

Explaining and Implementing the Excellence Initiative
As it Relates to Standards and Goals

Court Attorney – Training/CLE
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Personal Introduction - Background and Experience

Excellence Initiative:

Chief Judge Janet DiFiore announces Excellence Initiative during her Investiture in January 2016

Objectives and Goal:

1. Relentless pursuit to achieve and maintain excellence throughout court system
2. Giving the People of New York the level of justice services they have a right to expect and deserve
3. Work to improve all aspects of our system and services
4. Achieve operational and decisional excellence in everything we do
5. Focus on fundamentals i.e. court operations – promptness and productivity

How do we Achieve our goals:

1. Undertake a detailed, comprehensive evaluation of current processes and procedures to determine what is working and what is not
2. Act to eliminate programs or initiatives that have lost their relevance
3. Replicate optimum operating procedures across the board

Team Initiative:

Cannot be undertaken from Beaver Street. This is a ground-up initiative. Must be a partnership. All staff, from management to non-judicial to judicial must have “skin in the game” and take ownership of problems and how to solve them.

How we started:

Meeting of all Administrative Judges at the Judicial Institute in White Plains in February 2016.

Ongoing:

Continued meetings with all Administrative Judges on a regularly scheduled basis since the initial meeting. These meetings have been individual as well as group meeting.

Meetings on a regular basis with Chief Clerks as well as District Executives outside NYC

Conversations and meeting with other non-judicial employees and Union Presidents.

Dashboards/Caseload Management Project Reports – creation and use – Analysis of data from all courts

Emphasis on:

1. Filings
2. Dispositions
3. Pending Caseload
4. Pending beyond S & G
5. Days on Trial/Hearings
6. Criminal v. Civil

Special Emphasis – Foreclosures / Criminal Courts (NYC) City Courts (Outside NYC) Supreme/County Courts - Criminal

Words of Coach Bill Parcells “You are what your record says you are”

What the Excellence initiative is not.

Importance – Court Attorneys to success of S&G focused initiatives

Solutions:

Criminal:

1. Use of re-pleading DWI/511 in City/Criminal/District Courts
2. Minimize # of adjournments
3. Adjournments must advance case
4. Use of TAP parts
5. Bring case to the end game. Take plea or be sent out to trial
6. Consent Discovery
7. Use of SCI's
8. Working with DA and Defense Bar including Public Defenders

Civil:

1. Foreclosure model – Settlement Conferences then to Master Calendar for summary judgement motion. If not made – Dismissal after one year
2. Use of “purges”
3. Dealing with insurance carriers – MV cases
4. Medical Malpractice
5. Matrimonial
6. Commercial

Discussion – Matter of Gilpatric 13 N.Y.3d 586; 896 N.Y.S. 2d 280 (See memo and case attached)

Conclusion:

This is not a finger-pointing exercise.

Not meant to embarrass.

If there is a better way to do something we should be doing it. Not acceptable to say “that’s the way we always did it”

Won’t work unless everyone committed to make it work.

Signature program of Chief Judge – We are looking at ourselves

Thank you for your help and commitment to excellence