



SUPREME COURT CHIEF JUSTICE JOHN ROBERTS: THEY WON'T REMEMBER

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Last night, John and I had the good fortune to be invited by our lovely neighbors, Jim and Anna White, to the [James P. White Lecture on Legal Education](#) at the [Indiana University School of Law](#) on the [IUPUI](#) campus in Indianapolis. This lecture series brings in those important to the law and legal profession in the United States as [Professor White](#) was, and still is, instrumental to the formation of legal education around the world. As Robert A. Stein, Executive Director of the ABA commented, “Jim White is more responsible and deserves more credit than any other person for the high quality of legal education in the United States.”

Our distinguished speaker last night was [Supreme Court Chief Justice John G. Roberts, Jr.](#) The crowd was welcoming and warm to him, not only because he is in the midst of important, historic, and selfless public service to the citizens of this country, but also because he grew up in Northwest Indiana. We're a humble state, but we are immensely proud of our own. He is no exception.

The first half hour of our time with him was as students and teacher. He gave us an interesting history lesson of the Supreme Court of the United States, how they interacted with their President at the time, and what decisions were important to their Court. Mr. Chief Justice used Powerpoint to show photos of the different courts. Seeing photos of the Justices, as well as the Presidents during whose term they served, was an interesting addition to his lecture.

The Q & A period was the best part of the night because his personality, thought process, humor and insight came through loud and clear. He is a humble man, but strong in his conviction that Justices are to be umpires, not players on either side of the game.

One point that stuck with me was when he talked about very few people being able to recite the names of the former Chief Justices throughout history. During his charming introduction of Chief Justice Roberts, Indianapolis IU School of Law [Dean Gary R. Roberts](#) even admitted he could not. Justice Roberts modestly, but with humor, told everyone this was a good lesson for a Chief Justice to remember. Everyone laughed, and understood his point with no more explanation needed by him. They won't remember, and that's okay.

This made me think about those of us who do what we do to serve others. No, I would never compare myself in importance to Chief Justice Roberts, but I can compare what he said to all who serve clients as a way of life. It is probably true that our clients' children, employees or successors will not remember our names long after we are gone, but that doesn't matter. It is rare when you and I will have court cases named after us, marketing, business planning or social media applications that carry our names, or buildings that bear our name so that we might be fondly remembered. This does not matter at all. They won't remember, and that's okay.

Why doesn't this matter?

Because what is most important is what we actually do for our clients at the very moment we are doing it, without lofty goals of making a name for ourselves, or looking forward to adulation because of important people noticing what we did *after* the fact.

What matters most is that our clients understand, without a shadow of a doubt, that we are completely present for them, that we care passionately about their business, what happens to them, that we are there to protect them, understand them, and that we have their best interest at heart when we are with them, and even when we are not.

We owe them....

- We owe it to our clients to treat them as the special, important human beings they are, without the expectation of being recognized by them as being somehow special because of our credentials, reputation, our degree, who we know, or the size of our firm or client list.
- We owe it to them to turn our phones off when we're together.
- We owe it to them to help them understand what is going on at every stage of our relationship, even when we have no important news to tell.
- We owe it to them to give them news, whether good or not-so-good, in a timely manner.
- We owe it to them to say thank you to them whenever possible.
- We owe it to them to give them the feeling that we have their backs, that they can trust us to watch over them to the best of our ability.

I'd like to thank Chief Justice Roberts for his slight, subtle bit of humor about *not* being remembered last night, and for reminding, and inspiring, me to share these thoughts with you.

Do you have examples to add to my list that show how we can be memorable to our clients at the moment we are serving them? If so, please add them here:

<http://www.myrlandmarketing.com/2010/04/chief-justice-john-roberts-they-wont-remember/>



Nancy Myrland, President, Myrland Marketing, is a Social Media Consultant, Speaker and Trainer, as well as a Professional Marketing Advisor. She works with law firms and their clients to help them grow by strengthening their relationships with their clients through the understanding and *strategic* use of Social Media. She started Myrland Marketing in 2002, and has over 20 years of strategic marketing, management and sales experience.

Nancy has spent a great deal of time immersing herself in the worlds of New, or Social, Media and Traditional Marketing, and understands how to wisely and efficiently blend the two areas to help you accomplish your goals.

Nancy is innovative, passionate, loyal, strategic, wise, and has a depth of knowledge to share with her clients that comes from working in sales/business development, in management and marketing in corporate America with Time Warner and L. M. Berry, and in law firms and other professional services firms.

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