

Introduction

Paralegal education must prepare students not only to understand legal concepts, but to function effectively within the structure, pace, and expectations of a real law office. While legal theory provides an essential foundation, paralegal students also need a clear understanding of what it means to be a paralegal in practice—how legal work is organized, how responsibilities are managed, and how paralegals support attorneys and clients on a daily basis. This book was written to provide that introduction.

This text is designed as an **introduction to the paralegal profession**, offering students a practical overview of the paralegal role, the day-to-day realities of legal work, and the skills required to succeed in a modern law office. It explains not only *what* paralegals do, but *how* they do it within legal workflows, office systems, and ethical boundaries. Topics include the daily life of a paralegal, core hard skills such as drafting, file management, and calendaring, as well as essential soft skills such as communication, organization, professionalism, and time management.

I am a law office management consultant and legal educator with **more than 25 years of experience in the legal field**, including paralegal work, firm administration, and legal operations. I am the founder of **My Law Office Managers**, a legal consulting company that works with law firms nationwide to improve workflow, efficiency, and office systems, and the founder of **The Paralegal Academy**, an educational platform focused on practical, skills-based paralegal training. Through both organizations, I work closely with attorneys, paralegals, and legal staff and consistently see the gap between what students learn in school and what law offices expect on day one.

My career began at the entry level, and I progressed through nearly every position within a law office, including paralegal, paralegal manager, operations manager, and firm administrator. I currently serve as an adjunct professor teaching Civil Law and Procedure in an American Bar Association-approved paralegal program and am the author and coauthor of multiple legal textbooks and professional resources. Teaching paralegal students and consulting with law firms has made one need especially clear: Students require a practical introduction to the profession itself, not just the law.

This book addresses that need by introducing students to the realities of paralegal work, employer expectations, and professional responsibilities. It is intended to be used alongside paralegal coursework, internships, and early professional experiences, providing students with a realistic understanding of the profession and a strong foundation for continued learning and growth.