

10 Things to Consider in Choosing a Criminal Defense Attorney

1. How much experience does the attorney have?

There is no substitute for experience. It takes several years, many say over a decade, to develop the experience needed to handle a case with excellence. Your future is too important to put in the hands of a lawyer who lacks adequate experience.

Burges McCowan has been an attorney since 2002.

2. What area of law does the attorney focus on?

You want an attorney that focuses on criminal law. If the attorney is advertising family law, bankruptcy, personal injury, or any other area of law, then you should be concerned. Each area is vastly different and takes a great deal of time to learn well. An attorney practicing many different areas is probably not excellent at any of them.

Burges McCowan focuses exclusively on criminal law.

3. Where was the attorney's legal training?

This starts with the law school. You want an attorney with a good foundation in legal training. An elite law school degree tells you that the attorney is either very smart, or worked very hard in school. Either way you are likely getting a good attorney.

Burges McCowan graduated from UCLA School of Law, the highest-ranking law school in the Southwestern United States.

4. Where did the attorney get his legal training?

You want to avoid an attorney who just opened shop right out of law school. You want an attorney who spent time learning from other more experienced attorneys early in his career.

Burges McCowan gained his legal experience over many years in the Maricopa County Attorney's Office, one of the largest prosecutorial offices in the United States.

5. How many of the attorney's cases are referrals?

A good attorney has a good reputation with peers and former clients. Over time this means a good attorney is getting a lot of cases from recommendations by other attorneys and past clients. If the attorney is getting fewer than 50% from referrals, then you should be concerned.

Burges McCowan gets more than half of his cases from referrals.

6. What is the attorney's relationship with the court and prosecutor?

Many criminal defense attorneys advertise how aggressive they are. But being very aggressive does nothing good for you in the courtroom or in negotiating with the prosecutor. Your attorney shouldn't act like the attorneys you see on TV. This is the real world. And in the real world attorneys who have a good working

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relationship with the courts and prosecutors are the ones that get good results.

Burges McCowan is a former prosecutor who knows how to treat people with dignity and respect. He has handled cases throughout Arizona.

7. How many jury trials has the attorney done?

Most cases settle before trial. But if your case is one of the few that does go to trial you definitely want an attorney with jury trial experience. The reality is most attorneys go their whole career with only a few jury trials, and many never do a jury trial. Jury trials are very intense and the only way to be any good at them is a lot of practice from actual trials. You don't want your attorney getting his practice on your case.

Burges McCowan is a seasoned jury trial attorney. In fact, one year he did over 18 jury trials. That's more trials in one year than most attorneys do in their whole career.

8. Is the attorney promising you a particular result?

Attorneys are prohibited from guaranteeing a particular result. If an attorney does promise you victory, you should report that attorney to the state bar. An experienced attorney may have a good idea of the likely outcomes for your case, but the reality is that every case is unique and a good experienced attorney knows not to assume anything until he has thoroughly

reviewed the case.

Burges McCowan never has and never will promise a particular result. He knows that each case deserves diligent representation. Some cases he thought were a lost cause ended up getting dismissed after he put in the hard work on them. Burges McCowan promises to treat your case with that same respect and work hard.

9. How much does the attorney charge?

Naturally, everyone wants to get a good deal. But when you are facing criminal charges you want to hire the best attorney for your case. An attorney who charges the lowest fee is either not experienced or handles too high a volume of cases.

Burges McCowan charges the market rate for his services. He is not a "discount," or "volume" attorney. You get what you pay for.

10. Who will be the attorney with you in court?

After answering all of the questions above, you want to make sure the attorney that answered them is the attorney that will actually represent you in court. Many firms have an attorney on their advertisements but after you sign up with the firm they hand you over to a different attorney. Before you hire a firm, make sure who your actually attorney will be.

Burges McCowan never farms his cases out to other attorneys. If you hire Burges, you get Burges, period.