The Attack Outline

A traditional outline can sometimes be 80 pages long, which can seem extremely burdensome to memorize for your final exam. As it gets closer to final exams and you have a better grip on the material and your professor, it could be helpful to create an *attack outline*.

An attack outline can take many forms (such as only including rules, only including cases, or only including an analysis structure for different issues you might have to analyze on the exam), but the most common is one that is just a shortened and condensed version of your traditional outline.

Step One: Start with a Bigger Outline Already Made

Have an outline that you have already been working on and studying with. Open up a new document, and copy over that same skeleton structure.

Step Two: Transfer Information/Cut Out Information

The next step is to transfer over information from your traditional outline to your attack outline. While doing this, you want to be sure to cut out all irrelevant information. Cutting can seem daunting because you never want to cut something that is actually important. This is why it is important that you make your attack outlines much later in the semester so you have a better idea of what is important and what is not important.

Here is a list of general information you should focus on cutting:

★ Information you thought was important when you first outlined it, but now you realize it is not
★ Extra explanations of concepts you understand clearly now
★ Replace your 1-2 sentences of facts for each of your cases with a buzz word or two if you have a good understanding of the facts (ie: the facts in *Fisher v. Carrousel* can be "tray")
★ Concepts your professor said would not be tested
★ Hypos/Examples if you already have a good understanding of their related concepts

The most important tip with cutting information for your attack outline is that you never want to cut out information you do not understand fully yet, it will only hurt you. For example, if you do not understand the doctrine of transferred intent, you should leave in all further explanations, full descriptions of cases, and all hypos and examples until you do fully understand it.

By the time you finish your attack outline you will hopefully be left with a document that is 20 pages or less, which is much easier to memorize than a traditional outline.