This project started when the American Bar Association approached me about writing a book on trial tactics. Although the idea intrigued me, my “day job” involves regularly trying cases (and working up and settling the ones I do not try), so I knew I had neither the time nor the stamina to pen an entire book.

But what I did have was a contact list of America’s greatest trial lawyers. Accordingly, I reached out to many of them, most of whom I knew in some way, shape, or form, a few of whom I did not. Knowing how busy trial lawyers are, I anticipated few positive responses. Much to my surprise, virtually every lawyer I contacted enthusiastically agreed to take part.

Every trial lawyer must develop his or her style and undoubtedly will (and must) learn much of trial tactics through personal experience and trial and error. But most of us who try cases also learn so much of what we do from other lawyers. I knew I would learn from them, and I knew others would as well.

And I was right. Indeed, during the writing of this book I tried two different jury trials, and before each I read and re-read (or at least gave a good skim to) every chapter in this book, each time incorporating the secrets of my fellow authors into my own trial presentation. This book has already helped two of my clients even before it was published. Whether you are already a seasoned lawyer or learning your own passage through the trade, I hope these insights do the same for you.

One might ask the authors of this book, what’s in it for them? That is not how I would phrase the question, nor would they. Great trial lawyers all share two common characteristics: (1) They want to make a difference, and (2) they all learned much from those who came before them. Many before me taught me, mentored me, and shared their secrets with me to put me in the position where I am today, and my co-authors as well. For this reason my co-authors contributed such a substantial amount of their time, intellect, experience, and “secrets” to the production of this book. To them, giving back is the reward.

I dedicate my part of this book to my exceptional fellow authors. Whatever achievements I may have accomplished or will accomplish in this profession, being listed as a co-author among them will always be near the top of the list.

—John S. Worden