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Chicago Lawyer Aims To Find The Middle Ground

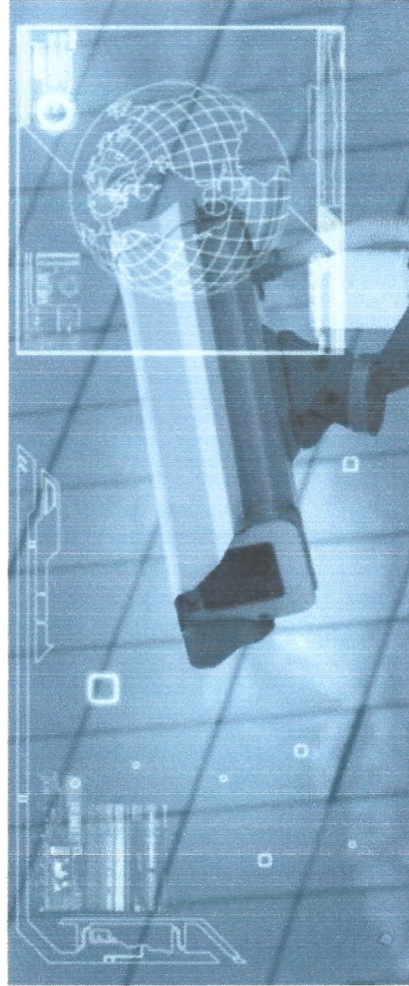
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Not everybody has the last word as a lawyer. Believe it or not, some lawyers prefer appeasing both parties with a middle ground, including Chicago lawyer and business owner Chris-Tia Donaldson.



(Photo Courtesy of Chris-Tia Donaldson)

"I like the negotiation piece where you're trying to find a middle ground," said Donaldson, who currently works on corporate law for a software company. "Litigation tends to be, 'I win, You lose.' Corporate law is more of a cooperative process because you're working with people who may have interests different from yours on the other side of the table. Hopefully you're winning a little bit, but it doesn't have to be at the other party's expense."

The Harvard Law School graduate also holds a bachelor's degree in Economics.

"I combined my background in business with law. Corporate law does acquisitions, security, helping small businesses and large businesses to get started, security and compliance type issues."

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small businesses and large businesses to get started, security and compliance type issues "

But even as a math whiz who believes effective writers have the best analytical skills, Donaldson quickly realized that there was something else she needed to succeed in legal practice mentors

"I didn't know that I needed mentors to be successful in this field. There's a lot of stuff you have to learn to figure out on your own. A mentor can provide guidance, a second set of eyes. You may arrive at the answer, but it may take four or five years to get to that point. A mentor can help you shortcut things and help your career be on a fast track."

While it may be no surprise that Donaldson would encourage lawyers to have their own lawyers for additional assistance, she stepped outside of the legal box to encourage everyday people to become more adept, too.

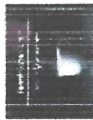
"It's important for people to know how to read contracts. Even if it makes absolutely no sense. Read it and ask questions. Read it and Google what it means. It's important that you read your contract and try to understand it in addition to legal guidance," said Donaldson.

While law school may seem like the logical place to learn the law, hands-on practice is what really fine-tuned Donaldson's skills.

"Even in law school you don't learn everything that you need to know to be a lawyer. You will learn the fundamentals and the basics over time through your career."

Shamonteil L. Vaughn is a professional journalist who has work featured in AXS, Yahoo!, Chicago Defender and Chicago Tribune. She's been an Examiner since 2009 and currently writes about 10 categories on Examiner.com.

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