

Law practice takeaways from Super Bowl LII

Super Bowl LII is in the books. Hundreds of thousands of people gathered in TimeSolv's hometown of Minneapolis to celebrate and enjoy one of the most celebrated sporting events of the year. While the game itself provided four quarters of action packed gridiron battle, it also offered some valuable entrepreneurial lessons that you may have missed in your whirlwind of hot wings and craft beer. So, now that you have either thoroughly celebrated or nursed your broken heart, let's take an objective look at some lessons you and your law practice can take away from Super Bowl LII.

Every game matters

The Super Bowl is the epitome of professional football, but the glory of this accomplishment eludes all but two teams each year. Neither of them gets there without showing a consistent dedication to their performance on the field. These players and coaches spent months practicing and preparing for the challenges that each game presented. Even contests that seemed easy to win required preparation and effort in the competition to reach the Super Bowl.

Just think what you could accomplish if you view your cases in the same way. Your clients rely on you to handle some of the biggest challenges of their lives. While a final divorce decree or closed real-estate deal may not compare to the pomp and circumstance of the Super Bowl, they are still extremely important events for your clients. Treat them as such by demonstrating a consistent dedication to every task and step of the case. Just as football teams prepare for each game, you should prepare for each pleading, conference, and client meeting as if it's one step closer to the big victory. Don't let laziness or overconfidence negatively affect your

performance. Always remember that your clients are counting on you to perform, just like the fans in the bleachers count on their teams to perform. Exceptional client service may not only lead to a short-term victory, it also results in better client relationships, repeat business, and valuable future referrals.

Adapt to changes

Football is as much about strategy as it is about skill. Professional teams spend millions of dollars to create coaching staffs that provide the players with tactics and plays that work. At halftime, the U.S. Bank Stadium scoreboard read 22-12 in favor of Philadelphia. But instead of calling it quits, New England came back to score two touchdowns in the third quarter and an additional score in the fourth. To do this, they had to adapt to what was happening on the field. That's why halftime is so important to a football game. It is an opportunity to identify necessary changes and make adjustments. Though it ultimately wasn't enough to secure the win, it still provides a valuable lesson for you and your practice.

The legal industry is in midst of numerous changes. From the rise of globalization to the influence of technology on the practice of law, the legal community is constantly transforming and, in order to stay relevant, you have to determine where and how your law firm will adapt to this new landscape. Many firms will not be able to keep pace with the expectations of a clientele that is becoming more and more technically savvy. So, it is imperative that you adjust what is happening on your respective football field. Of course, that looks different for every practice. For some, adapting may mean tightening up cybersecurity procedures. For others, it may mean adding a new technical practice area. Still for others, adapting may be as simple as moving from an antiquated legacy billing system to a new and innovative [cloud-based billing system](#), like TimeSolv. Wherever your firm falls on the spectrum, you need to be ready and willing to adapt in order to stay relevant and profitable.

When preparation and opportunity don't equal luck

Do you have any doubt in your mind that the Patriots prepared for this Super Bowl appearance? Practices, meetings, films... I'm sure they prepared to the best of their ability to go out on the field and take advantage of the opportunity in front of them. However, even with the most thorough preparation possible, failure can still show up to the party. Perhaps you have put all of your time and mental energy into a really big case- one that could take your practice to the next level. However, despite all of your efforts, you are unsuccessful. Though nobody wants to talk about it, defeat happens in the practice of law. You may not be able to secure everything on your client's wish list or some unexpected curve ball could throw your entire defense theory off track. When these things happen, you have to learn how to deal with them in a manner that saves your sanity and allows your practice to keep moving and growing. Which brings me to the next Super Bowl LII lesson...

The only way you lose is to give up

The Eagles entered the big game as underdogs, with no Super Bowl wins under their belts. The odds were completely stacked against them and though many fans hoped for a victory, most football experts predicted a Patriot win. Yet, in the end, the underdogs pulled an upset. Here's the takeaway... You are going to face defeat at sometime in your career, but it is only the end if you allow it to be. Managing a small to mid-sized law practice can be extremely stressful, particularly during times of adversity, but there are various resources out there to help you through, including:

- Find one if you don't already have one – someone who has been doing this a lot longer than you to offer you some good advice, or at least a listening ear.
- Bar resources. Virtually every bar has a small or solo practice section, where you can network with other attorneys and take advantage of useful resources.
- Giving yourself a break. Allow yourself time to rest, relax, and recharge. You would be amazed how a little time away from the office can change your perspective on a loss.

About Erika Winston:

Erika Winston is a freelance writer with a passion for law. Through her business, The Legal Writing Studio, she helps legal professionals deliver effective written messages. Erika is a regular contributor to [TimeSolv](#) and a variety of other publications.