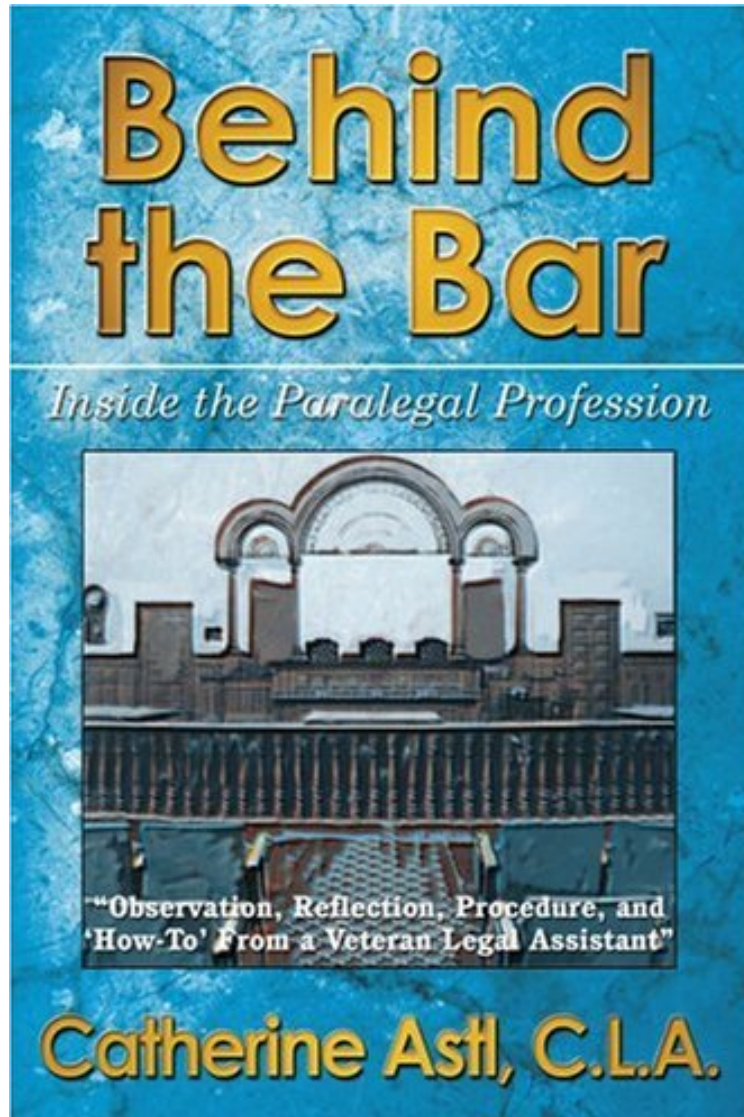


(Download pdf) Behind the Bar: Inside the Paralegal Profession

## Behind the Bar: Inside the Paralegal Profession

*Catherine Astl*

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**Catherine Astl : Behind the Bar: Inside the Paralegal Profession** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Behind the Bar: Inside the Paralegal Profession:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Must have for paralegals--By Socrates N. Turner, I've been a paralegal in a busy Midtown Manhattan firm for the past 4 years. The advise given in this book is phenomenal. It's good to know that the trials and tribulations that come with work in the legal field, are somewhat universal. It definitely helped my career, the insight, and humor make this an extremely quick read, and enjoyable also. For me the greatest benefit is knowing what it takes to do the job well, and provide the lawyers you support with the stuff they

want, before they even know they want it. This book and "Plain English for Lawyers," have been invaluable. I didn't take a CLA course, and came into the field through the standard trial by fire. The only thing I'd add to this is using new technology (crackberry, msoffice, etc...) to help produce the best work product possible. Everyone becomes familiar with MS Word, and Excel, through high school and college, but, in the professional world of legal document production, the more you know about these two programs, the better you look to everyone. Get some "Dummies" books on those programs, learn the specifics of the law you support (litigation, civil rights, real estate, etc...) and you're rocket to the top of your career. Office politics are a definite part of the game, but, shouldn't deter you from being successful. My rule of thumb is: The better you are at your job, the less prone to the whims of office gossip/politics. Become an expert and you're an asset. Oh, and you can make A LOT of money. Lol... Most paralegals earn high salaries and still earn overtime pay. Sometimes I've had to stay in the office overnight, so, depending on your pay, and cost of living, the extra money definitely comes in handy.

Hannibal, future Esquire.2 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Props to Ms. AstlBy G. GuesbyProps to Ms. Astl on even the first 5 pages of her book. The humor definitely helps all of us in the legal field trying to make it. May she continue to help many others find their ways!0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Easy read. Reality check for new to Paralegal bizBy Trudy BeermanPublished in 2004, Behind the Bar proved a relevant read to me as a student of the Paralegal Program in 2009. This narrative writing had engaging anecdotes, career enhancing tips and reality checks, all told in entertaining language. It was an easy read, and I completed the book within 6 hours of a single day. Behind the Bar's author Catherine Ash offered an inside, personal, and often vulnerable look, into the (unknown to me) industry of the law and law firms. It was a view that mirrored my expectations with some key insights, tips, and observations that offered what I like to think of as `reality checks' to the otherwise glorious impression offered by television. My opinions, reasons, and plans to enter the paralegal career was not in anyway changed or influenced by this book. In some case, it might have been reinforced, encouraged, and made more specific. For example, Ms. Ash pointed out the arena for paralegal work is vast enough to accommodate looking for a job that matched my personality and work style, instead of just a paycheck. "Being a legal assistant is a wonderful career, but it can sometimes be extremely stressful, with a sky-scraping workload, vast and immense responsibilities, and, in working for some attorneys and people, dealing with mammoth egos and thorny personalities" (pg 88). This is a solid, realistic, honest and insightful summary of the career, and frankly, I love her use of imagery to get her point across so effectively. Behind the Bar is an easy, enlightening and entertaining read; however, I think it has a very definitive audience - those in the industry, and those considering the industry. I would absolutely recommend it to anyone who fits that audience.

What is it really like to work as a paralegal? Will I like working for a law firm and lawyers? What, exactly, does a paralegal do? And what does "assist lawyers" truly mean? Can you tell me about some real-life experiences? Which area of law is right for my personality? Lots of books tell me to, "be organized," but can you give me real specifics? How can I stand out from the rest and be excellent at this career? The answers to these questions, in depth and straight from the inside, are finally here. Reading like a novel, readers are truly transported "Behind the Bar"--deep inside the field of paralegalism and into the author's own career, woven with useful tips and information. The book discusses the history and future of the profession, education requirements, the work of paralegals in different areas of law, the author's actual experiences and useful resources for the reader. The author also outlines qualities personified and sought after in legal assistants and what readers can do to achieve the same level of distinction.

About the Author A Certified Legal Assistant for 12 years, Tampa, Florida based Catherine Astl has much experience to impart. In June of 1992, she earned an Associate in Science Degree in Legal Assisting from Hillsborough Community College. Catherine's articles have appeared in Legal Assistant Today and The National Paralegal Reporter.