



PUZZLES

Puzzles are excellent learning tools. They teach us the importance of details, improve mental speed, and help hone problem solving and critical thinking skills. It's no wonder that eDiscovery professionals are viewed as "puzzle people". The challenges we face daily with eDiscovery and Big data require legal professionals to have the problem-solving expertise of a true puzzle master.

On your easiest day you might only have to choose a single path to reach your goal. On your hardest day you'll be presented with a black box of pieces and told to put it together without knowing what the final image will be. Those days, the ones with the black box, are the days where every skill you've developed will be tested. You'll have to set your goals, develop a strategy based on the information and tools at your disposal, and be prepared to tackle the unexpected.

Wondering what constitutes a "black box"? Imagine receiving a one terabyte hard drive that has been self-collected from a client. On the hard drive are folders labeled 1, 2, 3 etc. and within those folders are folders labeled emails and C drive. Luckily within the emails folder the pst files are named for their custodian; but that's it. All the information you have, regarding the data you have, is set before you. This is a black box. A complete unknown and it is your job to make sense out of it. If this scenario scares and excites you at the same time, then congratulations you are an eDiscovery expert.

An eDiscovery expert can be presented with a black box and understand all the things that went wrong to get to this point, roll up their sleeves ready to dive in, and then find a solution. If you're still early in your career and the idea of a black box scares you, it's ok. Skill sets are built from our experiences and interactions with people who can provide insight into their own. The eDiscovery community is a community of puzzle masters all looking for our next challenge and you should feel empowered to reach out and ask for help. After all, puzzles are way more fun when you do them with friends.

Sincerely,

Amanda Tillman

The Pro (aka: Amanda Tillman)