during this journey. So although Kafka was correct about writing being solitude, I have been blessed because during this descent I have never been truly alone.

Acknowledgments

My first acknowledgment is to my editor, Lisa Dunne, who first suggested that I write this book and who provided superb editing, encouragement, positive reinforcement, and constructive criticism during the past two years. Her contribution was incalculable. This book's Editorial Advisory Board deserves the next acknowledgment—their contributed time and accumulated knowledge of employment law from the employee and management sides provided excellent perspective and suggestions for each chapter.

Looking back at thirty years of practice, it would be impossible to acknowledge each of my colleagues and peers who have provided insight, feedback and perspective on what makes a successful trial attorney, but a few deserve specific mention. Ronald Rubin, Melvin Sternberg and Sheldon Sternberg took a chance and hired me to work at their law firm when I was just a first year law student in 1974. Ron Rubin was my first mentor and taught me the invaluable lesson that a trial lawyer cannot over-prepare—a lesson I meticulously practice to this day. Melvin and Sheldon Sternberg taught me the practical and business side of practicing law, which unfortunately is not taught in law school. The unselfish tutelage and guidance these attorneys gave in my formative years provided priceless insights into what it is to be a trial lawyer.

I have learned much from the following plaintiff and management-side attorneys over the years, sometimes the hard way: Hon. Lawrence Anderson, Charles Chester, Richard Cohen, Amy Gittler, David Gomez, Douglas Grimwood, William Hayden, Kelly Hocker, James Jellison, Lawrence Katz, Amy Langerman, Kraig Marton and Bradley Schleier.

And I thank my paralegals of two decades, Cindy J. Anderson and Mary H. Portillo. Finally, I want to acknowledge my clients, especially Colleen Schallock who had the courage to do the right thing.

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Preface

"The only real lawyers are trial lawyers, and trial lawyers try cases to juries." Clarence Darrow

I tell my clients that trying cases to a jury is very similar to rolling the dice at a Las Vegas craps table. In Vegas, blind chance determines whether you or the house wins. In the courtroom, six or eight total strangers determine which side wins. In both cases, certainty of outcome is never guaranteed.

The pages that follow contain the lessons, knowledge and experience I have acquired over thirty years of being a trial lawyer. Some of the lessons were learned from cases I was certain I would win, but lost, and cases I should have lost, but won. The lessons, techniques and random ruminations come from decades of learning in the School of Hard Knocks.

This book is designed to be a practical day-to-day resource for employment litigation and trial strategy. I am proud to be a plaintiff's employment lawyer; the book, however, attempts to provide practical suggestions for both the plaintiff and management side. Although the pages that follow are black and white, the techniques clearly are not. They are suggestions and ideas which each practitioner can think about, experiment with, accept or reject. Trying cases is an art, not a science.

August 2007

Tod F. Schleier

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		§3:61.1 Factual Background
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Plain	tiff's Co-Workers	
1.		es
1.	Governing Principl	
1.	Governing Principl §3:90	Value of Testimony
1.	Governing Principl §3:90	Value of Testimony Distinguish From Expert Opinion
	Governing Principl §3:90 §3:91 §3:92	Value of Testimony Distinguish From Expert Opinion Case Examples
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1. Cross-Examination

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2. Direct Examination

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2. Direct Examination
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Cross-Examination

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          Key Facts
§3:131
          Strategy
§3:132
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§3:133
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                     Introduce EEOC and Role in Investigating Discrimination
          §3:133.3
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          §3:133.5
                     H.R. Did Not Fully Investigate Whether Other Individuals Were
                     Offered Plaintiff's Former Position
          §3:133.6
                     No Independent Investigation of Alleged Financial Problems at
                     Phoenix Branch
          §3:133.7
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                     ness Justification for Plaintiff's Termination
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2. Direct Examination

§3:134 Strategy §3:135 Checklist [§§3:136 – 3:139 Reserved]

E. Plaintiff's Friend/Neighbor

1. Direct Examination

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2. Cross-Examination

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§3:147 Angles of Attack
§3:148 Model Cross-Examination
§3:148.1 Plaintiff Confided in Witness
§3:148.2 Plaintiff Confided That He Was Upset About Marital Difficulties
§3:148.3 Plaintiff and Wife Separated Days Before Job Termination
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§3:152	Plaintiff's Co-Worker
§3:153	Plaintiff's Friends, Family, Neighbors

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- 3-A Trial Memorandum—Defendant's Use of Leading Questions of Defendant's Witnesses in Plaintiff's Case-in-Chief
- 3-B Plaintiff's Response to Defendant's Motion in Limine to Exclude Anecdotal Evidence of Other Firings
- 3-C Voir Dire in Age Discrimination Case
- 3-D Response to Motion for Summary Judgment in ADA Case
- 3-E Sample Letters for Preservation of Electronically Stored Information
- 3-F Motion for Default or Partial Summary Judgment and Sanctions for XYZ's Willful Destruction of Evidence
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- 3-1 EEOC Guidance: Questions to Ask as Part of Employer's Prompt Investigation
- 3-2 Enforcement Guidance: Effective Policy Against Sexual Harassment

Chapter 4 Deposing & Examining the Human Resources Expert

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B. Sexual Harassment Cases

§4:06	To Prove Ellerth/Faragher Affirmative Defense
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84:08	In Practice: Is Expert Testimony Required?

C. Gender Stereotyping

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§4:10	Cases Admitting Expert Testimony
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D. Disability Discrimination

§4:12 Discrimination in Hiring — Direct and Cross-Examination at Trial

II. Daubert Provides Analytical Framework for Expert Testimony

A. Governing Principles

§4:13	Trial Courts as Gatekeepers
§4:14	Daubert Analysis Applies to All Expert Testimony
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B. Applying Daubert: Attacking and Defending H.R. Expert Testimony

1. Basic Points & Procedures

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§4:17 When, How to Challenge Admissibility
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2. Is Expert Qualified?

- §4:20 Specialized Knowledge, Skill, Experience, Training or Education?
- §4:21 In Practice: Qualifying an H.R. Expert
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3. Does Testimony Address Matters Within Jurors' Knowledge

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- §4:25 "Human Resources" Is Not Science
- §4:26 Testimony Goes to Ultimate Issue of Discrimination
- §4:27 | Jurors' Job Is to Make Fact Determinations
- §4:28 Jurors Are Capable of Assessing Human Motivations
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b. Arguments for Admitting H.R. Expert Testimony

- §4:30 Expert's Testimony Expands Jurors' Understanding
- §4:31 Expert's Opinion Supports Facts Leading to Legal Conclusion

4. Is H.R. Expert's Testimony Reliable?

- §4:32 "Reliability" Is Exacting Standard
- §4:33 Challenge re: Expert's Methodology
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5. Danger of Unfair Prejudice?

- §4:35 Jurors Place High Value on Expert Testimony
- §4:36 "Ultimate Issue" Testimony More Prejudicial Than Probative
- [§§4:37 4:39 Reserved]

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- §4:40 Education, Background, H.R. Training
- §4:41 Past Employment
- §4:42 Current Employment
- §4:43 Publications
- §4:44 Experience as Expert Witness
- §4:45 Retention in This Case
- §4:46 Nature of Assignment in This Case
- §4:47 Expert's Opinions
- §4:48 Wrap Up

B. Sexual Harassment and Stereotyping

- §4:49 Sexual Harassment
- §4:50 Sexual Stereotyping

C. Failure to Promote and Gender Stereotyping

- §4:51 Overview
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- §4:57 Checklist
- §4:58 Model Direct Examination
 - §4:58.1 Establish Expert's Credentials
 - §4:58.2 Establish Scope of Assignment and Documents Reviewed

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§4:58.4	Bolster Credibility by Praising Employer's Written Anti-Harassment
	Policies
§4:58.5	Explain Key Components of Proper Sexual Harassment Investigatio
§4:58.6	Expert's Opinion: Employer Did Not Conduct Reasonable
	Investigation
§4:58.7	Expert's Opinion: Poor Investigation Lead Employer to Wrong
	Conclusion re: Harassment
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§4:61	Strategy		
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§4:63	<u> </u>		
· ·	§4:63.1	Cast Doubt on Expert's Credentials	
	§4:63.2		
	§4:63.3	·	
	§4:63.4	•	
	§4:63.5	·	
	§4:63.6	Point Out Errors in Expert's Report	
	§4:63.7	Obtain Concessions: Employer's Investigation Meets All Criteria	
	J	Expert Established for a "Reasonable" Investigation	
	§4:63.8	Expert's Other Criticisms of Investigation Not Valid	
	§4:63.9	Failure to Explore Alleged Harasser's Conduct at Prior Employer	
	J	Not Fatal to Investigation	
	§4:63.10	Expert Ignored Evidence and Boxed Himself in With "Limited"	
	Ü	Assignment	
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	3	Sexual Harassment	
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	3	tional Anti-Harassment Policy	
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[§4:64 R	Reserved]		
į U	,		

V. Summary Checklist

§4:65 Summary Checklist—Human Resources Expert

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- 4-A Motion to Exclude Human Resources Expert Testimony at Summary Judgment
- 4-B Response to Motion to Exclude Human Resources Expert Testimony at Summary Judgment
- 4-C Reply to Response to Motion to Exclude Human Resources Expert Testimony at Summary Judgment
- 4-D Motion in Limine to Disqualify Expert Witnesses in ADA Failure to Hire Case (Diabetes) Based on Lack of Experience and Scientific Knowledge

Chapter 5 Deposing & Examining the Mental Health Expert

I. Governing Principles

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III.

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B.	Proving Emotion	onal Distr	ess Damages
	_	§5:04	Proof of Actual Injury
		§5:05	Physical Manifestation of Emotional Harm
C.	Proving Compe	ensatory	Damages
		§5:06	Is Expert Testimony Necessary?
		§5:07	Plaintiff's Testimony as Sole Proof of Distress
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D.	Treating, Cons	ulting Psy	chologists as Experts
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		§5:11	Advantages
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E.	Rule 35 Examir	nation	
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		§5:14	Components of Independent Medical Exam
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Had	erstanding P syc	hologica	I Tosts
	The DSM-IV	liologica	i lests
Α.		§5:20	What Is It?
			How Does It Work?
		-	Limitations of DSM in Litigation
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B.			Personality Inventory (MMPI)
В.		§5:25	Early Development
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		§5:27	Criticisms; Grounds for Cross-Examination
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C.			Inventory (MCMI)
О.		§5:30	Background
		§5:31	Use & Purpose in Litigation
		[§5:32 Res	
D.			Inventory (PAI)
		§5:33	Personality Assessment Inventory (PAI)
		[§5:34 Res	, , , ,
_			_
Dep	osition of Ment		Expert
A.	Preliminary Ma		
		§5:35	Goals of Deposition
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		§5:37	Obtain Raw Testing Data
_			5:39 Reserved]
В.	•		1ental Health Expert
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A. Direct Trial Examination of Treating Psychologist

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§5:57	Checklist	
§5:58	Model Dir	ect Examination
_	§5:58.1	Establish Treating Doctor's Credentials
	§5:58.2	Plaintiff Was Referred by a Doctor, for Medical Reasons
	§5:58.3	Doctor Has Spent Significant Time Treating Plaintiff
	§5:58.4	Doctor Took Detailed History From Plaintiff
	§5:58.5	Diagnosis Is Based Upon DSM-IV Criteria
	§5:58.6	Expert Can Identify Facts Supporting Each DSM-IV Criterion for
		PTSD in Plaintiff
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		and Filing of Suit
	§5:58.10	Defendant's Conduct Caused Permanent Injury
	§5:58.11	Establish Floor for Damages
[§5:59 Re	eserved]	

B. Cross-Examination of Defense Psychologist

luon oi L	reiense rsy	chologist
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§5:61	Strategy	
§5:62	Angles of A	Attack
§5:63	Pattern Cr	oss-Examination
·	§5:63.1	Expert's Credentials Pale in Comparison to Plaintiff's Expert's
	§5:63.2	Expert Is a "Hired Gun" Who Spent a Few Hours With Plaintiff,
	· ·	Solely for Purpose of Litigation
	§5:63.3	Expert's Diagnosis Is Not Incompatible With Plaintiff's Expert's
		Diagnosis
	§5:63.4	Plaintiff's Expert's Diagnosis Is Reliable
	§5:63.5	Plaintiff Was Open, Honest and Cooperative During Meeting
		With Defense Expert
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	§5:63.7	Challenge Expert's Testing Methods (MMPI) and Resulting Diagnosis
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	§5:63.9	Scholarly Articles on Which Expert Relied Support Plaintiff's
		Theory of Case
	§5:63.10	Expert Believes Plaintiff's Version of the Facts; Concedes Plaintiff
		Not Malingering
10 F (4 B	- 13	

[§5:64 Reserved]

V. Summary Checklist: Cross-Examination Mental Health Expert

§5:65 Summary Checklist

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- 5-A Opposition to Defendant's Rule 35 Motion and Psychological Testing
- 5-B Motion for Protective Order
- 5-C Defendant's Memorandum of Law in Opposition to Motion in Limine to Exclude MMPI-2 Results and Testimony
- 5-D Defendant's Motion to Compel Plaintiffs' Attendance at a Physical Examination by Defendant's Medical Expert Without the Presence of her Attorney, and Without the Examination Being Audiotaped or Recorded in Any Way
- 5-E Proposed Protective Order
- 5-F Joint Stipulation for Entry of Protective Order

Chapter 6 Deposing & Examining the Expert Economist

I. Economic Damages Available Under Federal Discrimination Statutes

A. Overview

- §6:01 Title VII & ADA Cases
- §6:02 ADEA Cases
- §6:03 Civil Rights Cases [§§1981, 1983]
- [§6:04 Reserved]

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- §6:05 "Make Whole" Remedy
- §6:06 Computation Basics
- §6:07 Recovery Period
- §6:08 Components of Back Pay
- §6:09 Prejudgment Interest

2. Mitigation of Damages

- §6:10 Plaintiff Must Seek Substantially Equivalent Employment
- §6:11 Burden of Proof on Defendant

3. Terminating Back Pay Period

- §6:12 Basic Principles
- §6:13 Refusal of Unconditional Offer of Reinstatement
- §6:14 After-Acquired Evidence
- §6:15 Employer-Caused Disability: Damages Cutoff?
- [§§6:16 6:19 Reserved]

C. Front Pay

1. Basic Principles

- §6:20 Make-Whole Remedy
- §6:21 Alternative to Reinstatement
- §6:22 Court or Jury Issue?
- §6:23 Length of Award; Speculative Damages
- §6:24 Factors Considered in Awarding Front Pay
- §6:25 Hybrid Awards

2. Limits

- §6:26 Mitigation Required
- §6:27 Do Damages Caps Apply?

3. Discounting to Present Day Value

§6:28 Goal: Basic Concepts

§6:29 Burden of Proof on Plaintiff

§6:30 Determining the Rate

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D. Offsets

§6:35 Availability of Offsets Rests With Court's Discretion

§6:36 Application of Collateral Source Rule

§6:37 Employer-Funded Benefits

E. Adverse Tax Consequences

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§6:39 Cases Supporting "Gross Up"

§6:40 Cases Refusing to Allow "Gross Up"

§6:41 Compare: Attorneys' Fees

§6:42 In Practice: Support Request for Gross Up With Expert Testimony

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A. By the Plaintiff

§6:50 Why Hire an Expert?

§6:51 When to Hire

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§6:52 Why Hire an Expert?

§6:53 When to Hire

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A. Goals

§6:55 Cast Doubt

§6:56 Determine & Attack Underlying Assumptions

B. Deposition Checklist - All Cases

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§6:58 Document Retention Policy

§6:59 Experience as Expert Witness; Bias

§6:60 Retention in This Case

§6:61 Assignment and Assumptions

§6:62 "Present Value"

§6:63 Mitigation of Damages

§6:64 Wage Growth

§6:65 Fringe Benefits

§6:66 Discount Rate [Interest Rate]

§6:67 Work-Life Expectancy

§6:68 Compare Experts' Reports and Conclusions

§6:69 Completed Work

C. Deposition Checklist - Misappropriation of Trade Secret Case

§6:70 Qualifications and Experience

§6:71 Assignment and Information Relied Upon

§6:72 Attack Causation

§6:73 Attack Assumptions and Conclusions

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IV. Expert Economist at Trial

A. Direct Trial Examination of Plaintiff's Expert Economist

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B. Cross-Examination of Plaintiff's Economic Expert

Key Facts	•
,	
٥,	Attack
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