

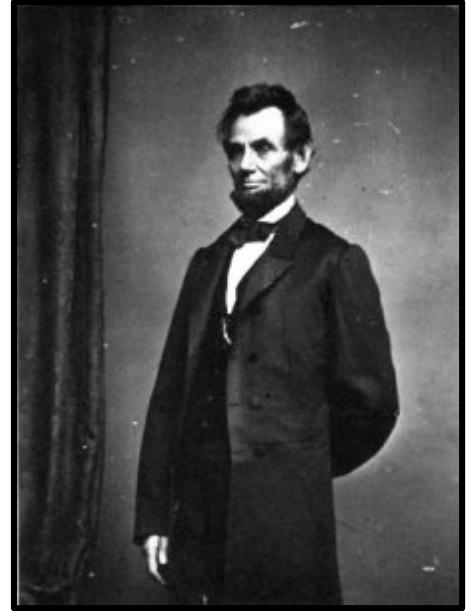
Lincoln's Unique Practice of Law

A study of the life of Abraham Lincoln reveals much about his character, his beliefs, and his integrity. Such understanding about the man explains why he became perhaps the greatest president the United States has had.

Consider, for example, Lincoln's practice of law.

Lincoln had a rather unique approach in trying a case when he was a practicing attorney. He went to great lengths to learn everything he could about what the attorney for "the other side" would say and the evidence he would present.

Then, in his arguments, Lincoln would do a superb job of presenting the case from his opponent's side of the table. He was complimentary without being condescending. He gave the factual side from the other person's perspective. He even brought their feelings and their beliefs into play. On occasion, the attorney for the other side would make the observation that Lincoln had presented the opposition's case better than he could have.



Perhaps you wonder why Lincoln would take such an approach. First, he wanted to be fair. Second, he wanted to win the case if he believed his client was right.

Needless to say, Lincoln then presented his own side with more fervor, facts, and reasons why his side was the right side. By using this procedure, Lincoln completely robbed the opposition of anything to say and built his own case in a stronger manner. That's one reason Lincoln won so many cases.

He also wove in more humor and homespun stories when he presented his case. Most people, including jurors, like and trust those who give them cause to smile and who bring homespun logic to the table.

What Lincoln did was simple. He practiced great human relations and used his abundant common sense. He wanted right to prevail and when he presented his case, as a general rule, the right side did win.

What are some lessons we can take away from Lincoln's theory and method? There are several, including:

1. Understand your competitor – how he or she thinks and style of performance, including an assessment of one's strengths and weaknesses. Such an advantage is not gained by a casual review of the opponent, but by a thorough and diligent analysis.

2. Be prepared. Being smart and working hard have their rewards.
3. Seek to know and do what is right, and be aggressive in its pursuit.
4. Keep it simple. There is a reason that most U.S. newspaper writing is gauged in readability at the 11th grade level. And we should keep our speech in short, easily understood language.

Remember, Life Care and Century Park are companies built on relationships. As with Lincoln, let's practice good HR and use our common sense.

– Beecher Hunter