The image features a hand holding a stack of books, with a blue background and a decorative pattern. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

The Insider's Guide to the Bar

Jo Delahunty QC
Professor of Law, Gresham College



Getting a foot in the door

- ▶ **The Basics:**
 - ▶ The Academic component of Bar training: law degree OR degree + GDL
 - ▶ Joining an Inn
 - ▶ The Vocational component of Bar training: more options available now!
 - ▶ Pupillage/ the work based learning component of Bar training: 6 months shadowing and 6 months doing it for yourself!

The four Inns of Court

The Inns of Court are the only institutions in the country with the power to call a barrister to the Bar.

The
Honourable
Society of
**Lincoln's
Inn**
The Honourable
Society of
Inner Temple



The Honourable
Society of
**Middle
Temple**

The
Honourable
Society of
Gray's Inn

The four Inns of Court

- ▶ A barrister must join one of four Inns of Court. Membership is for life.
- ▶ The Inns of Court provide barristers with training, networking and careers advice. They also offer financial help in the form of scholarships to students.
- ▶ Before being “called to the Bar” a barrister must complete 12 qualifying sessions at their respective Inn of Court. This includes social occasions like formal dinners and music evenings or educational events such as lectures, debates, mock trials (called “moots”) and training weekends.



Being ‘called to the Bar’

- ▶ After having completed a qualifying law degree, a barrister then undertakes the Bar Professional Training Course (BPTC). Upon successful completion, a barrister is “called to the Bar.”
- ▶ After having been “called to the Bar”, a barrister completes pupillage which usually takes place in chambers. Pupillage involves shadowing a barrister before getting involved in the practical work of chambers, and attending court as a practising advocate.



Funding the academic and vocational stages

- ▶ The GDL and Bar Course are expensive.
- ▶ Scholarships are available for both components from the Inns of Court.
- ▶ The new 2-part course of the Bar Course (the Vocational stage) has significantly reduced the cost AND means most of the cost is incurred if you meet the requirements to progress to Part 2 of the course.
- ▶ Part 1: £1575 (+ £150 UK) Part 2: £11,520 (+£295)

“The scholarship covered all of my BPTC course fees and there was also a little money left over to cover my dining sessions [...] I would never have been able to afford to pursue a career at the Bar without the scholarship from Inner Temple. It was a huge encouragement and felt like a sign of endorsement from Inner Temple that I was on the right path.” (Rehana Popal, Social Mobility Advocate)

Pupillage: the statistics

▶ THE HARD FACTS:

- ▶ BPTC enrolments 2017/18: 1,624
- ▶ Pupillages 2020/21: 435
- ▶ Pupillage applicants annually: 3,000
- ▶ Terrifying but a large proportion don't intend to practice in the UK

Pupillage: the application process

- ▶ Can you argue your own cause?
- ▶ What are you seeking to showcase?
- ▶ Have you done so economically with words and evidentially with facts?
- ▶ Can you be your own advocate?

Useful resources:

- ▶ The web, individuals step in and up
- ▶ Pupillage and How to Get It (www.pupillageandhowtogetit.com)
- ▶ Inns of Court resources: advice sessions, podcasts, mentorship programmes,

Pupillage: Application Forms

Situation

Action

Outcome

THINK AHEAD!



What does it take to get pupillage?

- ▶ Many people say that getting pupillage requires luck.
- ▶ *That's not the whole story.*
- ▶ It starts with having the basics on your CV, *and*
- ▶ It is about drafting an excellent application form, *and*
- ▶ It is about presenting yourself in the best possible light, *and*
- ▶ It is about being a good advocate under pressure, *and*
- ▶ It is about networking at the Bar and accessing the help and mentoring available, *and*
- ▶ It is about knowing your subject and demonstrating that when it matters, *and*
- ▶ It is about believing that you are going to succeed, *and*
- ▶ It is about working very, very, very hard.
- ▶ **After you've done all this, then it's about luck.**

Competencies

So how do you go about assessing what you've got on your CV? Competencies.

Here's a short list of competencies for the Bar:

- ▶ Oral advocacy
- ▶ Written advocacy
- ▶ Client management
- ▶ Attention to detail
- ▶ Thinking on your feet
- ▶ Working under pressure
- ▶ Commercial awareness
- ▶ Self-motivation/drive
- ▶ Leadership skills
- ▶ Research skills

Pupillage: Preparation for Interview



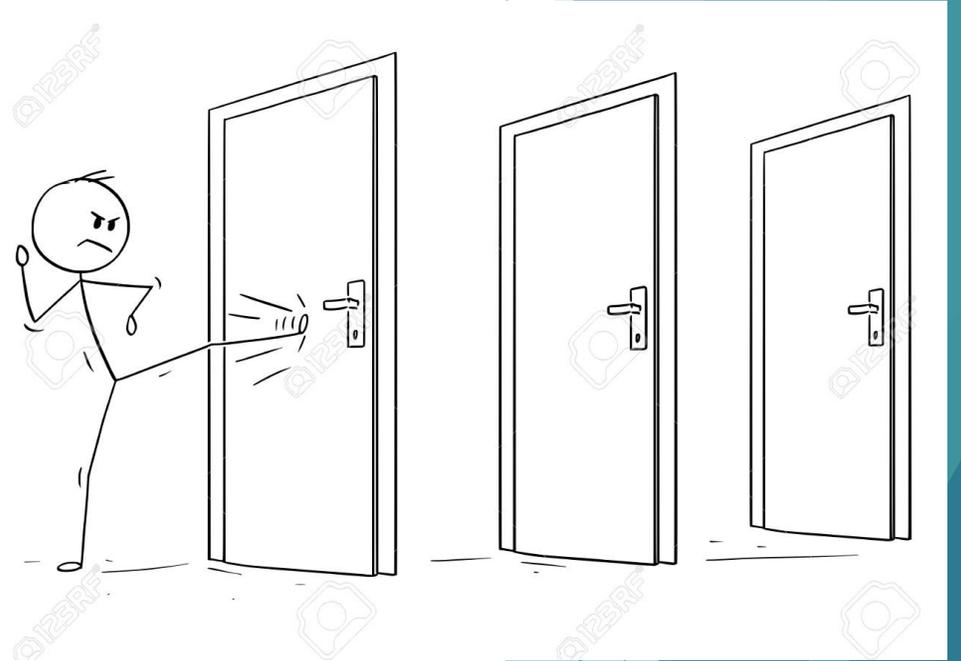
- ▶ Google your chambers
- ▶ Track the careers of the juniors
- ▶ Check out the careers of the interviewers
- ▶ Check the news for law angles
- ▶ Elaborate? don't fabricate
- ▶ Work out what your star selling point is, make it adaptable so you can run it over a number of types of questions
- ▶ Practice out loud

Pupillage: Can you cope with failure? Do you want it enough?

“My most important piece of advice on this topic is that you must keep going. You might be rejected from your very favourite set without being invited to interview, or you might get all the way to the final hurdle, only to get knocked back.

This happens, but nevertheless you must keep going, must hold on to whatever it is that has kept you going up to this point - not least because, if you do succeed, then rejection and disappointment are going to be an inevitable part of your career. You are going to have to deal with losing legal arguments, losing trials, and being sacked by clients. Rejection is in many ways an integral part of this profession.”

General Reflections on rejection from a criminal pupil, taken from <https://pupillageandhowtogetit.com/final-thoughts/how-to-handle-rejection/>





Carving out a Career: Outside Court

- ▶ What worked for me: making link with junior sols. As their career goes up so does yours!
- ▶ Never make assumptions about the legal execs or clerks with you at court
- ▶ The usher and judges clerk is your ally (if you make them one)
- ▶ Be there first
- ▶ You are on show to future briefers and opponents



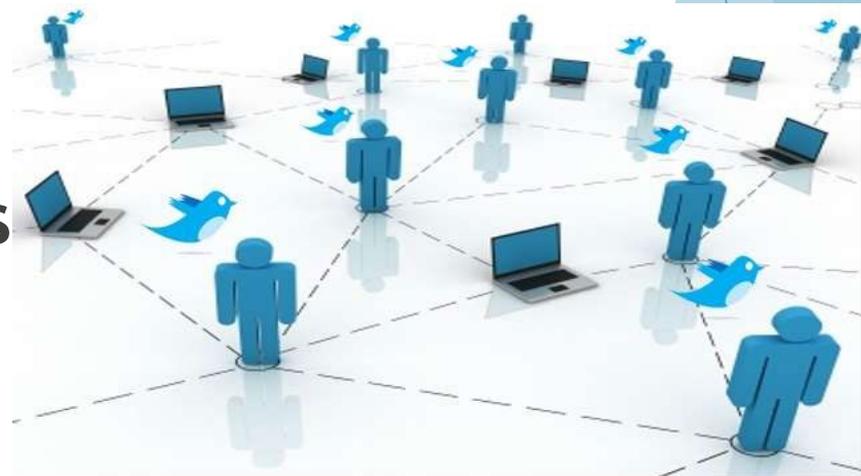
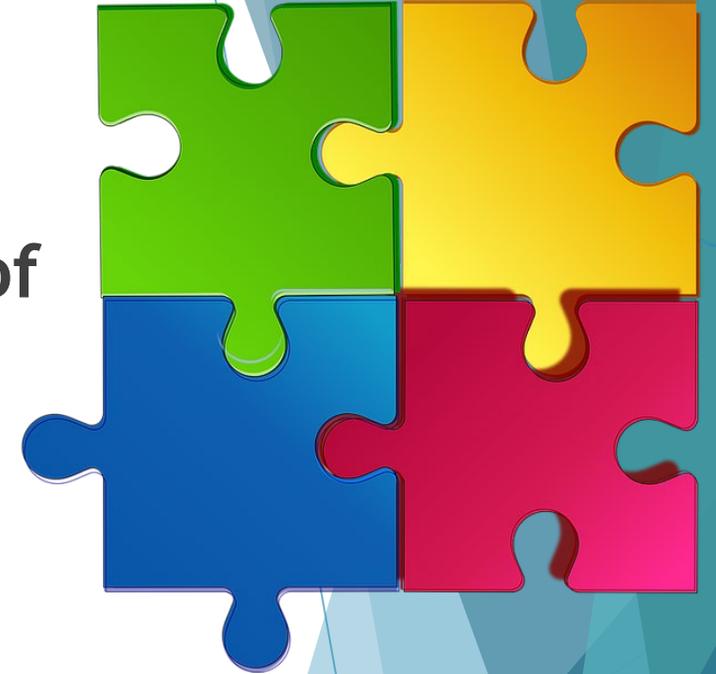


Carving out a Career: Outside Court

- A reputation is hard to acquire, easy to lose.
- Keep your temper and personal baggage out of court and the corridor
- If you have said you can do something; keep the deadline or let the recipients know before the deadline has been and gone that you can't do it.
- Don't dump the problem
- Don't over commit
- Remember your role
- Make and keep boundaries

Carving out a Career: Outside Court

- ▶ In chambers: ask for practice meetings with your clerks and give them advanced notice of what you want to discuss
- ▶ Out of court networking;
- ▶ Facebook
- ▶ Social media: Twitter
- ▶ LinkedIn
- ▶ ‘Public duties’ recorder, tribunals
- ▶ Silk?



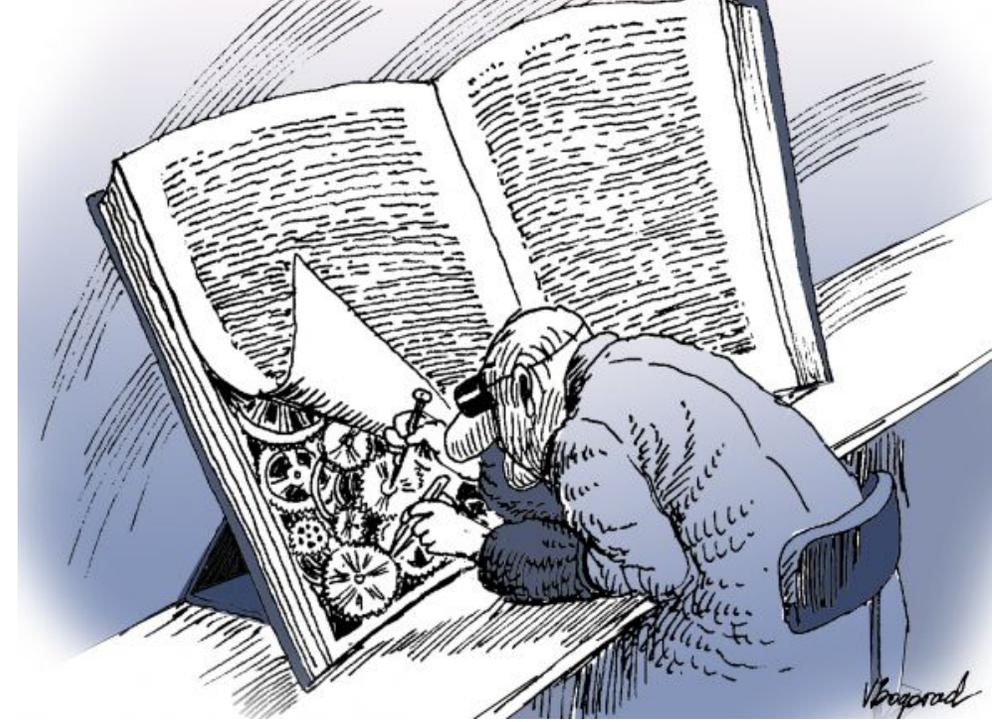
Carving out a Career: In Court

- ▶ Think of your case as your opponent would
- ▶ Prepare and don't limit your prep to the papers you are given
- ▶ Remember you are part of a team
- ▶ Remember your case is only as good as the information you are provided with: be prepared to challenge, identify gaps and assess how they can be filed.



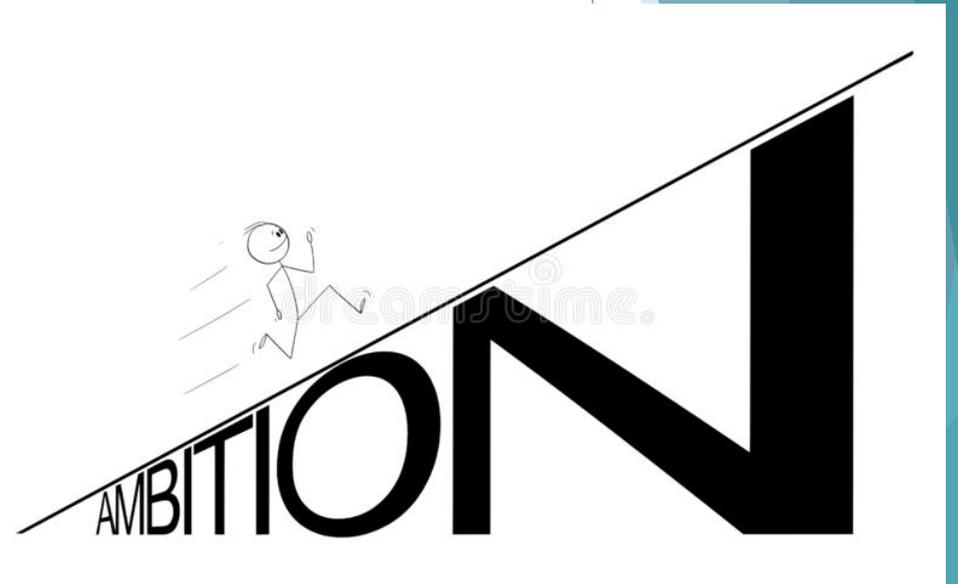
Carving out a Career: In Court

- ▶ Plot: Identify the goal: the achievable and the more remote
- ▶ Manage expectations
- ▶ Be adaptable
- ▶ Don't underestimate the judge or your opponent: Grapple with the weak points
- ▶ Questions have to be able to be tailored to the evidence



Going forwards

- ▶ Listen and learn
- ▶ Don't be afraid of being thought naïve or too 'lowly' to ask questions
- ▶ Be ambitious: go the extra mile
- ▶ Be prepared to be a pupil again
- ▶ Ask questions: we all love flattery
- ▶ Don't stagnate





The costs of
success?

The Next Option: Jump the Groove

- ▶ Move chambers?
- ▶ Change career direction: the Bar is not limited!
- ▶ Transferrable skills



What marks
out leaders
in their field?



Preparation



Style



Confidence



Commitment



Being prepared to be the odd one out

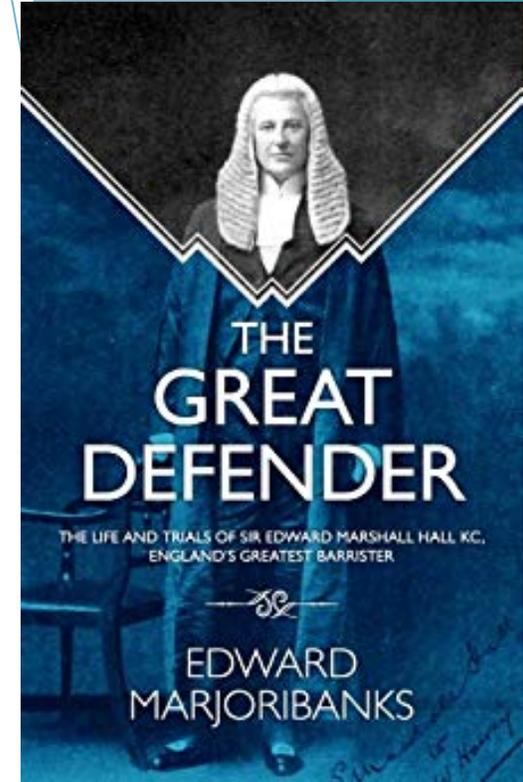
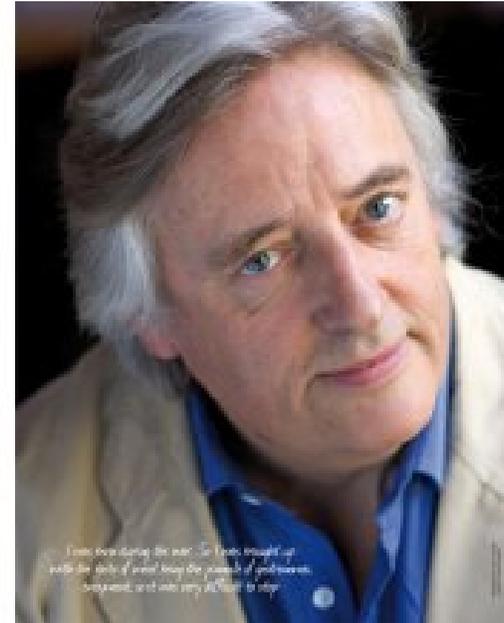
My Advocate Icons

Upfront

A law unto **HIMSELF**

Scourge of the establishment, champion of the underdog, barrister Michael Marjoribanks' vegetarianism demonstrates that it's not just human rights he'll fight for.

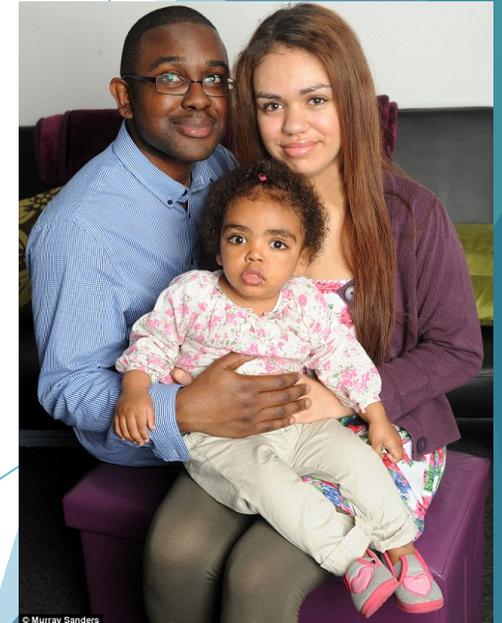
Michael Marjoribanks is a barrister at the chambers of the Honourable Mr Justice Raftery in London. He is a vegetarian and a member of the Vegetarian Resource Project. He is also a member of the British Vegetarian Society and the Vegetarian Resource Project. He is a member of the British Vegetarian Society and the Vegetarian Resource Project. He is a member of the British Vegetarian Society and the Vegetarian Resource Project.





The Joys of Success: Making a Difference

- ▶ Changing history
- ▶ Changing lives
- ▶ Changing the law
- ▶ Changing the profession



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My profession,' once said Sir Marshall Hall KC, 'and that of an actor are somewhat akin, except that I have no scenes to help me, and no words are written for me to say. There is no back-cloth to increase the illusion. There is no curtain. But, out of the vivid, living dream of somebody else's life, I have to create an atmosphere - for that is advocacy.'

Is it worth it?

