Before You Sign Executive Employment Agreements: A Primer

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Most relationships between employee and employer begin well. Not all end that way, and for those that don't, the terms of the employment agreement take on additional importance. Courts deciphering the parameters of an executive's employment will first look to the existence of, and then the terms found in, a written employment agreement. A judge will look to the intent of the parties as reflected in the language of the document. Most times the court will not look beyond the document itself, and this is significant for an executive who believes some terms of his/her employment are also defined by conversations not reflected in the written agreement. Broadly speaking, employment agreements may be broken down into five major sections.