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**Good Tools for Trial Lawyers**

Kudos to Richard J. Plezia on his article, "Shifting Costs Under the Texas and Federal Rules," in the October 2012 *Texas Bar Journal*. The Texas Offer of Settlement Rule and the distinction with the Federal Rule of Offer of Judgment is well written and helpful. In fact, both rules should be a tool of advocacy in every trial lawyer's toolbox, both plaintiff and defendant.

**J. Alexander Johnson**  
Southfield, MI

**Attorney's Fees Hypertechnical**

I think that the October 2012 *Texas Bar Journal*, devoted to the sub-

ject of attorney's fees, is the first issue of TBJ that I did not read from back to front. Thank you for an exceptionally good read and a "keeper." Unfortunately, however, the entire subject has become far too hypertechnical, making a hard and risky job that much harder and riskier. Perhaps the Texas Supreme Court would like to create a library of "safe harbor" fee agreements for members of the Bar?

**Donald W. Dickson II**  
Austin

**Office Conferences Valuable**

The comments by in-house counsel (in the October 2012 *Texas Bar Journal*) included a pointer about not billing

for office conferences. Recently, one of my colleagues and I each spent about \$500 of time in a conference that probably saved the client at least \$10,000 of time spent researching and trying out/discarding arguments, not to mention the intangible value of having the arguments my partner ended up with closely scrutinized and debated. I have no problem not having those valuable conferences and billing in-house counsel the \$10,000 if they demand that I run my law practice that way. Personally, I consider office conferences one of the most valuable and efficient things lawyers can do for their clients.

**Jim Parker**  
Austin

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C12-0201-010 (2/12)