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# Daily Journal

## Ariel A. Neuman

Whether facing a jury, a judge, the U.S. government, or all three, a common key to Neuman's practice in white collar criminal defense is building credibility and humanizing clients.

Neuman, a former prosecutor, now often finds himself at the opposite table defending executives and companies accused of fraud, money laundering and negligence. However, the tactics translate.

"Part of what I find useful is the same techniques and tools I used as a prosecutor to maintain credibility as a rep of the U.S. government. You build yourself up, especially if you have prosecutors on the other side that may be more fast or loose," he said.

"Our job is to build credibility so that when we ask the jury to question the assumption the government asks them to make, they

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**Ariel A. Neuman**

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do it with an open mind," he said.

In one case, Neuman secured dismissal of all money laundering charges against his client, a large garment company. The U.S. Department of Justice accused the company of laundering money for Mexican drug cartels by knowingly accepting drug cash in exchange for textiles sold to Mexican customers. *USA v. Pacific Eurotex Corp. et al.*, 2:14-cr-00521 (C.D. Cal., filed Sept. 9, 2014).

Another money laundering case pitted Neuman against a prosecution effort in South Carolina. Then, the government threatened prosecution of Neuman's client as well as principals and employees of the entity. Neuman settled the case with no criminal charges.

"In those cases, the biggest challenge is getting past the government's assumptions about what people in a corporation knew," he said. "For instance, in one the government saw cartel money being deposited into a bank account, and there were certain warning signs they believed existed, and we had to prove our client didn't know anything.

"In other cases it's really just showing that people are generally just operating their businesses and being taken advantage of."

Neuman said that the rise of money laundering through international trade, a growing part of his work, is largely the practice of criminal organizations taking advantage of American businesses operating with good faith and no knowledge of illicit funds.

"It's about getting into the mind of clients," he said, "and our job is always to try and show the government and a jury that our client was acting in good faith."

— Andy Serbe



**Bird, Marella, Boxer,  
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**Practice:** White collar criminal defense **Age:** 39