Witness Familiarisation

Our Witness Familiarisation sessions provide witnesses with an invaluable opportunity to find out how the trial process really works. We prepare witnesses to give evidence by taking them through a practical enactment of being cross-examined and teach them how to remain calm under pressure at all times.

These sessions prepare witnesses to give their best evidence free from nerves and help them to avoid typical pitfalls. They will gain a better understanding of court procedure. They will learn how to deal with tough questioning and remain calm under pressure in the witness box.

All our witness familiarisation sessions comply with the latest case law and guidance and have been written in conjunction with experienced members of the judiciary.

**WITNESS OF FACT OR EXPERT WITNESS?**
We regularly deliver witness familiarisation sessions to both witnesses of fact and expert witnesses preparing to give evidence in a whole range of courts, tribunals, committees and hearings.

**ONE-TO-ONE AND SMALL GROUP SESSIONS**
Witnesses may be prepared in small groups or individually. Where possible we recommend a one-to-one session to ensure that each witness receives specific individual attention enabling them to build up their confidence and deliver their best evidence in court.

**DURATION OF SESSION**
A one-to-one session usually lasts three to four hours. For a group of up to six witnesses a full day is appropriate.

**A JUDGE CAN BE IN ATTENDANCE**
We can arrange for a retired judge to be present at the session to provide additional authenticity and give further feedback.

**POST-SESSION FEEDBACK**
The trainer provides each witness with detailed oral feedback and advice on how to communicate their evidence in the best way. We can also film sessions at your request for further review. We will provide you with a written report for each witness. Additionally, the trainer can meet with you and your colleagues after the session to provide an expert opinion on the presentation of the witness.
FOLLOW-UP SESSIONS
If the witness is likely to face prolonged cross-examination we suggest that an intensive additional session focusing purely on cross-examination would be highly beneficial.

This follow-up session is also recommended when a witness has undergone an initial session and it is felt, after considering the report, that they would benefit from an additional session.

FICTIONAL CASE STUDIES ARE PROVIDED
As you may know, the trainer cannot know the facts of your case or discuss this with your witnesses. Therefore the session will be based on a fictional and unrelated case study or an old expert witness report. The transferable skills your witness learns from this case study can then be used at trial.

WHY CHOOSE THE CITY LAW SCHOOL?
- Professionalism, experience, credibility and organisation
- Specialist knowledge and expertise in the area of witness familiarisation. We have a strong record of providing this session for high profile clients
- Tried and tested by many of the top 100 city law firms. You can have confidence that your witnesses are in experienced hands
- Ability to accommodate specific requests within tight timeframes to suit your clients.

LOCATION: UK AND INTERNATIONAL
We are able to deliver these sessions at your offices or at our state-of-the-art training rooms at The City Law School in central London.

We can also deliver sessions anywhere in the world, so they are available to all your international clients to suit their individual circumstances.

FIND OUT MORE...
The City Law School runs legal skills courses for solicitors, accountants, healthcare practitioners and other professionals, drawing on the collective knowledge and skills of staff in the School. For further information or to request a brochure please contact our CPD department on +44 (0)20 7400 3618 or cpd-cls@city.ac.uk.

OUR TRAINERS
Our sessions are only delivered by experienced advocates. As part of The City Law School, formerly the Inns of Court School of Law, we have unrivalled access to a wide selection of specialist professional trainers.

Our Witness Familiarisation Group is led by Penny Cooper and David Wurtzel.

Professor Penny Cooper is a leading authority on witness familiarisation, expert witness training and ‘special measures’. She has been a Governor of the Expert Witness Institute since 2007. She is the author of Reporting to Court, co-author of Experts in the Civil Courts and co-edited The Expert Witness Pack.

David Wurtzel practised at the Bar for 27 years. He has delivered numerous courses in witness familiarisation for witnesses of fact and expert witnesses in civil trials and to police forces and civilian police analysts. He brings to this his wealth of experience as a barrister and his skill as an advocacy trainer to bring home to witnesses the true aims and methods of the cross-examiner.

ONE HOUR FREE CPD SEMINAR
We will come to your offices and deliver an introductory session to your lawyers. This seminar will explain the benefits of professional witness familiarisation sessions and will also include a practical demonstration of cross-examination techniques. It is also worth 1 CPD point.

BOOK NOW
For more information and to book our Witness Familiarisation sessions, please contact our CPD department.

+44 (0)20 7400 3618
cpd-cls@city.ac.uk

‘Really helpful, well organised, valuable feedback, excellent balance between being challenged and feeling supported.’

‘A really valuable and powerful experience with an opportunity to put feedback into practice during the session.’

‘Witnesses should not be disadvantaged by ignorance of the process, nor when they come to give evidence, taken by surprise at the way it works.’

‘True it is that witnesses would have undergone a process of familiarisation with the pitfalls of giving evidence and were instructed how best to prepare for the ordeal. This, it seems to me, was an exercise any witness would be entitled to enjoy were it available.’

Pitchford J as quoted in R v Salisbury [2005] EWCA Crim 3107