

## Why Clients Shouldn't Hire a Young Attorney: Board Certified is Best

Practice makes perfect. That's the rule of thumb for almost every profession one can find themselves in. However, practicing a skill should never interfere with the ability to provide a successful outcome for a client. It's this principle that guides the idea that allowing a younger, or even a newly established lawyer to represent a case as Lead Attorney may not be the best choice for a favorable outcome, no matter how confident the young attorney is in their ability to try the case.

That's never to imply that young lawyers don't deserve a chance, because becoming an attorney is a profession that requires a level of dedication that not many can achieve. There are the chosen few that have proven to be highly valuable to clients straight out of law school. Sagi Shaked, founder of the Shaked Law Firm achieved his first multimillion dollar verdict for a client at the young age of 28 years old. This achievement made Mr. Shaked one of the only lawyers in the country to have ever reached this milestone so early on in his career.

These rare instances of success account for the minute amount of young attorneys that go on to achieve board certification as they advance through the ranks to become senior attorneys. These attorneys achieve great success when advancing to partner positions and ultimately founding their own firms where they take point on every case that comes through their doors. That's what separates this 1% of lawyers from their sea of peers who never sought board certification. Board certified trial lawyers have honed their skills over a period of many years by learning from the senior attorneys around them. These are the attorneys who can be trusted to take point on cases while the lead attorney oversees the process in a supervisory capacity.

It should be noted that a client should never walk away from a firm simply because the lead attorney brings in a younger lawyer to assist on their case. This lawyer is learning, honing his or her skills, and could be one of the few board certified lawyers to expertly try cases in the coming years.

### Emphasis on significance

So why all the significance placed on "board certification" on the Shaked Law Blog? The answer is simple: when we think of "board certified", what comes to mind is someone who established in their field of practice; the best at what they do: surgeons, doctors, and other professionals that are entrusted with the lives and livelihoods of the public. "Board certification" differentiates that professional from their peers.

One would never allow a surgeon who isn't board certified to operate on them, so the same principle must apply to an attorney—never trust an attorney who isn't board certified to try a complicated case. Lawyers, much like doctors who are board certified, have a higher level of satisfied patients (or clients) than those who chose not to "take their boards".

## Not entirely equal

Unfortunately, one of the main issues a client will face when retaining an attorney after an accident that left them in need of representation is the qualifications that lawyer holds as opposed to another lawyer, or another firm entirely. While the profession of law itself is a prestigious and daunting one for those who are newly established in the field, there is far more that goes into the making of a great lawyer than law school and the bar exam.

When it comes to clients, it's difficult to narrow down what a lawyer does to one specialty. When we think of an attorney, the idea is in broad strokes. An attorney is probably someone we might hire to "sue" someone who has "wronged us". The word "lawsuit" and the phrase "I'm going to sue you" gets thrown around in spades, but there is far more pressing issues that attorneys deal with on a daily basis. Litigation is not simply a matter of the courtroom. Litigation requires hundreds of hours of discovery, paperwork, motions, consultations, conferences and can be exacting work on a young lawyer who may not have a full understanding of what they signed up for.

An attorney with the goal of board certification down the road knows that the long hours and mountains of paperwork will be worth the hundreds if not thousands of clients they'll achieve successful outcomes on behalf of over the course of their career.

## A personal choice

The choice to become board certified is one that requires a lawyer to put in the dedication, time, and commitment to their profession above and beyond what's already expected of them. A high standard of practice and maintaining favorable client outcomes are only some of what factors into a highly qualified attorney. To become board certified, those who hold such certification underwent rigorous screening of their credentials.

These credentials can include but are not limited to:

- **Thoroughly documented experience:** What is the attorneys success rate for favorable outcomes for their clients?
- **Judicial and peer acquired references:** what do other attorneys and those in the law-world think of the attorney's ethics and moral character?
- A written exam is taken
- Any disciplinary action taken upon the attorney must be promptly reported for a thorough review of such actions; if the lawyer has been written up for conduct or any other violations that pertains to their ethics, this may disqualify them from becoming board certified until a later date or indefinitely.

## Maintaining certification

Remaining board certified is of equal importance to first becoming board certified. Maintaining board certification means the lawyer has maintained the high standards set forth for them and consistently continues to excel at the highest level within their chosen field of practice.

*This is a follow-up in our Board Certification Series. Read: "The Board Certified Difference (Why What's Hanging on Your Attorney's Wall Matters!)"*

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