

Popular Threads on Solosez

Law Offices of, Attorney at Law, or Esq.?

I am trying to decide which of these to put on my business card. I really like Esq. as that sets a tone of personal warrior. The downside is that it is not as good for a logo as the other two. Law Offices Of also seems good as it sets a tone of stability and resources but then if you are a solo it seems sort of presumptuous. Attorney At Law sounds too mild for a litigator, like maybe better for counseling type practices.

What do you guys think and has anyone written something on this?

Thanks,

Steven B. Pollack, Esq. Steven B. Pollack, Attorney at Law Law Offices Of Steven B. Pollack

None of these are actually true until Nov. 9.

Here's a related question: if I want to change the name of my firm (not now, but eventually) -- how do I do that? Do I need a new d.b.a. Anything else to consider? (Besides the obvious -- all new marketing materials.)

I know I have to inform the court on all cases -- do I also have to inform all opposing counsel?

Who else needs to know?

Amy Kleinpeter, Pasadena, California

Personally I prefer "Law Office of John Doe" (not "offices") because it sounds more official and is IMO more appropriate if there is more than just the attorney at the firm. "Esq" always make me think of Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure "Bill S. Preston, Esq." and "Ted Theodore Logan".

Amy (mere Associate of a 3-lawyer firm) Ondos

My understanding is that "Esq." is something of an honorific, appropriate for addressing another attorney but not used to refer to oneself.

I like "Attorney at Law" and don't find it at all mild, but not particularly aggressive, either. It's juuust right. Goldilocks, Attorney at Law.

Anne Sherry

I am by myself. I use my name, with the word "Attorney" after it. The



Subscribe to Solosez

First Name

Last Name

E-mail Address

Submit (input element)



Unsubscribe from Solosez

E-mail Address

Submit (input element)



Books

Click on the book for more info



only problem I have run into is that the concept seems to be too simple for others; they always want to add "Attorney at Law" or "Esq." I continue to hold the line with my simple description, which is quite enough and accurate.

Elizabeth Eagleson

I like "Attorney at Law" for a solo. "Law Offices" sounds pretentious, unless you actually have more than one office.

IMO, YMMV, ASDA.

Dave Markowitz, KB3MNK

A corollary question:

Is it "counselor" or "counsellor"? Following the practice of my old NYC firm, I've always used the 2L version. Should I revert to 1L?

Edward R. Wiest, Boston, Massachusetts

No. You are a Counsellor at Law. According to my bar certificates, Massachusetts (where you are) and New York use two L's. Illinois and Missouri use one.

Norman R. Solberg, Osaka, Japan

A rule of thumb - avoid "Barrister" or "Counsellor."

Gerald Gilliard

While I've used "Esq." after my name, just to try it on for size, now that I've come to my senses, "Esq." connotes a guy clad in a finely tailored suit and shod in cordovan tasseled loafers. Or at least silk stockings. Tom Wolfe is an Esq. kinda guy. Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas' Dr. Gonzo, who was actually Oscar Zeta Acosta, wasn't. Esq. is just too fancy-pants.

What's wrong with plain ol' "Lawyer?"

jennifer rose, Mexico

"Attorney at Law" has the charm of being a simple statement of the fact.

I do not want to do business with an office, nor do I welcome memos from a Desk.

John Page

I understand that the female equivalent of Esquire is Dame. Frankly, I can

get behind that title. Again, it probably would seem pretty pretentious, though.

Lesley Cummings Gannon

What is wrong with "Legal Beagle"?

Lew Wiener

Does "Loophole Louie, Esq." sound too pretentious?

Lew Wiener

Although, if you work from home, a memo "From the bedroom of ___" sets a certain tone. LOL

Seriously, I guess i'm schizophrenic about it. My business cards, letterhead and sign say 'attorney at law', I sign letters and emails as Esq. as you see here. (OK, maybe it is pompous and pretentious but that is the common usage up here in pretentious Vermont), I have used Law Office of Michael D. Caccavo on my website and brochures. Hmm, maybe i should revisit all that. I'll put it on my list.

Michael D. Caccavo, Barre, Vermont

I don't think it's pretentious at all. Kinda brings up the idea of a lawyer, trotting out to the green wearing long socks, short pants with a cricket bat under his arm. Perhaps shouting "Hellooo, chaps, what say we start the game, what?"

Dick O'Connor

Why should "at law" be appended to attorney? If you're an attorney and you're not at the law, then what the devil are you up to?

M.E. Hendrickson, Alexandria, Virginia

Because technically, an "attorney" can be merely someone who is an agent or someone authorized to act for another. See Black's Law Dictionary.

Michael A. Blake, Milford, Connecticut

Attorneys at fact are usually not attorneys but lay folks empowered to carry out some legal task. The term "at law" after attorney now appears (as opposed to some 500 years ago in the common law courts of England) utterly superfluous as it's commonly used here in the United States.

M.E. Hendrickson, Alexandria, Virginia

I believe Esquire is an honorary title that is used by others about you. It's not considered good etiquette to use it when referring to yourself. It is however, polite to use it when referring to another lawyer. Kinda like calling a judge "The Honorable, etc. etc."

This day and age, I imagine half your clients wouldn't understand what it means anyway. They'd think it means you're an East Coast trust-fund baby... or at least vaguely British...

Seth Rogers, Longmont, Colorado

Getting to carry a sword around would be a nice perk.

Perhaps a bit too ostentatious though...

Seth Rogers

Except on formal occasions. They do come in handy for slicing sheet cakes at receptions, and similar functions.

Mike Riddle

Does it make a difference for Law Office of Steven B. Pollack if I dont have an office besides a de facto home office? Does that violate truth in advertising?

Steven B. Pollack

Using the full "attorney at law" helps when people call in and ask about being appointed a power of attorney or "attorney in fact."

Letterhead, business cards and such are generally formal, and carry the title granted by your Supreme Court. Aggressive folk can be "barrister and counselor" or "counsellor" if they want.

In conversation sometimes I am a lawyer, sometimes an attorney, depends on the audience. I regularly get a laugh at myself after I note what term I used. Talking to someone in a suit or business attire, I am usually an attorney, but blue jeans gets lawyer most of the time.

Ted A. Waggoner, Rochester, Indiana

Be careful using "offices" (plural) in your firm name. Some state ethics committees have ruled that you cannot use "offices" unless you have more than one office, in different geographic locations. Similarly, you cannot include "and Associates" in your name unless you have more than one attorney.

I address correspondence to other attorneys as "Esq." but have never used

it to refer to myself. To me, it sounds a bit pompous.

I started out with Law Office of Neal A. Kennedy and later changed it to Kennedy Law Office (now it is Kennedy Law Office PLLC). My business cards have "Attorney at Law" under my name.

Neal A. Kennedy, Marble Falls, Texas

Well you could be an Attorney in Fact. Which in this jurisdiction is now called an agent. You get that from having a Power of Attorney over someone's affairs. Most non lawyers say they are so and so power of attorney. If the are the question then is what part of their body did the notary impress to the notary seal.

John Davidson

My first trial in federal court, N. Dist. of Oklahoma in Tulsa (I don't remember the judges name but I formed the opinion that he was senile), I remember a Tulsa lawyer warning. me--"Above all, do NOT wear tasseled loafers at trial in front of judge _____. You'll lose for sure."

Dick O'Connor

That whole thing about the use of "law offices" being illegal if you don't have at least one other office in a different location seems odd. If I have an office in which I transact business, and there is another office which may or may not be occupied, then I have Law OFFICES, plural, more than one.

Dick O'Connor

Language changes in response to vernacular usage. For example, Dante was the first writer (that I know of anyway) to use Italian instead of Latin in writing "Il Paradiso." Although he was criticized by the academic writing community for doing so, Dante is regarded as the father of modern Italian.

Likewise, I think the old English usage of the title "Esquire" (or Esq.) is not particularly relevant to the current legal world which seems to be shorthand for lawyer. I see legal documents and letters, business cards, etc, from women using Esq. all the time. A good part of American society instantly recognizes that the person using the title is a lawyer

Blessings on you, my child: I hereby confer upon you the title of Esquire. I'd tap you on the shoulder with my sword but COTE took it away from me.

Dick O'Connor

Who's Impunity? Is he your law partner? I've never met him. Anyway--

most of the things we worry about (such as the use of Esq. referring to yourself or other lawyers) are soon forgotten by the world, if not by ourselves.

Dick O'Connor

Better than "Mr. Dewey Cheatem, Inmate #13209" or "Cell Block D"

David Tarvin, Elkhorn, Nebraska

I use "Law Talkin' Guy"

Daniel X. Nguyen

This topic came up before. If you Google "female equivalent of esquire," you'll see that the Solosez archives are the first entry. I believe that the term "Dame" applies to the spouse of a Knight. The term "Goodwife" is often connected with the "Esquire" designation. However, it appears that even in England in the 1600's there was some disagreement.

Bruce L. Dorner, Londonderry, New Hampshire

I haven't picked up on the entire thread, only the beginning and a couple in the middle. I am sure someone has written about the marketing and other reasons for using various titles with your name. I know a very successful and well known trial lawyer who hated the words, "attorney at law," and so under his name on his business card he used the word, "Lawyer." I practice mostly on my own in two states and use the title "Law Offices of." Under my name on my business card I do say "Attorney at Law." I don't really think just the word "Lawyer," conveys the right image to clients, but after all, I am not a trial lawyer.

Regards,

Robert A. Schrage Westport, Connecticut and Los Angeles, California

While on the thread of "Law Offices" vs. "Attorney" or "Esq." what's the firm's opinion on a woman using Esq? The term Esquire originally meant "gentleman" and was exclusively used for men. Any thoughts on this?

Roxanna Kaz, Encino, California

After reading of some of the hunting and bourbon drinking, etc. of some of the ladies on the list I think they may more appropriately use the masculine than I.

Roger Traversa

You're quite right, language changes with usage. Thanks for the "tap". At last I can use Esq. with impunity.

Roxanna Kaz, Encino, California

My business card has the name of my law firm in the upper left corner, along with address: Law Office of Russell D. Gray, PC. In the center of the card, in large bold letters, it says my name. Below my name in smaller italicized letters it says "Attorney and Counselor at Law".

While most of my practice is litigation, I think clients like the "counselor" part - when they ask what it means I tell them I can counsel them in legal matters (i.e., not just fight for them in court). Seems to make them happy.

I don't really care for Esq., brings back too many memories of Saturday morning cartoons: Bugs Bunny, Esq.

Russ Gray, Salt Lake City, Utah

[Back to Popular Threads](#)