

The Legal Writer

Writing It Right

Hon. Gerald Lebovits

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INTRODUCTION

The Legal Writer column first appeared in the July–August 2001 issue of the New York State Bar Association when Howard Angione, then–editor-in-chief of the *Journal*, asked me to write a column on legal writing. The column, now in its 16th year of publication in the *Journal*, offers practical, real-world legal-writing suggestions that attorneys, especially New York attorneys, will find useful in all aspects of their professional lives. The point of this book is to put every facet of legal writing discussed in the columns into one place for easy reference.

This book is not meant to suggest that there’s but one way to write it right. Some will agree with my suggestions. Others won’t. I’ll be happy if my readers come away appreciating the importance of legal writing—an importance not merely to their clients but also to the honest and good administration of justice.

I’d very much like to thank Joan Fucillo, the State Bar’s Publication Manager, who worked on every column in this book; Alexandra Standish, my law clerk for more than 10 years, who helped with most of the columns; and my judicial interns, who researched many columns.

I’d also like to thank Daniel McMahon, Director of Publications at the New York State Bar Association, and copy editors Alex Dickson, Reyna Eisenstark, Howard Healy, and Kate Mostaccio.

I dedicate this book to my children, Natalie and Kenneth Lebovits, the loves of my life and my reasons for living.

Hon. Gerald Lebovits
New York, New York
March 2016

BIOGRAPHY

Hon. Gerald Lebovits has been a New York City judge since 2001. An acting Supreme Court justice in New York County, he previously served in Civil Court, Criminal Court, and Housing Court. He is the president of the Board of Judges of the New York City Civil Court. Before that, he was the president of the Association of Housing Court Judges.

Justice Lebovits has also taught law as an adjunct professor for 30 years—currently at Columbia, Fordham, NYU, and New York Law School and previously at St. John's University.

A prolific author, he has published several books and hundreds of articles, many of them for the New York State Bar Association.