

Book Reviews

The Articulate Advocate: New Techniques of Persuasion for Trial Lawyers

by Brian K. Johnson and Marsha Hunter

206 pp.; \$19.95

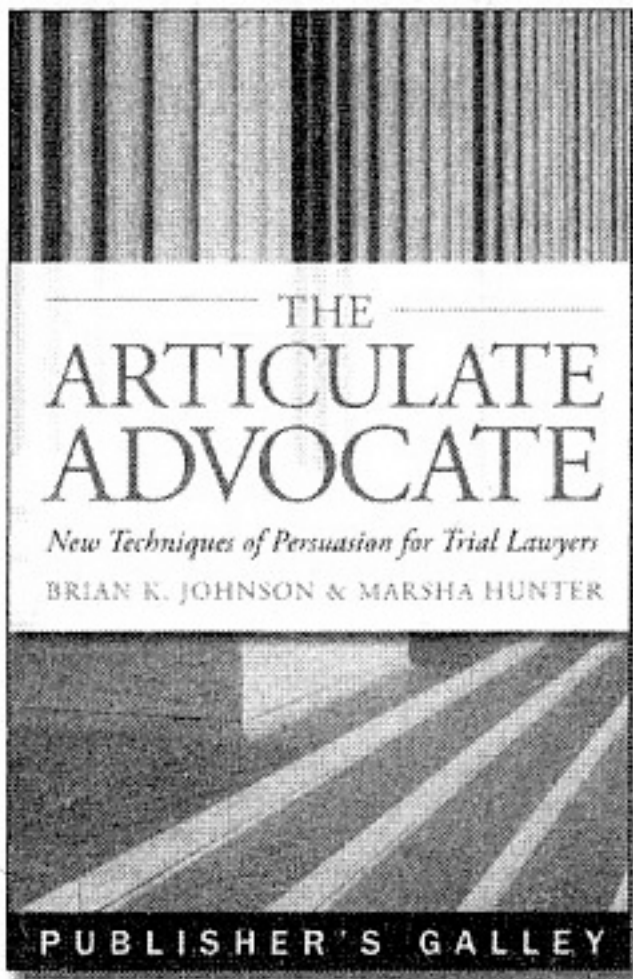
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Every practicing lawyer knows there are plenty of how-to books, articles, videos, and DVDs on improving trial skills, as well as one or two experts on the subject in every firm or office. Even so, *The Articulate Advocate* manages to cover familiar ground from a fresh perspective. Perhaps this is because the book's authors, communications instructor Brian Johnson and attorney Marsha Hunter, draw equally from their work experience and their experiences in acting, opera, and flying.

Rather than making bland and general exhortations to be persuasive by being prepared and the like, Johnson and Hunter offer specific examples and suggestions, nicely accompanied by checklists, exercises, and an occasional diagram. A concise explanation of the brain's production and regulation of adrenaline segues into how to use this knowledge to control a shaky voice, trembling hands, or other signs of nervousness. Another chapter makes a compelling pitch for the need to practice, practice, practice; accepts no excuses for less; and provides ideas for how to get that practice.

To be effective advocates, courtroom attorneys need the skills of actors and salespeople. This book tells practitioners how to acquire these skills, with chapters such as "How to Practice Step by Step," "Exercises to Avoid Specific Problems," and "Thinking on Your Feet." The book is well organized, and is equally useful read from start to finish or by consulting certain topics out of order.

The experienced trial attorney will find many ideas for polishing an advanced repertoire, and the new practitioner will appreciate the practical advice for navigating the hurdles of those first few trials. This book would be a useful addition to any lawyer's library.