

Witnesses:

- Normally a witness will begin by introducing themselves to the court, and spelling their last name for the record.
- Next, each witness should explain to the court how they know the parties, or what the basis for their testimony is. *(For example, a witness might explain they know the parties because they lived next door to them for twenty years).*
- Each of your witnesses should provide some key piece of evidence or testimony needed to show the facts & circumstances identified in the outline for your CASE IN CHIEF.
- Decide what sequence you want you witnesses to appear in, and prepare a separate list of questions for each witness, making sure you cover each piece of evidence or testimony you want the court to know about.
- When you ask a witness about an exhibit, the court will want to know how the witness is familiar with issue in question.

For example, if the issue is the preparation of your tax return, the witness should explain how they are familiar with your tax return, and when they last saw it, and why they happened to be familiar with what was in the tax return. It just helps the court to understand that a particular witness really does know what they're talking about, and helps establish the credibility of your witness.

General Tips in preparation –

Anticipate disputes! If you know that there is likely to be some question about a particular issue, be ready for it! For example, if your spouse doesn't agree with you about the value of the old pick-up truck, take copies of the Blue Book values with you to court. Be ready with documentation that supports your position, and include that documentation in your Exhibit Book to be admitted into evidence.

Don't try to hide bad facts! If you happen to have some bad facts in your case, such as a DUI, don't try to hide it! Even if you were arrested for a DUI, it's far better that you have a chance to explain it, before the other party uses it to show that you are hiding the truth.

Always treat witnesses respectfully. Never be disrespectful in front of the court to a witness. Be courteous and professional, and always address the witness as Mr. or Ms.

Tell the Judge when you're done. When you're finished asking questions of a witness, tell the court that you're done by saying: *"No further questions for this witness, Your Honor"*.