

## About Brandon L Blankenship

## About Brandon L. Blankenship



Check out the tie Anna made!

Hi! I'm Brandon L Blankenship and my mission is to help attorneys improve their practice.

I speak and write about my experience with a hidden enemy in my law firm. Through story, methods to improve the practice of law are powerfully illustrated. I write concentrated posts on my [professional blog](#). Also, my former partner, Greg Harrelson, and I have developed a continuing legal education course called [Enemy In The Camp](#) which covers most of the material.

### **Nobility Academy**

I have also taken a genuine interest in the impact that prioritizing profit over purpose is having on our legal profession. I research lawyers who have performed acts of nobility and write about them at [Nobility Academy](#). This project has been a real encouragement to me personally. It has given me the opportunity to learn about attorneys and build relationships with attorneys that are really making a difference not just in the United States, but the world.

Every now and then I deviate from an attorney story because I get a lead on a nobility story that doesn't involve an attorney. For example, a group of fifth-grade boys just down right inspired me to write [Nobility Lessons From a Gang](#).

## Sixth Through Eighth Grade Curriculum

An added hope I have for the future of Nobility Academy is a sixth through eighth-grade curriculum where attorney stories like the story of [Beth Klien](#) illustrate character education for students.

## Future

As I talk with attorneys about my current projects, I am noticing a trend. When I ask attorneys what their biggest challenge is for their practice, they consistently tell me that the legal service industry is shrinking and that professionalism is under attack by forces like lawyer hucksterism in advertising. I would like to play a role in helping the legal services industry innovate in response to a changing market.

## My Family



Donnalee, Anna and I

My wife, Donnalee, and I have been married for 27 years. We have an awesome daughter, Anna.

Donnalee moved to my hometown when I was in tenth grade (she was in ninth) and we dated off and on for eight years before we married while we were still in college. Like most married couples, we have had our good times and bad. While we prefer the good times, we have learned to take those bad times and grow from them. Our love and commitment to each other and our marriage is stronger now than ever before.

Donnalee and I have a heart for couples in crisis. We maintain a [marriage blog](#), facilitate marriage retreats and work with couples one-on-one. Starting in 2009 we developed the marriage curriculum for our church's Life University.

We are now members of Westwood Baptist Church where we co-teach a [class for newlyweds and nearly-weds](#) with two other wonderful couples. We continue to use our marriage experiences to help others with theirs.

Anna keeps us busy with her competitive ice skating, drama practices, and school involvement. She enjoys learning Latin, Greek, French, Spanish, and sign language (in that order). She has truly been a blessing to us.

We have lived in Alabama for the past 19 years and we currently live on [Blankenship Farms](#) where I am (literally) the chief bottle-washer, and beekeeper. Anna makes cold process soap and lip balm, using some of our honey and beeswax, to sell to our friends and neighbors. Donnalee makes beautiful pottery and markets all our [farm products](#).

## My Biography



## Newfangled Equipment

The desktop computer was coming out about the time I graduated high school. A local businessman bought one and donated his old computer system to my school and I had the opportunity to tinker with it.

By the time I graduated high school, I was writing simple code and building databases. My first software analyzed utility accounting bills for manufacturers and businesses with multiple locations.

Most every industry was impacted by access to the desktop computer. I started college and coded

and worked various jobs and coded and keep coding until I established clients.

The real pivot for me was from providing coding services to clients to using the desktop computer platform as a way to disrupt industries. A big one was publishing. At the time, magazines and newspapers were still designed by hand. Images and text were literally cut out by hand and then placed on large design boards with melted wax. Wax was used so that images and text could be moved. Desktop computers replaced each step of the manual system until it was fully digital. A publisher using computer design was faster than competitors and more responsive to customers.

I used this emerging technology to move into several industries and to increase the productivity of our sales force. By 1992, the annual sales of all these companies exceeded \$20 million. I turned 26 that September.

## **Brilliant Failure**

I loved growth. I loved that I could leverage technology so that one person could do the work of three or more. My dad called it piddling but for me, it was piddling with a purpose. I loved forcing some new technology that wasn't quite ready and going to bed three days later when it finally worked.

As the company grew, product quality declined, product shipments were delayed and the Attorney General (and lawsuits) came calling. The whole thing crashed and burned so fast it lit up the night sky - a brilliant failure.

When the dust settled, I had nothing left (materially) and I owed more than I ever had.

## **A Real Job**

About this time, manufacturing companies were leaving the United States so fast that, according to presidential hopeful Ross Perot, it caused a "giant sucking sound." I followed the sound offshore.

I had an opportunity to take a job with a Prime Contractor for most of the branches of the U.S. Department of Defense. The opportunity was perfect for me. Most of the places we were bringing technology didn't have reliable electricity much less modern technology. Although most of the people I worked directly with were super-intelligent and highly educated, the manufacturing workers themselves were often illiterate in their native language and English.



Our balcony view overlooking the ocean.

This was a perfect setting for me. I was able to use technology to address specific problems to help people make things. The use of technology created value on the manufacturing floor as well as in the company itself.

Also, living in a different culture was a challenge. There were many positives. I had a life-long dream of living on the beach and I got to fulfill that dream. I garnered enough Spanish to be able to function without too many embarrassments. I learned a new culture of food, music, dance and religion.

Although there is a segment of people who are Anti-American, the people of Puerto Rico certainly made us feel welcome and took every opportunity to share their Island with us.

I felt like I had finally arrived when I was in a heated discussion one day and was called a "gringo." A senior executive stepped up and said, "No es gringo, es un gringo-rican."

## **The Call**

I grew up close to the county seat and since the courthouse was there, lawyers were a part of my community. As early as high school, lawyers in my community encouraged me to go to law school. I didn't think it was a realistic option for me because I was paying my own way. Four years of college seemed excessive in light of the fact that I could make as much as most college graduates

working in technology.

I spent a lot of time with one of the lawyers that represented me during the [Brilliant Failure](#). After the last case was resolved, he started encouraging me to go to law school. As months passed, I started feeling called to return to the states and go to law school.

I decided to put out a fleece and tell Donnalee about the calling. I expected that she would think I was crazy and reject the idea outright. We had finally paid off our debt and started righting the ship. It was crazy to make such a drastic change.

Without hesitation, Donnalee said, "if that is what you feel called to do, do it."

In May of 2001, I graduated from Thomas Goode Jones School of Law.

## How Can I Help?

Where are you struggling? I am interested in your stories, your challenges, your practice. I want to help. Sharing experiences helps. I speak and write about how to succeed online by being human. By building relationships. By being vulnerable. By being honest. By telling stories. Tell me your stories and I'll tell you mine.

[Brandon L. Blankenship](#)

\_Birmingham, Alabama  
(205)912-8249

[LinkedIn](#) [Twitter](#) [Google+](#) [Facebook](#)

###

