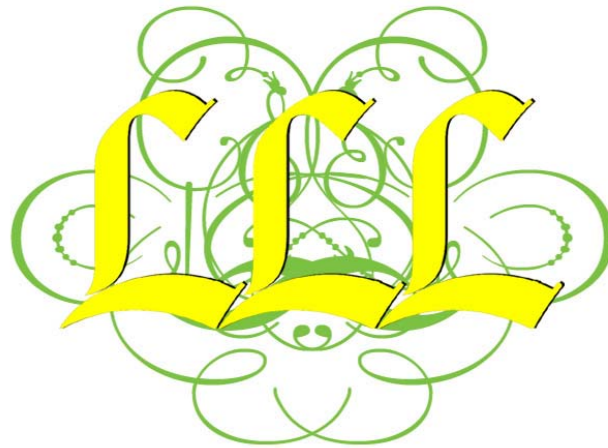


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As modified



Lyman's Laws for Lawyers

(and everybody else, too!)

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The Beginning

The 105 “**LYMAN’S LAWS FOR LAWYERS**” (“**LLL**”) of **TILLEKE & GIBBINS** (and for everyone else, too) which follow, my substantially revised, expanded and updated 2006 edition, are nothing more than courses of good conduct clients expect of their lawyers and are what clients pay for. Some readers will conclude that you already know what is written here. So for you **LLL** can serve as a refresher course. Many readers, however, are probably slow learners like me and still have much to gain from **LLL** compiled in one place.

More often than not, these guiding principles have been learned by me the hard way, i.e. from my defeats as well as my victories, from my own mistakes, and sometimes from bitter and other times humorous but always enlightening experiences over my almost 49 years in the law and military services (U.S. Navy). My parents, both lawyers, taught me many truisms, while some ideas were gained from other professional colleagues I admired, some from opposing parties and their counsel, and, of course, some from clients and friends.

LYMAN’S LAWS FOR LAWYERS do not address law firm management or business operations. They do not tell you how to make partner or where to work. Rather, these canons focus on and extol personal values, conduct, practices and attitudes.

Though my legal practice as a second generation American lawyer in Asia (one of the very few alive today who can make that claim) has centered on Thailand, a Civil Law Code country here in tropical Southeast Asia, I have been told coincidentally that most of **LYMAN’S LAWS** are timeless and applicable to many vocations in addition to the law, as well as to much of day-to-day life itself.

Redundancy within **LYMAN’S LAWS** will be found. I decided that more benefit is derived from the emphasis of repetition than editing to remove repeated thoughts expressed in different ways.

Too many **LYMAN’S LAWS** you say! Too verbose? Well, nobody promised you that the successful practice of our profession was easy or lacking in challenges. My task in giving you **LYMAN’S LAWS** is to teach you, to prepare you, to remind you. They reflect my philosophy, my principles and my values.

No apologies are offered for sounding like a teacher. Somebody has to tell you about the rules to follow and traps to avoid. I’m certainly far from being one of the world’s greatest lawyers, but by following these principles as a starting point, **TILLEKE & GIBBINS** and I haven’t fared so badly over the years. You have the freedom to abide by them or to ignore them. The choice is yours. Each option has its own consequences.

My admonition to younger lawyers and law firm staffs everywhere is to follow all of **LYMAN’S LAWS FOR LAWYERS** simultaneously; certainly strive to. Believe in them. Be persuaded by them. Refer to them often for guidance and, I hope, inspiration. Older, more experienced successful people know that **LYMAN’S LAWS** merely set out the minimum criteria for you to become the great lawyers that you are capable of being.

Do supplement my **LLL** with your own lessons, however learned.

I. In Practice

At all times...

1. **Love the law.** Love its practice and love serving clients. Ours is an honored calling. To do your best, you have to truly respect and deeply care for the law, the Rule of Law, a strong, fair and independent judiciary, our profession, and for your clients. If you don't or if you are in the legal profession just for the money or for the glory or for power, do the rest of us a favor and find another occupation in which to work the way you want.
2. **The law is about people.** The practice of the law is based on personal relationships.
 - a. Treat all persons involved with courtesy, dignity, respect, humanity and a smile.
 - b. Act with honor, integrity, kindness, tolerance and compassion.
 - c. Be a good listener. Talk little; listen a lot. When you do talk, make sense.
 - d. Enjoy your career. Your enthusiasm is contagious.
 - e. All concerned in your practice, not just your clients, colleagues and staff but also government officials, your opponents and their counsel and their witnesses, must trust you and respect you. Earn their trust. Earn their respect.
3. **We have the law and the Rule of Law to keep mankind civilized**, stable, free from erosion and tyranny, free of abuse by government, by the stronger, from those who wield authority, and to put boundaries of reason on our own personal conduct. Lawyers are their guardians. As the gatekeepers, we are responsible to safeguard against being defiled all the planet's Gaia, its creatures, great and small, including man and all his dominions and diversions. This is not an airy, overreaching or pompous concept but is a never-ending task from which we of the law can neither abdicate nor shrink.
4. **Client care, personal attention and your total reliability to them and to your partners and co-workers** are your most important assignments.
5. **Clearly identify exactly who your client is**, and who is not your client. This sounds obvious but it is not always so. Correct and early identification is critical for your duties, conflicts of interest, reporting channels, billing and knowing to whom you are responsible and who owes you your fees and reimbursables.
6. **It's unpardonable to misspell a client's name.** And pronounce his/her/their name as the client would.
7. **Know and always use the client's full name**, including the client's contact person's full name and title, plus client's most current and complete address. Keep your data bases of this information current.
8. **Clients will always remember the last matter you handled for them.** If you want to keep the clients, make sure that it was a positive experience for them. If it was a bad experience, you can be sure that they will never forget, and may not forgive.
9. **Clients want solutions and options**, not just "No, it can't be done." Tailor solutions which are pragmatic, fair to all concerned, and build goodwill. Help clients do the doable within the law. Exceed their expectations. Strive for a **KISS** solution – **Keep It Super Simple**.
10. **Be creative and innovative in your solutions.** Lawyers sell ideas. Go beyond. Seek to achieve the seemingly impossible. Don't be afraid or hesitant to challenge conventional wisdom – that's what makes change happen. And if it works in your favor, that's called brilliant judgment and good common sense. If it does not work, well, try another fresh idea.

11. **Solve the right problem**, and don't get sidetracked solving the wrong problem.
12. **Prepare and organize thoroughly.** It's inexcusable not to study and know all the known facts; know the applicable laws and regulations. Read. Study all relevant documents and other evidence before you undertake any action. They may not say what you expect them to say. Know every detail of your case inside and out, backwards and forwards. Costs of intelligence gathering are usually money well spent. Don't be caught by surprise. Know what's going on and be aware of what is happening around you. Know the lay of the land, the terrain and your best position in relation thereto. Think ahead. Identify and shore up your weaknesses as well as buttress your strengths. Be thorough. Do not be sloppy.
13. **Representing clients can lead to adversarial confrontations.** Endeavor diligently to avoid battles. Peaceful solutions by way of negotiation, mediation or compromise are always preferable to war. **The best war is one that is never fought while still achieving your objectives.** But if fighting is inevitable, then pick your battles to suit your purposes, decide their objectives, gather, evaluate, and rely on intelligence, determine what is motivating the opposition, develop strategies, indulge in detailed planning and preparation, assemble all your resources, decide on timing, identify the places, rehearse and practice your tactics, then execute them decisively. **Make your opponents fight by your rules, not you by theirs.** You take the initiative; you set the parameters and the agenda. Make your opponents respond to your game plan. Have a Plan B, a fall-back strategy, maybe even a Plan C as well. **If fight you must, then fight to win the war, not just a battle or two.** To win, you have to outwork the other side. Wars are rarely of short duration and both sides suffer casualties. Prepare yourself and your clients for protracted and hence expensive campaigns. Do not mislead or delude them, or yourself.
14. **Clients want assigned tasks done right and done quickly.** Maximize value added for clients. You may think about your **input** – your hours, your sweat, your brilliance, your lack of sleep – but clients think only about your **output**, achieving their objectives on time while paying you the least amount possible. But when they do say “Thank you” whether you win or lose, then they make practicing law a worthwhile and personally rewarding career choice.
15. **When I would say I was overloaded** and had so many things to do I didn't know where to start, my mother would respond, “Pick one!”
16. **If truth is an issue** in a matter you are handling, tenaciously seek the truth irrespective of whether it helps or hurts your case. **Truth is the currency of the law.**
17. **As my father taught me, clients always need the hope of achieving their legitimate objectives. It's good for their health.** Don't rely on miracles to save the day. Be encouraging but honest with them, and yourself, in your assessments.
18. **Identify, grasp and accommodate the very real motivations, drivers, pressures and rewards of people in the corporate, bureaucratic, political, judicial, legislative and home environments, i.e. your arenas.**
19. **Reply to all incoming correspondence, including emails, faxes, short message service (SMS), letters and telephone calls within 24 hours of receipt** – even if only to acknowledge receipt. Then follow up.
20. **Lack of or delays in communications from lawyers are the major complaints of clients.** Communicate with clients more than just frequently. Put it in writing. Furthermore, you are responsible to be sure you and your client are on the same wavelength and are connecting for mutual understanding of whatever it is you are communicating.

21. **Make your clients full members of your legal team.** Think of them. Visit them. Call them. Learn from them. Do it for free. Get to know them as persons, learn about their businesses, products, services, places of work, their corporate culture/politics/policies/ownership/dynamics. Don't charge them every time. Include them. Provide them with training and education about matters of concern to them. Clients want, and are entitled to, your personal attention. Send them newspaper and magazine clippings pertinent to them. Let them know what you are doing for them and why it is necessary for you to do so.
22. **Clients, especially the Firm's existing clients as well as your colleagues and subordinates, want and need to be courted, constantly.** Courting clients is like courting women – they want to hear, repeatedly, that you care for them, you need them, you think of them, you love them, and to see that you are providing for them.
23. **Lawyers live by the Rule of Law, both its letter and its spirit. Learn all that it means.** Uphold this sacred principle. Do not compromise with it. Do not make exceptions or accommodations to derogation. No stretching, bending or twisting of this principle is allowed.
24. **The freedom of the individual and society to choose and to live without fear, insult or injury is the essence of the Rule of Law.** Until denied to you, you probably do not value how to cherish our freedoms, rights, duties, and hopes for contentment. **The law may not always be perfect or right, but even flawed it is far better than the vicissitudes, manipulations and machinations of the Rule of Men who abuse or misuse their power for their own purposes or gratifications through Rule By Law.**
25. **Personal and professional conflicts of interest, breaches of duties, violations of Bar Association/Law Council Rules of Professional Conduct/Ethics, dishonesty and corruption are intolerable and hence forbidden.** Even the appearance thereof is damaging and is to be shunned.
26. **A lawyer without integrity, personal and professional honor, ethical behavior, morality and a conscience dishonors that individual, our profession, and our Firm.**
27. You have a professional obligation to devote some of time and talent to do **Pro Bono** work for those unable to afford legal services. Public service and community service should also be part of your agenda.
28. **The practice of the law demands much from its adherents.** As a lawyer, you must be dedicated to the law, to clients, to the Firm, to the community. While a lawyer's time is rarely his or her own, for balance you must also devote quality time to yourself, your family; and you should engage in complementary, personally gratifying distractions.
29. **The "Blackberry",** that ubiquitous 5th (perhaps Freudian) appendage, and the addictive reliance thereon by today's North American legal counselors, is justified by its adherents as giving them freedom. From my observations of the habits of its users, I find the "Blackberry" an intrusive slave master, or, alternatively, a sophisticated security blanket. It is an extremely useful state of the art communications tool, but it is only a tool. Don't let it control your life. Don't let it become the tail which wags the dog.
30. **Young lawyers need mentors,** as did the mentors when they were young. Mentoring junior lawyers is an obligation of our profession.
31. **You can never have enough knowledge.** Read, look, listen, question. Learn as much about the law and its application to clients' needs as your brain can hold, and then learn

more. Pass on such learning to clients and colleagues. Share your knowledge and experiences.

32. **You can be selective;** you do not have to take every case that walks in the door. Lawyers do not have to work for clients or persons who are impolite, rude, insulting, disrespectful, excessively demanding, who expect free or underpay for legal services or who pursue improper, immoral or illegal objectives. Stand up to them and say, “No, not if that is going to be your attitude.” If they walk away, then you have saved yourself a lot of grief and aggravation.
33. **No matter how driven you may be, you can not know all the law in every field or even all the law in any one field.**
34. **Not all lawyers are effective as leaders or managers.** Most of us receive no training for such tasks. Not everybody wants the job or can do the job. Fortunately, training in leadership and managing is now available to those who want it or need it. There is a place in the practice of the law to suit every interest, every age, every ability, every character, every personality, every background, every ethnicity, every nationality. The pursuit of the law as a profession knows no exclusions or discriminations. Find your personal niche which presents you the challenges you seek, which you are most comfortable with, and which provides you with the personal satisfaction of your achievements and rewards, great and small.
35. **Absolute Justice is not attainable, so Substantial Justice is the best you can hope for.**
36. **In the end, as lawyers, be thankful** – it may seem distasteful but in the words of my deceased Thai law partner: “God bless those who make problems for our clients, and for our clients who make problems for themselves!”

II. Dealing with Legal Fees

37. **Sorry but those damnable time sheets are your lifeblood.** Complete, clear, accurate, fully informative – and charged to the right client and matter – records under all circumstances must be kept for all of your time whether chargeable or not and whatever is the fee structure agreed to with the client after an open dialogue. Without time sheets to build legal fee bills, both you and the Firm will starve. It is that simple.
38. **Our Firm must be profitable for us all to survive.** Yes, the practice of law is a profession, but it is still a business with salaries, expenses, assets, liabilities and taxes. Our only source of income is legal fees and service fees. Quality legal services are not cheap. Clients don’t pay for low quality work. But premium prices demand premium quality work. Billing and collecting legal fees are more art than science. Bills should be transparent, justifiable, prompt, and should reflect fairness, the scope of legal services rendered and their value to the client. Follow our current *Memorandum Concerning Legal Fee Charges and Conditions of Engagement* which is attached to our fee letters to clients. Some clients specify their own criteria for legal fees and chargeable expenses.
39. Over the years, **our Firm’s most costly mistakes have been not having written Legal Fee Agreements** for each client and, even better, for each matter. In some jurisdictions, they are required by law. Be very specific as to the exact scope of work expected of the Firm by the clients and the billing basis and arrangements – hourly, fixed, capped, contingent, value, negotiated, success kickers, premiums, hybrids or whatever. **Get deposits up front** against anticipated or agreed fees and expenses. **Don’t expect the**

Firm to be paid for services rendered but not instructed by clients. If the Firm does not get paid, you don't get paid.

40. **Clients do not have endless patience or bottomless pockets.** Be attentive to clients' objectives and time schedules. Timing is always important and may be crucial. Clients have limited resources for legal fees and expenses. **So get it right, the first time.**
41. **Do not over lawyer a matter to drive up legal fees and expenses.** A Texas corporate client once told me in connection with limiting the number of lawyers assigned to his cases that he adopted the motto of the Texas Rangers (State Police) – **“One Riot, One Ranger”**.
42. **When clients say of their case you are handling, “It’s not about the money, it’s about the principle!”**, what they really mean is, **“It’s about the money.”** They soon realize that it costs money (legal fees and expenses) to uphold principle. Caveat: Do not start or continue any activity on behalf of your client that your client is not fully supportive of and committed to complete. Recognize the signs of when client starts calculating a cost-benefit analysis, waives and withholds resources and support. When they become half-hearted, it is time to reassess your and the Firm's role, the value added for the client by your work and your chances of being paid for your past and continued efforts.
43. a. **Law firms and lawyers are subject to unrelenting pressure to reduce their clients' legal costs.** Do whatever you can to accommodate and to be more efficient, but there are limits below which you can not go. Do a cost-benefit analysis – educate clients that **if they pay only peanuts, they get only monkeys.**

b. If you have done your job for the client right, achieving the bulk of the client's objectives, and then the client does not pay the agreed fee, go after them tenaciously. **Attack vigorously.** Let them know they cannot cheat you and get away with doing so, that you will protect your own interests as you protected theirs.
44. Clients want premium work done by a great lawyer at low cost. Or as a Spanish lawyer colleague put it, **“They want a virgin with experience.”**

III. Golden Rules to Succeed

Remember that/to...

45. **Never, never, never assume.** Verify. Check every thing, every time. This is a postulate cast in concrete.
46. **Clients and bosses don't like surprises.**
47. **Communicate with clients, bosses, colleagues and subordinates** – clearly, completely, often, and honestly. Document all of your communications. Keep copies of every document you prepare and those which others produce. Back up in depth. Your matter files must be complete.
48. **You have a mind – use it.** All the time. Think. Be logical. Be analytical. Be thorough. Relate together all known details and facts. **Think like a lawyer!** (Another postulate cast in concrete)
49. **Keep an open and inquiring mind. Read, look, listen, touch, smell, taste, feel. Ask probing questions – Who? What? Where? When? Why? How? Get the answers, whether you like what you hear or see or not.**

50. **If you don't know, ask.** If you do have to guess, remember it's just a guess, not fact or truth. If you need help to do the work correctly and on time – **ask for help, early.** Don't be shy or embarrassed to seek help. Don't wait.
51. **There are facts and there are opinions and interpretations. The latter can vary; facts do not. Know which are which.**
52. **There is no such thing as a dumb question;** there are only dumb mistakes. What is dumb is to keep quiet when you need to know something in order to do your job.
53. **Errors are forgivable but carelessness is not. But don't make the same mistake twice.**
54. **Foolishness is tolerable but stupidity is not.**
55. **Keep your word.**
56. **Meet all deadlines, ahead of time.**
57. **Date all papers** – upper right-hand corner – date all drafts. It is advisable to precede all your computer file names by a 6-digit date of creation, e.g., YYMMDD, in order to stack them up chronologically.
58. **Teamwork** usually produces better results than doing a task alone. Be a reliable and effective teammate. It's "We", not "Me". Always give credit to those who help you; they come first, then you.
59. **A team requires mutual trust and mutual reliance.** Build internal networks. Garner support. The better the mutual understanding, respect, loyalty, cooperation, patience, and time spent working together, the more effective the team, the better the results, the fewer the mistakes.
60. **Humility and modesty are in....except when what is called for is a fearsome, mad-dog litigator fighter who strikes fear into the hearts of opponents.**
61. **Do not take credit for someone else's work.**
62. **Talking is easy. Actions require effort and commitment. So act and grow.**
63. **"Murphy's Law"** – "If things can go wrong, they will. And usually at the worst possible time." The world over Murphy is alive and well and as disruptive as ever. (An American observation which has universal application)
64. **If everything is going exceptionally well,** chances are you have forgotten to do something. Whatever it was, anticipate the possible consequences.
65. **Do not get into any trouble you can not remedy by noon the next day.**
66. **Never put anything in writing that you would not want to see in a newspaper the next day** – one of my mother's favorite sayings. And these days, the term "writing" and "newspaper" should be expanded to include emails, internet, faxes, blogs, chat rooms, short message systems (sms), newsletters, radio, TV, phones (landline, mobile, satellite). Nothing communicated is private these days – from eavesdroppers to hackers, to punching the "Send" button by mistake, to....
67. **Be adaptable.** Maintain the capacity to respond to different situations as they arise. Have a Plan B and even a Plan C, just in case. You can't predict the future, but you can prepare

and be ready for it. Never leave yourself without somewhere to go, even if it is backwards.
(A lesson from my Navy days)

68. **The unexpected always happens sooner or later.** Anticipate and prepare for it. Train yourself to deal with “What if” situations, including worst-case scenarios.
69. **You have capabilities and limits, strengths and weaknesses.** Recognize which is which in you. You can do a lot but not everything. But don’t stop trying.
70. **Never, never, never belittle or disrespect another person’s** religion, ethnicity, culture, traditions, language, family, physical appearance, dreams, beliefs honestly held, intelligence (or lack thereof) or their choices of dress, music, art, food, drink, politics, transport or mate(s).
71. **Remember who and what you are.** In your day-to-day conduct, preserve your dignity and integrity. Always do yourselves, the Firm and our profession proud.
72. **Have personal and professional goals,** and do what must be done to achieve them. Having done so, then set new goals. Have dreams, too, and work towards them. If you give up your dreams, you die.
73. **If you don’t keep up, you will be left behind.** In this very competitive world in which we live and work and learn, being left behind can mean failure. Continuing Legal Education (CLE), either formal or informal, is in your best interests. It may be required by your Bar Association/Law Society, or not. How to keep up? – Read, ask for and attend training courses, whether training be self-help, in-house or outside; get colleagues and even clients to teach you. Look, see, listen, ask, use your imagination to find ways to stay ahead and not fall behind.
74. **Lawyers, directly or indirectly, have power.** Power itself is neutral. Power may command fear, but it does not engender respect. Respect has to be earned. Use power only for good. Do not abuse power or be swayed by its “Dark Side”.
75. **Search for wisdom. Knowledge is not wisdom. Information is not knowledge.**
76. **Have a sense of humor.** Be able to laugh at yourself and at the humorous side of your matter. Take your tasks seriously but don’t take yourself too seriously. Laugh at least four times a day and at yourself at least twice a day. Laughter is a marvelous stress and depression antidote.
77. I have learned from decades of working in cross-cultural environments that, whether you think so or not, **every action taken by a person is logical to him/her.** Find the starting point of that logic and then you will see the path to understanding the “why” of their action.
78. **You must have patience,** imperturbability, understanding and diplomacy to handle the delicacies of a cross-cultural challenge – and not all local citizens or expatriates are the same.
79. **Eye contact** is always important, though in some cultures it may be considered impolite or even hostile. Know your cultures.
80. **When you play, play hard.** When you work, don’t play at all. It is preferable if work can be play and play can be work.
81. **Everything has its place and everything belongs in its place.** That way you can always find what you are looking for when you want or need it. (One of the many lessons I learned in the U.S. Navy)

82. **To minimize disappointment**, if you must do business with friends, relatives, or even loved ones, insist that the relationship be businesslike and professional. Try not to rely on trust alone.
83. One of my law school professors at Hastings College of the Law (San Francisco, California) taught us **that finding a good business partner is ten times more difficult than finding a good spouse**. I have lived to see that axiom proven many times over.
84. **Know your “enemy”**. Never underestimate your adversary or overestimate or revel in your own abilities. “Bad guys” are often smart, clever and very adept at deception and diversion. Be thoroughly prepared to face them effectively. By the way, opposing counsel, if acting professionally and ethically, is a rival. Counsel is not necessarily the enemy, though he/she may represent the enemy.
85. **Don’t confuse skill with luck**. But know that without luck, at the right time, skill alone might not be enough to win the day. Napoleon knew this when he said, “Give me lucky generals.” Coincidentally, as I alluded to earlier, don’t rely on miracles to save you.
86. **Control your temper**. Anger must not cloud your better judgment. Besides, “You catch more flies with sugar than with vinegar” – one of my mother’s favorite sayings – self-discipline is the key.
87. **Life** is full of risks and pains as well as ecstasies and satisfactions – **take risks; calculated ones**. Taking no risks means no progress, no loves, no achievements, no glory, no “Well Done.” So do surge forward but don’t be foolhardy about it. And remember – sometimes you are the statue, and sometimes you are the pigeon.
88. **When you decide to act, think first**, if there is time, and then act rationally and calmly. Put your mind in gear before you put your mouth, or these days your fingers, in motion. This may mean after reflection you could decide that it is appropriate to go with your gut feeling, your instincts, your training.
89. **You will have to make decisions**. Some will be easy, some difficult, some will be grave and some will be critical. Do not be reluctant to do so, even knowing that whether right or wrong you are responsible for your decisions. Make the decision. If you make a decision which is wrong, recognize your error and make another decision to correct your course. You and the others affected thereby will have to live with those decisions, so carry that responsibility well.
90. **You will make mistakes, you will have failures and setbacks. We all do**. Admit them. You learn more from what you do wrong than what you do right. Get up and immediately get on with the job. Denying mistakes and your failures or hiding them leads only to consternation, and that misguided effort will come back to bite you much more viciously than the original error.
91. **Don’t burn your bridges behind you**. If you end up in Hell, you will want a clear way back from whence you came.
92. **Know when to back off**, slow down, retrace your steps backwards, embark on a strategic advance in another direction. And know when to press home your advantage with vigor. (Another lesson from the U.S. Navy)
93. **Don’t be boring or one-dimensional**. A thorough knowledge of the law and honed skills in its practice alone do not make you an interesting, complete or well-rounded person. Get a life. Have hobbies. Read everything. Engage in a variety of activities other than the law. Be agile. Keep abreast of current events, of scientific, military, political, social, ethical, media, legal and legislative developments. Participate in family, cultural, academic,

community, spiritual, sports, fitness, environmental, conservation, musical, artistic, travel, cross-cultural, welfare, entrepreneurial and other people and planet saving oriented activities. Learn the techniques of effective negotiation, mediation, public speaking and storytelling. Learn how to protect and defend yourself and your family and to survive in dangerous or extraordinary circumstances.

94. **Look after your health and fitness, mind, body and spirit.** Protect your eyes – only one set per customer. Don't try to save money on footwear – use only good quality foot-supporting shoes. Many maladies have been traced to originate from neglected teeth – check yours often and replace all the metal in your mouth with modern dental resin composites. Make quality of your life a goal. Yes, exercise regularly. Do all that good stuff like cut down on caffeine, Blackberry and TV dependence, limit alcohol intake, avoid smoking and drugs. Eat your veggies and fruits and proteins, take supplements. Meditate. Consider alternative and complementary medicine. Most important for a long healthy and happy life is to find, give, share and cherish love, compassion, companionship and relationships.

IV. The Firm

95. **The Firm's reputation is its brand,** its most important asset, as is each lawyer's own reputation. Promote, enhance and protect such reputations, such brands. They take years to build, but only seconds to damage or destroy.
96. **Clients must be and must remain convinced** that they have come to the right law firm to have their problems solved, and that you and your colleagues are the right lawyers to do so. Convince them by word and by deed.
97. **Clients are clients of the Firm, not of any individual lawyer.** This is admittedly a controversial proposition. The only possible exception is when the client is in a "bet the company" bind and selects a specific named lawyer of known reputation to represent him/her/them.
98. **Love the Firm's clients like you love the law.** If you treat them right, existing clients will give you far more work more often than new clients and at far less cost to the Firm to obtain such work.
99. **Our Firm has its own culture which is unique and stands us apart from our competitors. Tilleke & Gibbins** is a multi-service (not a full-service) law firm with many specialties. Adopt as your own and adhere to the Firm's *Mission Statement, Creed, and Rules and Standards of Conduct*, in both letter and, particularly, in spirit. Live them; breathe them. They set our Firm's business strategy and define our values, our strategic objectives, who we are and what we stand for. To compete effectively, we must provide value added to our clients that is not provided by others.
100. **Look after your subordinates and colleagues in the Firm,** have confidence in them if they have earned your trust; always treat them with sincerity, understanding, patience, humor, humanity, personal care; be there to support them when they need help; preserve their dignity and they will reciprocate in return – except for those few self-centered malcontents who no matter what you do are hopeless losers or disrupters! But try.
101. **As the leader of our Firm, I demand** of each and every person in the Firm, or who otherwise works for me, **and they can all expect the same from me in return, total and absolute integrity, loyalty, respect, honesty and trustworthiness** to me, to the Firm, to our clients, to the Courts and to themselves. Constructive criticism courteously

presented falls within the ambit of this law. Occasionally, forgiveness for lapses might be possible, perhaps, but otherwise no exceptions.

102. **Anyone who deliberately hurts the Firm or our T&G family** will be pursued without end. Time and expense will not be impediments to my retribution. The head of the house protects his family.
103. **The Firm is a family, your family**, which means you have family responsibilities and obligations in addition to benefits, protections and rewards. You can not enjoy the latter without dedication to the former. The Firm is not a charity so perform up to standard or be prepared for the weight of the family to come down hard on you. You do not want to find yourself ostracized for letting down the family, do you?

V. The Last Law

104. **When the practice of the law stops being fun, it's time to seek a new line of work.**

VI. OK. One Final Law

105. I find **lawyers jokes** (or should I say anti-lawyers jokes) tiresome and uncouth. My favorite rebuke to the vacuous purveyors of such tripe, best told for maximum effect in a large gathering, is the following: "A good accountant might be able to save your fortune. A good doctor can save your life. A good clergyman might even be able to save your soul. But only a good lawyer (pause) can save your ass (arse)!"

You are welcome to use this retort, with attribution to me of course! The impact is stupendous if you get the timing right.

Epilogue

So now you have a significant portion of my accumulated, and I hope sage, advice, my passions, and perhaps some wisdom such as it is, about you and your practice of the law. This has been my purpose, my grand strategy, my edifice.

As I now begin to fade into a phased retirement – remember, I graduated from university in 1958, law school in 1962, and commenced full time with Tilleke & Gibbins in 1967 – my endurance and stamina are waning and I am reaching the age of becoming venerable. That means I can preach **LLL** from the vantage point of experience and sincerity.

Call **LYMAN'S LAWS FOR LAWYERS – LLL** – my legacy to the people of T&G, present and future, as well as to the legal profession, all of whom and which have provided me with boundless satisfaction. Not for one moment have I regretted my choices for my professional lives, civilian and military, my international upbringing, my life and long residence in Thailand, my schooling, travels, friends, diversions, avocations, hobbies, wives, loves and life experiences. May you be so fortunate!

Respectfully,

David Lyman
Chairman & Chief Values Officer
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