Guideline Regarding Court Appearances

Today there are fewer opportunities for lawyers to speak in court. This is particularly true for lawyers with less than five to seven years of experience. The Court strongly encourages more experienced senior lawyers and their clients to allow less experienced lawyers to have the primary speaking roles in pretrial conferences, oral arguments, and during trials. This opportunity is particularly important and appropriate when the less experienced lawyer has drafted or contributed significantly to the underlying motion or response or to the trial or hearing preparation.

The Court understands that in some circumstances, clients may not wish to have a less experienced lawyer argue the issue or lead the trial. If the only lawyer who drafted or substantially prepared the motion, brief, or evidentiary presentation is the senior lawyer, or if the motion is dispositive in a "bet-the-company" case, litigants may justifiably want the senior lawyer to do all or most of the in-court talking. But in all but these cases, it is crucial to provide substantive speaking opportunities to less experienced lawyers. The Court encourages all lawyers and their clients to do so.