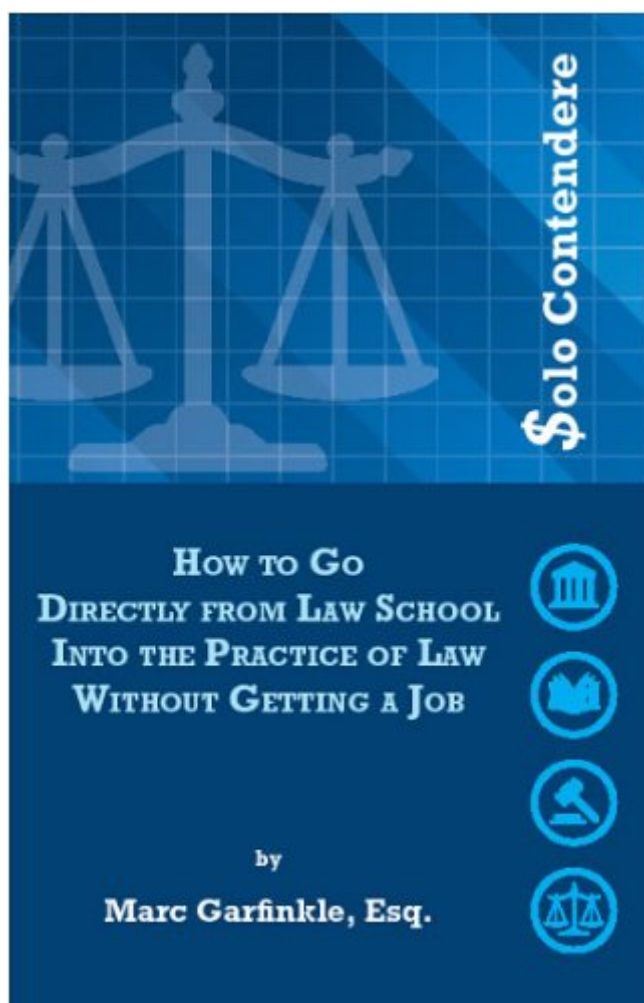


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# Solo Contendere: How To Go Directly From Law School Into The Practice Of Law Without Getting A Job



## Synopsis

In an easy-to-read conversational style, law school professor and long-time sole practitioner Marc Garfinkle gives valuable advice and suggestions to new lawyers, particularly those choosing to go solo right out of law school. Garfinkle says, "Lawyers don't need jobs; they need work." He argues that most lawyers learned their trade on the job, anyhow, even at a large firm. Recognizing there are dangers afoot to client and lawyer alike when ill-prepared lawyers plunge headlong into a business and a profession at the same time, the author stresses the importance of practicing defensively. Maintain a network of experienced lawyers you can discuss your cases with regularly, he encourages. Have malpractice insurance if you want to sleep at night. Don't take a case that two other lawyers have handled before you. Extend every courtesy to your adversary. Know your stuff and know your depth. Know when and how get out of the case. Brimming with caveats, tips and sage advice, Solo Contendere has been selected for publication by the Missouri State Bar CLE, as part of its "bridging the gap" programming for new lawyers.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Wisdom is the sum of experience over a lifetime. Marc Garfinkle shares his experience of decades in solo legal practice and distills the critical elements down to their common sense principles. Common sense is sorely lacking in today's society, but Garfinkle has lots of it. In *Solo Contendere*, he speaks to us as a wise and concerned uncle who wants to ensure that we avoid the wrong roads and take the proper forks. This book is useful not only for lawyers, but for any professional - whether graduating college or stepping out of the corporate mold--looking to go solo. Sure, there are plenty of "how to" guides on the market, but this book is more of an "if it were me, I would..." based on his years of personal experience. If you are thinking of going out on your own, you can use a wise Uncle Garfinkle's uncommon common sense.

This book tells you many of the things you should know, and where to locate the rest.

Generally a good read. Mr. Garfinkle does a good job making you feel like 1) it's not crazy to want to start your own firm and 2) you are competent and 3) it is do-able. I'm glad to have it in my library.

Concise and packed with useful info. Even mentions how to staple paper properly. It is helpful for new attorney who wants to go solo.

To be realistic, going solo right out of law school is probably not possible unless you have another source of funds or income. You need staying power until the revenues are large enough to put you in the black. A book is usually pretty good when it leads to interesting discussions afterward. *Solo Contendere* among other things is a platform to bring out true war stories of professional life in the trenches. These are things you don't learn in law school because they aren't covered on the bar exam. Many notable trial lawyers did not get started at prestigious law firms. Abraham Lincoln rode the circuit, appearing in county courts when in session, handling a wide variety of cases. Melvin Belli's first gig was to pose as a hobo for the Works Progress Administration to observe the Depression's impact on vagrants. With a law license, you can do a lot of things, including solo practice. I found *Solo Contendere* useful, even entertaining although I'm not an attorney but a CPA. Author Marc Garfinkle's advice applies to all service professionals, only to attorneys in greater measure due to the nature of practicing law. The pros and cons of taking on partners, of accepting cases involving friends and family are salient examples. This advice spans everything from establishing the type of office suitable for your particular solo practice to billing and collection concerns. There are many ways to go solo as an attorney. Garfinkle explains how to market oneself

to other attorneys, performing various support work. There are many ways to specialize or else generalize with a specialty. The book does not cover specialization in depth. Instead it gives a broad outline of the considerations in becoming known as a specialist.

I found that much of the book could have been condensed and felt at times as if I was reading filler. For example, rather than stating that you will need office supplies and moving on. The author lists the individual office supplies.... pens, pencils, pencil sharper, stapler, staples, staple remover,.... I had to double check the copyright date while reading as I found some of the information to be out of date and no mention of software. Some examples: Typist, non-carbon copies and keeping a physical appointment diary in pencil in case you need to change a date. There is a section on helpful websites, which every solo should know, but I felt as if this section was added later to give the appearance that the majority of the book had not been written long before. This book could be improved if it were better updated throughout and the information was condensed to be more essential. If filler must be added to increase the page count, perhaps a real life example/story would be a great addition. Thank you.

"Solo Contendre" by Marc Garfunkel is the instruction packet that should come, standard issue, with every J.D. A quick read, Mr. Garfunkel uses simple and plain language to establish a straightforward framework that serves to instruct the reader on how to approach the myriad of challenges that comes with setting up a law office. Issues covered run the gambit from making you think about logistics (acquiring office space, obtaining equipment, etc.) to marketing and expanding one's clientele base. It will not make you less anxious about practicing the law, but this book does help you focus on working through the problems that come with a new practice in such a way that, by the book's end, you should have a functional plan of action. In these rough economic times, going solo is increasingly appealing to law school graduates, and I highly recommend this book for anyone (even if you are just graduating) interested in building their own practice.

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