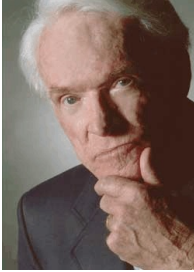


# The Litigator's Management Notes

Tips and tools to manage  
yourself and your office.



We provide litigators *practical and proven advice on:*

- *managing their work, and*
- *managing their law office.*

*Leonard Bucklin*

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## **RYON - for your mail and email.**

Most attorneys do not delegate enough. Lawyers need to delegate, but law schools do not teach delegation.

Delegation is a science, not an art. There are a number of articles and books on the subject of delegating work to others. You can teach yourself to delegate. Learn one such method of delegation, called RYON, below.

RYON can be quickly learned. RYON is a quick method of delegating, to free some time for you to work more on the items that demand your legal judgment and skill. Chances are that RYON will save you a half-hour, or more, a day (that's 100 hours a year)!

All you need for RYON to work is:

- (1) a knowledge of how capable your legal assistant is in using their own native intelligence and their own skill in communication; and
- (2) taking the time to give initial explicit and clear directions to your legal assistant on what RYON means; and
- (3) stifling any desire by you to micro-manage what your assistant does.

**RYON** stands for an instruction to your secretary or legal assistant to → **“Reply in Your Own Name.”**

### **RYON** - How to do it.

A great amount of your incoming email and snail mail can be given to a trusted legal assistant for them to handle and reply in their own name. That’s where RYON comes into play. Here’s the RYON way of getting rid of much of your incoming mail and email.

Simply write **“RYON”** on incoming routine requests for responses that do not need your legal judgment or an attorney’s certification for a reply, and on many routine client requests for assistance. Then you hand it (or forward it if it is email) to your legal assistant.

Talk to your secretary or legal assistant. Tell them that you are going to hand them items on which you have placed **“RYON.”** Tell them that **RYON** stands for → **“Reply in Your Own Name.”** Give your assistant both responsibility and also explicit authority to reply in their own name, without consulting you what the reply should be, and without any further directions, clearance, or final reading by you. Tell them you do not even need to be told it has been accomplished. Tell them that you assume they will completely take care of it, unless they want to ask for further instructions because of a complicating factor that arises.

At first, you may only be handing client requests for information to your assistant as RYON tasks. But soon you will be finding your assistant on doing much more in their own name. For example, you will find that your assistant is just as good as you are at setting a date and time and scheduling with your client or witness when the adversary attorney requests a deposition. When such a request arises — you’ll simply note on the incoming request, **“Set it up, RYON,”** and not have to waste time on doing anything that does not require your legal judgement.

You are the gatekeeper as to each item that becomes is a RYON task – that means that automatically you are controlling the level of complexity handled by your assistant. Furthermore, by writing any boundaries for the reply with your RYON notation (e.g., **“I don’t want to do this in January”**) you control outside perimeters of their reply to the mail or email.

If your assistant is intelligent, and knows enough, to handle a piece of incoming mail or email as a RYON task, write RYON. Then stand back, and get out of their way!

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