

LEGAL BOUNDARIES & REALITY CHECKS

An Operational Audit for Legal Education vs. Legal Representation

“The law establishes the minimum standard for civilized behavior—the floor. This book is a guide to building the architecture above it.” — Nance L. Schick, Esq.

As a Super Lawyer-rated employment attorney, my mission is to provide the educational tools and systems-level insights necessary to keep workplace disputes out of the courtroom. However, true stewardship requires recognizing the boundaries of general education. My books, proprietary tools (e.g., the HAQ Standard, KARR Method), and digital resources are designed to train your organizational choices, not to replace the individualized counsel of a retained attorney.

Before you apply these frameworks to high-risk disputes, use this safety audit to ensure your leadership team maintains clear boundaries between strategic conflict resolution and formal legal compliance. Score your current organizational approach (1 for Yes, 0 for No).

The Educational Boundary

- ☐ **General Education Standard.** Do you understand and accept that the contents of my books, blog, and digital templates constitute general legal education and systemic strategy, *not* formal, binding legal advice?
 - ☐ **No Attorney-Client Privilege.** Do you recognize that reading this book, utilizing its web-based downloads, or completing these scorecards does *not* establish an attorney-client relationship between you and Nance L. Schick, Esq., or Third Ear Conflict Resolution?
 - ☐ **Jurisdictional Nuance.** Are you aware that employment laws, statutory requirements, and administrative codes shift rapidly across state, county, and municipal lines, requiring you to verify local regulatory floors before finalizing structural alterations?
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Risk Management

- ☐ **Active Litigation Pivot.** If your organization is faced with an active lawsuit, an open EEOC charge, or a formal administrative investigation, do you pause independent mediation and immediately coordinate with your retained legal counsel or insurance carrier?

- ☐ **Document Integrity.** Do you maintain objective, accurate operational records of employment changes and dispute resolutions, ensuring your internal documentation remains clean, transparent, and legally defensive if inspected?
 - ☐ **Discretionary Limits.** Do your managers understand that while the HAQ Standard prioritizes humane and rapid resolution, it can never be used to bypass mandatory reporting laws, safety protocols, or explicit statutory obligations?
 - ☐ **Retained Counsel Integration.** Do you view your retained employment attorney as a vital partner who inspects the legal safety of your structural floors, rather than a firefighter you only call after a cultural collapse?
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YOUR LEGAL CLARITY ANALYSIS

- **0–3 (High Vulnerability / Over-Exposure):** Your organization is treating strategic, educational advice as a substitute for rigorous legal protection. You are operating with a dangerously blurred understanding of regulatory boundaries, exposing your business to significant statutory risks. Stop and consult an employment attorney in each jurisdiction where you have people doing work for you.
- **4–5 (Compliant / Moderately Prepared):** You respect the legal floor and understand the limitations of educational guides. However, your team is still vulnerable to applying general strategies to highly complex, localized legal situations without verifying the regional variations. Ensure your managers know exactly when to escalate an internal issue to legal counsel.
- **6–7 (Balanced / Resilient Stewardship):** You demonstrate an excellent, sophisticated grasp of professional boundaries. You actively use the HAQ Standard and KARR Method to optimize your internal culture and systems while maintaining an integrated, respectful relationship with formal legal counsel to verify your compliance guardrails.