

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2025

DAILY JOURNAL SERIES

How legal professionals are using AI with Angela Reddock-Wright

Artificial intelligence is rapidly transforming the practice of law, from legal research and document review to case strategy and client communications. But how are California's legal professionals actually using these tools in their daily work? In this series, the Daily Journal speaks with judges, attorneys, mediators, support staff, academics and other legal practitioners about their experiences with AI — exploring what's working, what concerns them, and how they're navigating the ethical and practical challenges of integrating new technology into a profession known for its adherence to tradition.

By Angela Reddock-Wright

What specific task or workflow in your practice chambers, or studies has AI changed most dramatically, and what does that look like day-to-day?

As a mediator, AI has helped transform my workflow and preparation for my daily mediations. In terms of preparation, I use vetted and proprietary AI platforms to assist me in summarizing client briefs and comparing the factual and legal arguments presented by all parties involved in the mediation. I also have used AI to build tools that allow me to be more efficient in my mediation practice, such as using it to develop checklists for my pre-mediation client calls and for managing my post-mediation client follow-ups.

When you're using AI tools for legal research or drafting, how do you verify the output? What's your process for catching hallucinations or errors?

I do not use AI as my lead or primary resource for legal research or for drafting such documents as settlement agreements.

With respect to legal research, I first begin by reading the mediation briefs presented by the lawyers representing their clients in



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mediation. Given my 30 years' experience as an employment and Title IX lawyer, and now mediator, I have a general understanding of the legal issues that arise in these practice areas, so I am generally able to flag whether there are any legal arguments that are nuanced and may need further research for my full understanding.

To the extent I need to do additional research beyond the briefs, I first begin with the research libraries and databases I have built on my own over the years, and then I cross-check information with well-known and regarded practice guides, legal journals, and other leading publications. After doing the baseline research, I then may run the

scenario or legal issue confidentially through an AI platform. Because I use the AI platform as a supplemental research tool only, I generally am able to flag right away any hallucinations or errors in the AI's analysis.

With respect to document drafting, I generally rely on the attorneys in mediation to draft such docu-

ments as settlement agreements. To the extent I need to offer insights or assist in the drafting of certain settlement terms, I first rely on my own database of settlement agreements and terms and may resort to AI to research whether there are better or new and enhanced ways to craft certain terms. I never use AI as a primary source or starting point.

Have you encountered a situation where AI led you astray or gave you problematic advice? What happened and what did you learn?

I have not experienced this problem yet, perhaps because I generally only use AI as a supplemental source or tool after doing my own research and examination of an issue. In doing this, I generally am able to draft the AI prompt in a way that is specific and tailored enough for AI to provide me with the information I am looking for.

How are you thinking about confidentiality and data security when using AI tools? What guardrails have you put in place?

I only work on proprietary AI platforms that have been tailored

for the mediation company and panel I am associated with. Additionally, I am careful not to include any information in my prompts that may reveal the names, identifying factual or other information that might reveal the identities of the parties, witnesses, or other individuals, or other confidential or sensitive information included as a part of the mediation.

What kind of legal work do you think AI will never be able to do well, and why?

I do not believe AI will be able to replace human mediators and neutrals. The business of helping people resolve problems and conflict often is driven beyond the numbers and predictive analytics, especially in cases like employment and family law, and even in consumer and business conflicts. Most conflict involves looking beyond the numbers and connecting with individuals on a personal level to understand the origins of the conflict, what may motivate them to want to resolve the conflict, and the feelings and emotions that often are at the heart of most conflicts. Only humans can connect in this way.

How has AI affected your professional relationships in terms of what services or work you provide, how you communicate, or what others expect from you?

I have not allowed AI to get in the way of my professional relationships. I only use AI as a secondary tool to help support my mediation practice and to make it more efficient. However, I still very much believe in the importance and power of connecting with clients, colleagues, and others directly and in building relationships face-to-face.

If someone just entering the legal profession asked you how to think about AI in their career development, what would you tell them?

I would highly recommend anyone entering the legal profession to learn more about AI and how it is changing the legal profession. I also would encourage them to get the necessary training to ensure they understand AI, how best to use it as a lawyer or legal professional, and understand our ethical obligations as lawyers and neutrals to our clients and others. I would tell them that AI is not going away, so we have to em-

brace it in a way that helps make our profession and the delivery of our services to clients better, but to never allow it to replace the value we bring to our clients as trained lawyers and legal professionals, that also bring the human touch and element to the work we do.

Angela Reddock-Wright is a mediator and neutral with Signature Resolution specializing in single plaintiff and class action employment cases, Title IX education law, mass tort sexual abuse and other claims, faith-based and religious institution, and hazing and bullying claims

