



## Google Voice

by Charley Gee  
YLS Futures Committee



Attorneys of all generations seem to be tethered to their cell phones more than any other device. An attorney can use a smartphone as a word processor, do legal research, and to dictate memos. Using Google Voice ([www.google.com/voice](http://www.google.com/voice)) in conjunction with a smartphone can also provide a lawyer with a powerful tool to organize and preserve cell phone communications.

Google Voice is a service from Google that provides a user with a telephone number, voicemail, conference calling, and text messaging service. It is accessible from any computer with access to the Internet, or from a cellphone or tablet.

The best feature of Google Voice is its price: free. Using your Google account, just sign up, select the number you want from a list of available numbers, and verify and connect your cell phone to the account.

One of Google Voice's key features is the almost instant transcription of voicemails. The transcriptions are then sent to the user as an email and, if they choose, a text message. Voicemails are archived on the Google Voice system until the user deletes them.

Google Voice also archives text messages sent to and from the account. I often

communicate with my clients via text message. Communicating in this manner is fast, efficient, and it is how a lot of younger clients prefer to communicate. However, communicating by text message presents the concern that messages back and forth are not preserved in any secure manner and would be lost if my phone was lost or damaged (and given my fishing habit and general Oregon weather this is a real possibility). Using Google Voice, every text message becomes a date and time-stamped email which can be preserved through case management software.

Another nice feature is the ability to access your voicemails and make calls without cell service. Believe it or not there are still some areas of the state that have no cell phone service. Google Voice users can make and receive calls and text messages, as well as fetch their voicemail, over the internet instead of a cell tower signal. I've accessed my voicemail and text messages from remote locations around the state just by finding a Wi-Fi hotspot.

Google Voice users can set up their accounts so that a call to the Google-provided number is routed to wherever you want your calls. Your mobile or desk phone is a likely destination if you're available. For times when you're not available, you can easily route calls to an assistant.

Google Voice is a great option for attorneys just starting a firm (especially since it is free) or for those of us who want to have greater connectivity and control over our cell phone communications. The features above are only a few of the benefits of integrating the service into your practice.

## Moving Toward a Sustainable Future The Earth Leadership Seminar for Lawyers

by Amanda Loupin-Bartlett



Imagine you are told that a prospective client will pay your expert billing rate for you to work full-time for that client for a period of five years. Your only task is to take actions that are in the best interest of that client. Such a proposition sounds tempting, as this will enable you to devote your legal skills fully to the project with no distractions to get in the way. Now imagine that you are told that this prospective client is a six-year

old child in the year 2063. Do you take the client? How do you help him or her?

This thought-provoking scenario is just one of many raised in the Earth Leadership Seminar for Lawyers. Sponsored by the Oregon Lawyers for a Sustainable Future (a project of the Center for Earth Leadership), the seminars are offered several times a year, with each seminar group being comprised of 12-15 lawyers from a variety of backgrounds. A typical seminar spans four lunchtime sessions and covers a range of topics related to how lawyers and the legal profession might advance the societal goal of sustainability, considering the lay of the land today.

The sessions are led by Dick Roy, a former corporate lawyer who left private practice in 1993 to volunteer full-time with his wife Jeanne in the Northwest sustainability movement. I had

the pleasure of meeting Dick a few months ago on my very first day at work as an attorney. I was inspired by his energy and selfless dedication to social issues, and so when he asked me to participate in his fall Earth Leadership seminar, I jumped at the chance.

After completing the seminar, I can safely say that this was one of the best decisions I have made as a new attorney. Especially when you're just starting out, I think it is easy to sometimes feel overwhelmed and insignificant. The seminar, however, really helped to not only provide a great education on sustainability, but also to put things into perspective. It was truly refreshing and empowering to be able to strategize with such a diverse group of professionals about what we as lawyers can do to stimulate change.

For all you young lawyers out there looking for a way to really make a difference in the world (and aren't we all?), I implore you to reach out to the Center for Earth Leadership ([info@earthleaders.org](mailto:info@earthleaders.org) or 503.227.2315) and get involved. Trust me, that child from 2063 will thank you.

## Ask the Associate

Dear Awesome Associate,

*Help! Now that I passed the bar and finally landed a job, my 90-day review is coming up and I have no idea how to prepare.*

*Lost After 76 Days In*

Dear Lost:

The dreaded 90-day review is that time in every associate's life when his or her worst fears are going to be confirmed and all of the partners are going to tell him or her that he or she has no future practicing law. I am kidding of course, but it sure feels like that. The truth of the matter is that most people feel like they have no idea what they are doing in those first 90 days, so you are not alone. Here are some handy tips that helped me get through that first review:

- Talk to other associates in the firm about their experiences. The more you know about

the process going in, the less scary the process will be.

- Make a list of things you would like to talk about. Don't expect the partners to do all of the talking and to steer the entire conversation. You should be prepared to talk about things that are important to you.
- Highlight some accomplishments *and* highlight areas in need of improvement. Be specific.
- Offer solutions. If a partner mentions that something appears to be a weakness or needs work, don't get defensive. Your review is the perfect place to talk out problems with the partners and to come up with a solution that works for everyone.
- Set goals. Once you have survived the first 90 days, you need to show the partners

that you really do want to keep improving. Most times you will not have another review until the end of the year so set goals that are attainable within that timeframe.

Remember, you were hired by the firm because they liked you and thought that you could add value to their law practice. It is always hard to go into a situation such as a review when you feel like you still don't know anything; your partners were in that same boat many years ago. Just because you weren't perfect in those first 90 days doesn't mean your partners are going to spend the entire time yelling at you and it doesn't mean you are not cut out to be a lawyer. Go into the review prepared and you will see that it really isn't all that scary.

Yours truly,  
Awesome Associate

Send your questions to *Awesome Associate* at [mba@mbabar.org](mailto:mba@mbabar.org).

## YLS Drop-In Social

On January 16, the MBA Young Lawyers Section Membership Committee and Lewis & Clark Law School hosted a drop-in social for students and YLS members at Punch Bowl Social. Thank you to Lewis & Clark Law School for supporting the event!

NEXT DROP-IN SOCIAL IS THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20TH - MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

