

4 Software Solutions for Older Solo Practitioners



older-solo-practitioners

They're not sure about you.

Your colleagues aren't sure if you're still the capable and formidable attorney they grew to respect. Their bias means they may hold your age against you. But the opposite is actually true.

As an older attorney you have an advantage.

You've accumulated a massive amount of knowledge, experience and timing. If you're great at your job (and you are) you have a clear idea about the details that matter.

This means...

You have something your younger colleagues don't

Your mind is still incredibly sharp.

Here's what's interesting about that. Contrary to popular belief, you're actually getting *smarter* as you age. That's strange because the assumption is we decline as we age. Here I am suggesting it's the *opposite*.

How's that possible?

It's simple. There are two different kinds of intelligence.

- **Fluid intelligence.** Your ability to reason and to solve new problems, independent of any knowledge from the past. It's pattern recognition and the ability to adapt to things you've never seen before.
- **Crystallized intelligence.** Your ability to use your skills, knowledge, timing and experience. It's intellectual achievement over the course of your life that you can call on whenever you need it.

Here's why you're at an advantage.

Fluid intelligence peaks in young adulthood then decreases afterwards.

Crystallized intelligence continues to grow well into your old age. When it finally begins to decline, you're still left with a large degree of crystallized intelligence you can use for quite some time.

What does this look like?

Can you see what's happening?

This is why younger attorneys, whether they're in an independent or in-house environment, struggle at first. There's an initial decline in fluid intelligence during young adulthood. Their struggle is inevitable.

You've come through this.

We all lose... eventually

While we keep crystallized intelligence well into our old age, it eventually begins to decline as well. [Raymond Cattell](#) theorized the existence of [fluid and crystallized intelligence](#). Yet he remained sharp, continuing to publish scientific works into his late 80s.

How did he do it?

More importantly, how can you accomplish the same in your career?

Are you focused on what matters?

As the saying goes, use it or lose it.

Cattell focused on what matters. What your mind focuses on, you get to keep. Want to stay sharp throughout your career? Focus on the parts of your job you value.

Outsource, delegate or minimize the rest.

Prefer to focus on litigation? Aim your attention and focus there. View well-made contracts as a work of art? Dive deep into your preferred practice area.

And the rest?

Use software to optimize your performance. Here are a few software tools and strategies you can use to manage your career or practice.

[Try Bill4Time for free.](#)

Tip #1: Rely on automated workflows

Use software tools to automate your workflow. Doing this means you get the apps you use to talk to each other. It's an *"if X, then Y"* sort of thing. Hate checking email? Use an automated workflow to check it for you. Here are a few options you can use immediately.

- [Microsoft Flow](#)
- [Zapier](#)
- [IFTTT](#)

Here's what that looks like.

Tip #2: Offload repetitive or unproductive work

Working on the same projects over and over can be tedious. You have the right approach and an incredible amount of knowledge and experience. Teach the right freelance lawyer to do things your way. Bill clients for the value and experience you provide.

Here are a few tools you can use.

- [Law Clerk](#)
- [LegisOne](#)
- [Montage Legal Group](#)
- [Hire An Esquire](#)
- [FlexLegal](#)

Can you see what's happening?

You can structure deals around your knowledge and experience. You can take on more work, spending less time on tedious tasks and more time on what matters. You can maintain a high work volume, even if you decide to scale things back personally.

Tip #3: Stop managing your time and calendar

Don't obsess over your day. Plan your time, create a schedule then use the right tools to forget about it. Use client, time and calendar management tools to create structure and clarity around your day. This gives you the time you need to focus on the work that matters.

You can use time management tools like:

- [Calendly](#) enables you to schedule meeting times automatically without the back and forth emails
- [Calendar and productivity plugins](#) for Microsoft Outlook
- [Bill4Time](#) legal practice and project management that enables you to track, manage and record your billable time.
- [Law Ruler](#), an AI-powered CRM tool that integrates with Microsoft Outlook
- [ProphetCRM](#) enables you to manage CRM from Outlook directly
- [Lexicata](#) client intake software

Tip #4: Speed up your legal research

Time is money. The easier it is for you to find the legal research you need, the better your performance will be.

- [Westlaw from Thompson Reuters](#) gives you immediate access to a comprehensive legal database. They're the 800 lbs. gorilla in the room so you get the backing of a major corporation

- [Fastcase](#) gives you access to a national law library offering citation analysis and comprehensive coverage
- [Casemaker](#) is a low-cost option for legal research. Your local bar association may offer free access to their service
- [Casetext](#) enables users to search through a database of millions of cases and review annotations about specific points in those cases. Points are created by legal scholars and practitioners

This is obvious, why does it matter?

Clients are demanding more value and efficiency. What does that mean for you? Clients [aren't all that happy about being billed](#) for legal research.

Follow the trend and this ceases to be a billable item.

The implications here are clear. The faster your legal research platform, the more profit your firm stands to make.

You have something your younger colleagues don't

An accumulated amount of knowledge, experience and timing. As an older attorney, you have an advantage. Use it or lose it. What your mind focuses on, you get to keep. Outsource, delegate or minimize the rest.

Start now.

Focus your attention on the areas you enjoy. Then use software and outsourcing to handle the tedious minutia you'd prefer to avoid. Use the right resources to optimize your performance. Start now and you'll have everything you need to manage a thriving practice for years to come.

[Try Bill4Time for free](#)