

# MARKETPLACE

## JOURNAL

### IMMIGRATION CORNER



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(Part 2 of 2)

## Why it's a good idea to have an attorney for your interview or hearing

your case, especially for your interview or hearing, rather than trying to save money and do it on your own. After all, you have waited so long to achieve your "American dream", so I'm sure that you don't want anything to happen just as you are about to "cross the finish line". At the interview, you

may be tired, frightened, nervous, or your mind may go blank for even the most simple of questions, resulting in your saying or doing the wrong thing. That could result in your case being further investigated or possibly being denied, even if you are legitimately eligible for your visa.

or you may have misunderstood the question, and gave an answer that did not fit the question. This may spark suspicion, or create additional questions in the mind of the examiner or judge. You may be rescheduled for another interview, and/or your case could be placed under investigation, therefore prolonging the case. With proper preparation and briefing by an attorney, you could possibly avoid this from happening.

While having an attorney representing you does not "guarantee" that your case will be approved, I think that it could greatly increase your chances, for the following reasons:

1. An attorney can brief or prepare you for your interview or hearing. An attorney can explain to you far in advance of your interview (or hearing), what to expect, the types of questions that may be asked of you, and the correct way to answer those questions, etc. In an interview or hearing, you may be asked a question, and you try to truthfully answer the question. But the answer comes out wrong, because you somehow didn't say what you really meant to, did not provide a full answer,

words, the Interviewing Officer may only want documents that have a direct bearing on your case and eligibility. If you bring a box full of papers that have no bearing on your case, it could possibly complicate matters.

3. An attorney can make sure your rights are protected at the interview or hearing. There are many complications that can arise during interviews. For example, the interviewing officer may suspect fraud, and ask the person to sign a confession. Without an attorney to advise him, this person may go ahead and sign the confession, out of fear and confusion, without even reading it, because he will be very confused and scared, and would not know what rights, remedies, and relief are available to him.

There are other complications that a person may not be able to properly explain to an interviewing officer or an Immigration Judge, like the existence of illegitimate children, discrepancies in birth or marriage certificates, late-registered birth certificates, applications for asylum, CSS/LULAC, DUI's, or other criminal offenses.

Because of your fear or confusion, you may say things that you didn't mean to say, or you

may wind up signing documents (or "confessions"), that you didn't read, simply because it was put in front of you.

With an attorney accompanying you, the attorney can make sure that the interview or hearing is conducted in a fair manner, and that you are not accidentally giving up any of your rights. The attorney can make sure that your rights are being protected.

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Michael J. Gurfinkel is licensed, and an active member of the State Bar of California and New York. All immigration services are provided by, or under the supervision of, an active member of the State Bar of California. Each case is different. The information contained herein (including testimonials, "Success Stories", endorsements and re-enactments) is of a general nature, and is not intended to apply to any particular case, and does not constitute a prediction, warranty, guarantee or legal advice regarding the outcome of your legal matter. No attorney-client relationship is, or shall be, established with any reader.

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## 44% of Filipinos feel economy will improve soon

by MA. ELISA P. OSORIO  
Philstar.com

MANILA – A survey by a global market research firm Synovate said that 44 percent of Filipinos living in Metro Manila, North and South Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao believe that the economy is weak but will improve soon.

"Interestingly enough, Filipinos across the Philippines generally share a sentiment of renewed optimism and this is a good thing as it leads to a greater consumer confidence," Carole Sarthou, managing director of Synovate in the Philippines.

"However, our results show that they have become more conscious when it comes to spending, with close to two thirds paying more attention to prices of food items before making a purchase and this trend may continue throughout the year," Sarthou added.

The survey asked respondents if they had made changes in their monetary habits in the last six months. It revealed that Filipinos were saving less, investing less as well as generally spending less on luxury items.

"It's no real surprise that Filipinos are cutting back on luxuries given the current economic climate. Our results show that only 12 percent of those living in Metro Manila admitted to spending more on luxury items versus the majority who tightened their purse strings when comes to premium and branded goods," Sarthou said.

"On the other hand, we discovered that Filipinos were spending more on necessities with the biggest spenders coming from Metro Manila and South Luzon proving only that necessities outweigh luxury goods for the time being," she added.

When it came to salaries and income, those living in Mindanao or 60 percent believed that they were earning more money than they did in the last six months while 40 percent of Filipinos in South Luzon said that they were taking home less money.

The economic pinch was felt more by those in Luzon, particularly Southern Luzon, and those from the class E households. They are the least optimistic, with about a third saying that the economy would still get worse. Manila and Mindanao are more upbeat.

The survey also asked which items they had already given up and which other items they were prepared to give up in the next six months in view of the current economic situation. ■

### BUSINESS

#### Quote of the Week

*"Before you can really start setting financial goals, you need to determine where you stand financially."*

—David Bach, Personal finance author of *The Armchair Millionaire* and the *Finish Rich* series of books.

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