

Winter 2023

MARC WHITEHEAD & ASSOCIATES  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW, LLP  
A NATIONAL DISABILITY CLAIMS LAW FIRM

Vol. 9 Issue: 01

THE NEWSLETTER  
YOU'VE BEEN WAITING FOR...

# \$uccessful Barrister



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## SPACE. THE FINAL FRONTIER.

### THESE ARE THE VOYAGES OF THE...

Just kidding. But with the dawn of a new year, I think it's a good time to think about truly expanding your firm to reach a *new frontier*. Attending my **Double Your Revenue** workshop is a great way to do just that! Read more below about what it can mean for you and your firm and then register at the link provided.

**And as usual, you would be a bright shining star in my eyes if you sent me a long-term disability referral to [marc@marcwhitehead.com](mailto:marc@marcwhitehead.com). Referral fees are paid in appropriate cases. ☺**

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## DOUBLE YOUR REVENUE!

### YES\$, YOU REALLY CAN!



Thinking back on some of the most productive programs I have ever attended in my 30 years of practicing law, I can't help thinking the "Double Your Revenue" (DYR) workshop conducted by Atticus is one of the best. In fact, it was so good I have attended three times, first in 2010, again in 2015 and finally in 2021. And yes, the first two times I was able to double my revenue within about three years. I am making good progress on the doubling my revenue for the third time.

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### NEWS FLASH

#### DOUBLE YOUR REVENUE WORKSHOP

An Atticus' Live Workshop

 February 16, 2023	 Houston, TX	 8.30 AM - 5.00 PM
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Marc Whitehead  
Adjunct Practice Advisor and Attorney



Denise Gamez  
Practice Growth Diagnostic Advisor

REGISTER NOW AT:  
[www.atticusadvantage.com](http://www.atticusadvantage.com)

Use code **HOU2022** for \$300 OFF registration. Tell your friends!

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Now I have finally convinced **ATTICUS** to bring the **Double Your Revenue** program to Houston! And as an added bonus (*tongue in cheek*) I am going to co-teach it with the wonderful Denise Gamez at the Houston Marriott West Loop by the Galleria on February 16, 2023.

**So, this is not a seminar, it is a WORKSHOP!** The key word being **WORK**. No answering emails on your computer or reading the news on your phone. You will be working both individually and in teams to ultimately come up with an executable written plan on how to double your revenue. You will be provided written brainstorming worksheets, guidance, and feedback from Atticus' 30 years of experience on the 8 levels of profitability. The best part is you will be getting real time feedback with your new friends at the workshop and of course my brilliance! **Our clients receive their money, closure and satisfaction. In many instances, we improve their quality of life. Most importantly, we made the villain keep their promise.**



## Brainstorming is the Key

The first part of the program you will do a self-assessment of what is working for you, what is not working for you, what you do well and what is not in your strike zone. Then we begin the ideation or brainstorming process. The rules are simple:

- Give yourself permission to have really bad ideas
- There are no wrong answers
- Think BIG!
- Do not edit your thoughts
- No idea is stupid
- Don't try to remember it, write it down

Then we will take you through a series of brainstorming sprints on the different levers of revenue such as: increasing the average fee per case, pricing strategies, strategic delegation, hiring an all-star team, using technology, focus management, marketing and implementation.

**Warning!** Doubling your revenue may not correlate to doubling your profit! However, it's been said, "*people can only see as far into the future as their current cash flow allows,*" and revenue equals cash flow. Managing your increased cash flow correctly can move you towards increased growth and profitability. The levers needed to support and grow your firm may be different than mine but investing time in brainstorming these levers will pay dividends in the long run.

## In Conclusion... A Plug for Atticus

I'd like to think that my ability to double my revenue had a lot to do with me and my skills, not just the **Double Your Revenue** program. Some good fortune (*translated-dumb luck*) also had a part to play. In any event, **Double Your Revenue** was a big part of putting me in position to take advantage of my good fortune.

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# MAKE SURE YOUR COLLEAGUES KNOW THEY ARE REAL STARS!



It's the beginning of 2023 and you undoubtedly had a small something or the other planned for each member of your firm as a show for how much you appreciate them. You gave out gifts over the holidays, maybe even a discretionary bonus, to reward the good work your staff has performed. Maybe you went above and beyond the normal agenda; you threw a holiday party and even rented a margarita machine or a taco truck (*hey, this is Texas*). They are rockstars, obviously.

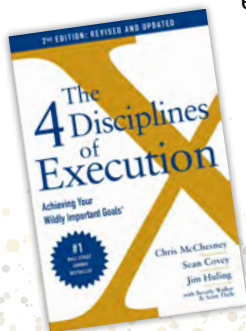
Hopefully that keeps everyone happy the remainder of the year.

*"Stars were born babies, just like us. They live their lives, then die without fuss."*

– Joseph Raphael Becker

I am here to tell you that that I work for a great firm and a great boss—and no, not saying it because I am hoping he reads this. He doesn't have to because he knows his efforts and those of the leadership at our firm to bring our teammates together has been a vital part of creating the star-studded cohesive collection of colleagues we have here at **MWA**.

A major focus of our firm has been the health and happiness of our entire crew; in fact, it is one of the firm's core values. Sure, we work hard and yes, we play hard, but we also recognize that each and every member of the firm has a life outside of the walls on Heights and 4th and 11615 Angus Rd.

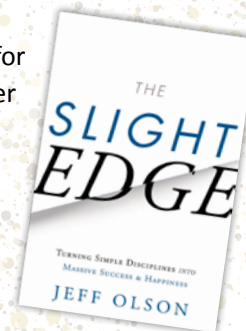


**MWA** Leadership has instituted several operations and I wanted to share some that have made a huge impact in the lives of those that serve our clients and I want to offer advice for any firm and leader out there who is trying to reach their employees on a more personal level. You definitely want your teammates to know that they are true **STARS** in your eyes, making an impactful difference with each and every call, letter, and communication they make on your behalf.

You should make sure each employee feels appreciated in the way that they want to feel appreciated. This starts by identifying every employee's love language at work (*words of affirmation, acts of service, quality time, receiving gifts, physical touch*) and nixing physical touch (*for obvious reasons*). Make sure that your communication is personal and fitted to the individual rather than utilizing general praise for the teams as a whole. You want the employee to understand that you thought about their efforts personally, but you also want to communicate your appreciation in the way that they like to receive it.

Earlier in the year, our firm solicited a small dossier of information on each colleague's preferences for food, gifts, outings, etc. It is kept in an open file on our shared drive, readily searchable by any team member wanting to show appreciation to someone by giving a small piece of gratitude targeted at the receiver's preferences. This book of information is not meant for simple holiday gifts but to be utilized year-round.

Setting yearly and quarterly goals for each department has been another game-changer. Each quarter, the department heads work with their teams to set goals using methods in **The Slight Edge** and the **4 Disciplines of Execution**. At the end of the period, those goals are reviewed and when met, celebration ensues!



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# A SUCCESSFUL MINDSET TO KEEP YOUR NEGOTIATION OUT OF A BLACK HOLE

Every successful negotiation requires you have a sound strategy. But to lay the groundwork, I want to discuss the characteristics of a good mediation mindset for advocates. As a mediator, I have had the opportunity to observe excellent attorneys who took a strategic approach to the process. All of them shared these same characteristics.

**PREPAREDNESS.** Just as in trial work, preparation is the key. It is essential that you bring with you all of the ammunition and laser death rays that you can muster in order to persuade the other side. Introducing real “fears” that the other side must face if the case is to move further in litigation. Having a good command of both the facts and the law will demonstrate that you are negotiating from a position of strength. It should also make your client feel confident that he or she is positioned to get the best available settlement. Similarly, you should prepare your client for potential weaknesses in your own case so they keep a tempered attitude and an open mind to resolution.

**OPENNESS AND CANDOR.** Parties will settle cases when they feel that they have sufficient information to evaluate their prospects in litigation. Some of this information usually needs to come from the other side. Mediation presents an opportunity to have a forthright exchange of information so that no one feels that they are being left in the darkness of space. Withholding information is generally counter-productive and may cause the other side to suspect weakness in your case. Remember: mediation is a unique opportunity to have all the parties at the table and fully focused on the matter at hand, take advantage!

**PATIENCE.** I have been involved in many cases, both as attorney and as mediator, which required long hours, more than one session, or extensive follow up work on the telephone. At some point it can feel like the process is taking lightyears. It can be tempting to give up instead of staying focused on the objective. You must resist the temptation to rush the process. Also, just because you can't get the deal done within the

set mediation session doesn't mean that was wasted time. The work done often leads to settlement shortly after.

**WILLINGNESS TO COMPROMISE.** This attribute is the most important of all. No mediation should ever be undertaken unless both the lawyer and the client are prepared to make a reasonable compromise. I typically make the parties agree that they are attending mediation in good faith with actual settlement authority before blasting off into the session. Participants must realize that almost every lawsuit involves risk, money, and time. Mediation is a process where the parties must compromise and give up some ground, but gain mitigation of risk, and savings of time and money spent in litigation.

If the parties enter into mediation with these principles in mind, you can avoid having your negotiation sucked into a black hole of impasse. *Prepare these principles before your next negotiation and it will help you launch into a successful negotiation!* ☺

*“NASA's next urgent mission should be to send good poets into space so they can describe what it's really like.”*

*– Shannon Hale*





# Applying **SLIGHT EDGE** Concepts to Achieve a Moonshot of Living 25 More Years



**“What age will you die?”** Our Atticus Summit session on *“The Bonus Years”* started with this bold, depressing question. Then followed the challenge, *“What if you could live 25 more years beyond that number?”* Given a number of factors Mark Powers and Steve Riley shared over the next hour, the Bonus Years of 25 more years of life was not the moonshot my brain immediately suggested and discarded. While the Bonus Years is still a question in my mind, it did force me to apply certain **Slight Edge** concepts to immediately improve my life.

## What is a Moonshot Idea?

Coined after President Kennedy’s speech where he dared our nation to *“[land] a man on the moon and [return] him safely to the Earth,”* per HBR, a moonshot idea is a *“difficult or expensive task, the outcome of which is to have great significance.”*

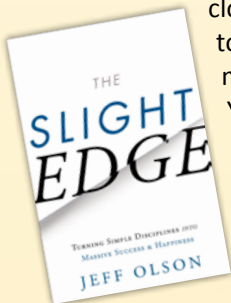


Due to significant strides in gene editing and repair, DNA mapping, longevity medicine, and many more factors, Powers and Riley pushed Summit attendees’ boundaries to live beyond their greatest imagination.

Marc and I had just completed a Leadership Boot Camp with our attorneys where we workshopped ways to practically and feasibly implement concepts from **The Slight Edge** by Jeff Olson, and with those concepts in mind, my greatest takeaway was not the impossibility of the Bonus Years but how I was shortchanging my dreams.

## Applying Slight Edge Concepts

Olson proposes seven **Slight Edge** habits that move you closer to your goals. One of those habits is to *“have a positive outlook.”* Wrapping my mind around the possibility of the Bonus Years, however, was just the first step. *“What will we do with those extra 25 years?”* was an even more uncomfortable question. Until it wasn’t. I allowed myself to dream of what I would do if I was granted the ultimate gift: **TIME**.



Could I actually meet my great grandchildren? Live in, not just visit, different parts of the world? The Bonus Years exercise forced me to move from negativity to positivity and imagine extra years where the age of 100 does not look like 100 now but 100 with vitality and flexible joints.

That then led to a stark realization that I was not on the path to have nearly enough money to live for 25 more years. It is great to dream big dreams, but we all know the difference between dreamers and people who actually achieve their dreams. Olson recounts a fable of a boy who chose an inheritance that doubled every day, rather than a lump sum. The fictional story is an incredible reminder of compounding interest and that *“simple daily disciplines add up to the difference between failure and success.”*

With that story fresh in my mind, I challenged myself to think about my financial landscape every single day, assessing weaknesses and identifying opportunities. I have not yet discovered my pot of gold, but the mere daily discipline removes the fear of *“not enough,”* paving the way for the daring possibility of the Bonus Years to become a more real idea.

## Discovering My Moonshot Idea

At the end of the Atticus session, we were asked to identify what our next step would be. With our **Slight Edge** workshop in mind, I thought of Olson’s three steps to achieving your dreams: write it down, look at it every day, and start with a plan.

I had a few *“it’s”* from the session, whether that was eating cleaner, exploring alternative financial investments, or determining what I want my legacy to be. But regardless of whether I get those Bonus Years, living **Slight Edge** concepts has already given me more life in my days. **And that’s a moonshot in and of itself.** ☺



MADISON DONALDSON  
ASSOCIATE ATTORNEY

# THREE LESSONS I LEARNED BY EXPANDING MY WORLD AND MOVING TO AUSTIN

This year I made the very hard, but very exciting, decision to leave my home in Houston and move to Austin. It was tough to leave the adorable starter home I purchased and even tougher to leave my family, but I had exciting things both personally and professionally drawing me to Austin. Five months later the dogs and I are settled into our gorgeous new apartment and the new **MWA** Austin office is open, fully (female) staffed and operational. **Here are some of the lessons I learned.**

**1.** I have a newfound respect for those that hand their own shingle. The day I got the keys to our new office I raced up the stairs, did a carpet angel in my new office, and then thought SHIT 🤢....

**Now what?** Not only did we have no furniture, I didn't even have a *stapler*. I called our Houston office manager and asked her to help, she started asking me a zillion different questions for which

I did not have the answers. Finally, after she realized I am completely useless, she scheduled a trip to come up for a long weekend and help me. When I say she got shit 🤢 done that weekend, she got. Shit. DONE. When she left, we had most of the furniture installed and the rest scheduled to be delivered. We had a fully functional break room with a fridge, microwave, coffee maker, you name it. We even had art on the walls!

**2.** Speaking of office managers, go find yours, figure out how they take their coffee and bring them Starbucks at least once a week. You have no idea how much they do to keep your office running. Even after we had furniture and I could stop working at home, I swear I had to make an office supply run at least twice a week. You don't think about a staple remover until you need one and then you need it IMMEDIATELY. Our Houston office managers keep the office stocked with all the office supplies you could dream of, everyone's favorite snacks and sparkling water and they even restock the Poo-Pourri in the men's bathroom... *just doing the Lord's work*. Seriously, please thank your office managers. Their hard work is often overlooked because no one notices it unless it stops.

**3.** Finally, you have to surround yourself with good, trustworthy people.

The first two months our office was opened, I was gone at least 3 whole weeks traveling for work. My new paralegal, Lisa, was a complete champ and held down the fort. Her productivity did not slow down even though she was literally in a new office alone and she even covered several of my calls and emails to lighten my workload when I got back from my trips. I'm sure all of you know that one of the most stressful parts of a trip is coming back to whatever mess is awaiting you at the office. Not having to worry about that was seriously weight off my shoulders and in return I keep Lisa fully stocked on Diet Cokes and yummy snacks.

Apropos of heading into a new year, I encourage y'all to get out of your own little worlds for a bit and challenge yourself. Even if you don't immediately succeed, the worst that can happen is you learn a new lesson, you learn something new about yourself or you learn to appreciate those around you more.

**Good luck in 2023.**  
**Cheers, nerds.** 😊



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# DOUBLE YOUR REVENUE!

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**ATTICUS** is a business coaching program for attorneys that is designed to help increase revenue, decrease stress, and provide support to achieve your short and long-term goals. I owe much of my success to the programs and coaching received through my years of involvement with Atticus. So much, in fact, that I have now become a Certified Atticus Adjunct Advisor for Atticus. Check out how to register at the following link:  
<https://atticusadvantage.com/what-we-do/double-your-revenue-workshop/dyr-2023-02-16>  
and **SAVE \$300** with promo code **HOU2022**.

If you want to pick my brain about the program before you commit, email me at [marc@marcwhitehead.com](mailto:marc@marcwhitehead.com) and I will be happy to discuss the program with you personally in more detail. **Cheers!** 😊

*"It's a fixer upper of a planet, but we could make it work."*

– Elon Musk

# MAKE SURE YOUR COLLEAGUES KNOW THEY ARE REAL STARS!

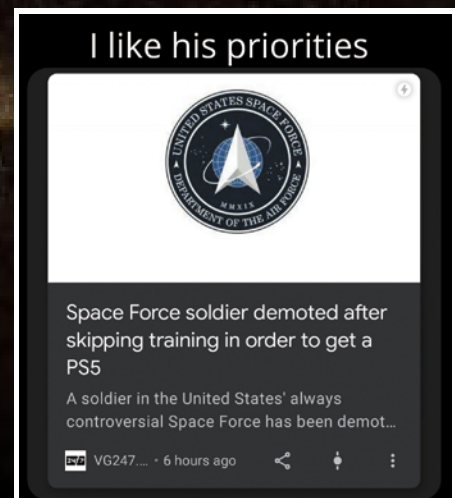
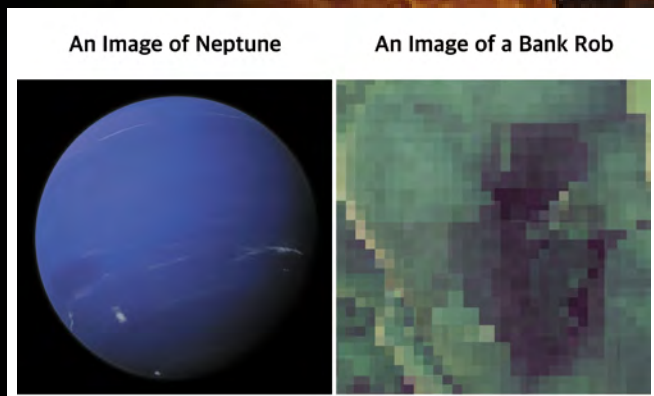
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Finally, a firm favorite, monthly department lunches have shown our team members that we continually appreciate them for their daily efforts and want them to put work aside for an hour or so and get to know each other better, laugh, share food, and find balance amongst the chaos of the day to day.

At the heart of it, employees are not simply some cog in a machine. Each person is an individual with unique circumstances, talents and desires. Fostering an environment where that is recognized and celebrated leads to employees being at the top of their game so that the firm can provide the best

representation of client's that it can.

**So be good to your people and they will be good to you!** 😊



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# Lawyers Need a Laugh

## CORRECTLY ANSWER THIS SPACE TRIVIA... TO WIN AN OUT OF THIS WORLD SURPRISE!

Email [Marc@marcwhitehead.com](mailto:Marc@marcwhitehead.com) with your answers.



1. Which planet is known as the Evening Star? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How many Earth years is one year on Jupiter? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What does NASA stand for?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Who is Commander-in-Chief of the United States Space Force?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Are you pissed that Pluto is no longer a planet? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Are aliens real? \_\_\_\_\_

New Scientist  
@newschemist

Pluto is covered in huge red patches and we don't know what they are



The Block Panther  
@DeleMage

Bruises from all the times y'all said he wasn't a planet.

## DISABILITY & INSURANCE DENIALS



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Bad Faith Insurance Denials

### Social Security Disability Claims

ALJ Hearings • Federal Appeals

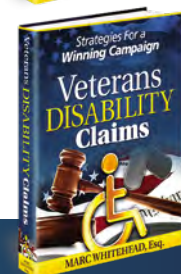
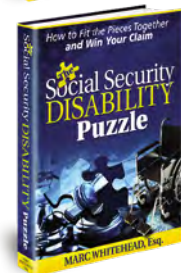
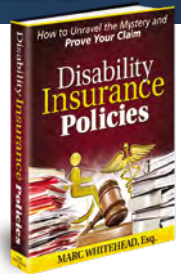
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