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Managing Editor's note



One of APLA's many objectives is to promote excellence in the provision of legal services. Advocacy skills are vital for the effective and successful conduct of litigation by all those involved, barristers and solicitors. As stated by Glissan, "(t)he art of legal advocacy is in part one of communication and in part one of persuasion: persuading the jury of the facts, the judge of the law, after communicating to them, through the witnesses, the evidence."*

Peter Berman SC has generously shared with us his *Ten Commandments of Evidence in Chief* which highlight the importance of good communication skills (and good humour) in order that evidence in chief, particularly from clients and lay witnesses, may be led and presented as persuasively as possible.

Practitioners who have been faced with the dilemma of deciding whether or not to call expert evidence will welcome the detailed analysis by John Griffin QC of the judicial approaches relating to the admission of expert evidence in his contribution.

For solicitors faced with the task of preparing briefs to counsel, Chris Newton has highlighted how the brief can be put together in a way which more effectively communicates the essence of the case to counsel in order that a better outcome is achieved. Following on from this, David Reid provides practical advice and helpful checklists in Preparation for Trial. David reminds us that "(w)hat is of primary importance is to develop a clear sightedness and capacity to cut through details so that, in combination with quality preparation, you achieve a good outcome for your client."



Plaintiff fulfils an important role in achieving another of APLA's objectives, namely to facilitate the exchange of information between members, and contributions are always welcome. This month we have published the election results for 2002. Congratulations to all, who no doubt look forward to receiving our support during the challenging year ahead. As we await the findings of the Coonan review panel, incoming New South Wales President, Bill Madden, has provided a detailed update

on the reforms which have already been implemented in New South Wales relating to medical negligence and negligence generally as well as comment on the open disclosure project and potential further reforms. In future editions we hope to provide updates from other jurisdictions.

* Glissan, *Cross Examination: Practice and Procedure* 2nd ed, 1991, p. 20.

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