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**Cynthia Sharp, Esquire**  
Business Development Expert

# INTERVIEW OF CYNTHIA SHARP

by Melanie Bragg

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Interview of Cynthia Sharp

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Melanie Bragg

**1. When did you first realize that you wanted to write a book, and why did you choose the topic of financial planning for lawyers?**

By way of background, I sold my practice and left the firm at the end of 2009 in order to devote myself to a full-time career as a professional speaker, author, and attorney business coach. As a practicing attorney, I spoke and wrote extensively in my area of expertise and absolutely loved speaking and writing. However, I had not yet written a book. Because my practice area was estates and elder law, I learned a great deal about the financial planning process. I wanted to capture the knowledge while still fresh in my mind and thus chose that particular topic. Significant research was of course required.

**2. Why did you decide to submit a proposal to the ABA as opposed to another publisher? Did you consider self-publishing?**

I did consider options other than ABA Book Publishing. However, my primary audience is the legal world. The ABA's extensive resources, prestige, and omnipresence in the legal world were the dispositive factor in making my choice. It has been (and continues to be) a pleasure to work with ABA staff and other members of the Solo, Small Firm & General Practice Division's Book Publications Board.

**3. Tell me about the board of advisors that you assembled.**

My goal in writing *The Lawyer's Guide to Financial Planning* was to create a reference and resource that can be used by attorneys at any stage of their financial lives. From the outset, I realized that professionals with strong and specialized expertise could add to the breadth and depth of the book. I chose 12 experts from various backgrounds to review and comment upon portions of the manuscript before finalization. Every single advisor improved the quality of the final product, and for that I am grateful.

By the way, I wrote in the acknowledgements the following passage: "Like all who venture into the dangerous territory of writing an acknowledgement, I fear that I have inadvertently omitted someone who contributed specifically to the book and extend my apologies in advance." Little did I know that such an apology would be necessary, but it is. I left out the name of my good friend,

Joseph Marovich of Marovich Business Institute, who painstakingly parsed through the chapter on real estate.

**4. Do you have suggestions for attorneys who want to write a book?**

Don't delay. The first step is to draft and submit a proposal, which will help clarify your topic. Although the research and writing process is labor intensive, the investment is invaluable. You will be a more knowledgeable lawyer, gain enhanced professional standing, and naturally become branded as the expert in your given field. Also, your family will be really, really proud. And so will you. And of course, there are royalties.

**5. Can you give an example as to how *Financial Planning* could benefit an attorney in the initial stages of putting together a financial plan?**

One perplexing issue for anyone to address at the outset is whether or not to use a financial advisor. An entire section is devoted to analyzing the pros and cons of the do-it-yourself option, clarifying the meaning of advisors' credentials and compensation structures, as well as providing a list of questions to ask a prospective financial advisor.

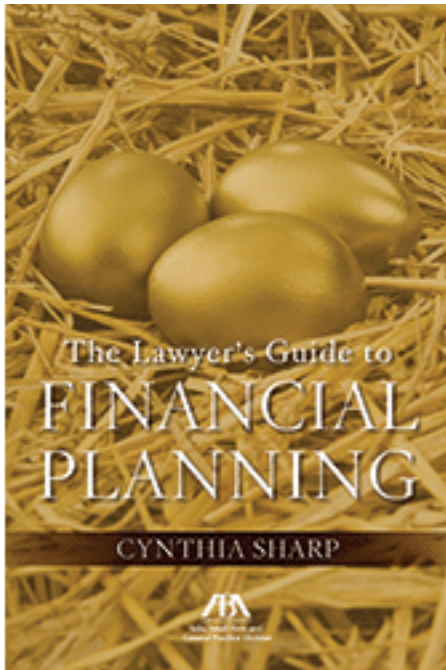
Throughout the book, I provide references to other resources so that readers who want to go deeper into a topic will have easy access.

**6. Do you have a work in progress now?**

I am working on a chapter on the topic of *Low Cost/No Cost Attorney Marketing* for an upcoming GPSolo release edited by Jennifer J. Rose entitled *How to Capture and Keep Clients: Marketing Strategies for Lawyers*, second edition. I recently submitted a chapter on *Selling a Niche Law Practice* for publication in the ABA book *The Lawyer's Guide to Buying, Selling, Merging, and Closing a Law Practice*, second edition. Because a great deal of my consulting work now involves attorney branding and business development strategies, I am entertaining the idea of developing a written work on the topic.

**7. What do you do when you are not writing or speaking?**

I enjoy cooking meals with my boyfriend, doing yoga, reading fiction as well as nonfiction and training my dog Rocky to do cute tricks.



### **Order *The Lawyer's Guide to Financial Planning***

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