

10 Tips for Findings and Retaining Clients

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1. Compassion

Clients need to feel heard. They need to know that in the worst moments in their life, you, as their attorney, are there, will provide them with guidance and demonstrate a significant amount of compassion for the issues that they are facing. Clients will remember the compassion you showed during the representation. This will remind them of you in the future when someone is looking for an attorney and your name will be at top of mind to refer you.

2. Responsiveness

Clients want to know that you will be responsive to their questions. This means getting on the phone with them, this means answering their emails and this means being available to clients when they want to come in and sit with you to discuss their case.

3. Thoroughness

Hiring an attorney might be the first interaction your client has with the legal system. They are going to have a ton of questions that will need to be answered. You need to have answers to those questions, or at least be prepared to do the research and legwork to find those answers. Give clients as much information as you can so that they feel like they know what to expect walking into court or joining the zoom link.

4. Providing a Plan of Action

Clients, when interviewing potential attorneys, want to know that the attorney they choose has a plan of action for their case. They want to know that this plan will set them up for success, as best as possible given their circumstances and the facts of their case. They also want to know that their attorney will know how to address any roadblocks that may come up in their cases.

5. Follow Through

Being an attorney is getting the best possible result for your client. After giving your client, the plan for their case, you need to deliver. That does not mean that you have to get everything your client wants, because we all know judges and clients do not always act the way we want and hope, and they don't always come to us with the greatest facts to get them what they want. However, this does not mean that you can't do everything in your power to get them the best result their facts. Create a plan of action, discuss it with your client, and proceed with it. If you were going to send out subpoenas, do so promptly. If you are going to attend a mediation, schedule it and prepare your memo.

6. Management of Client Expectations

So much of what is covered in the initial consultation with a client is about their expectations for a final result. A client's expectations need to be realistic. If you promise the sun, the moon and the stars to the client, they may be disappointed when you are unable to deliver because the facts are no longer favorable, or because a judge disagreed with your legal argument. Clients need to understand that they are not the only part of the equation, but that there is the other side, their attorney and a Judge, Arbitrator or Mediator that may affect the final outcome of their case. Setting expectations early helps prevent disappointment later.

7. Human Touch

Remember, in family law, we are often dealing with people at the worst point in their lives. At the end of the day, this goes hand in hand with having compassion for your clients and the matters that they are facing. Your client is not just a number, they are not just a set of facts. They are a person with feelings and emotions that you need to take into consideration when representing them. Sometimes, this means helping them get out of their own way. Sometimes, this means holding their hand when they need it. People will always remember how you made them feel.

8. Professional Reputation with the Court and Colleagues

Keeping clients can in many ways be easier than finding clients. But having an excellent professional reputation makes both easier. Your reputation is everything in this business. Lawyers love to talk, and word gets around, good, bad, or ugly. Be yourself and inject your unique personality into your work, but be courteous and respectful, always, to colleagues and to court staff. We direct you back to the end of #7— People will always remember how you made them feel.

9. Volunteer Activities

Volunteer activities get your name out there and allow you to meet new people, while also helping out a good cause. This shows people you're willing to work, and it's not all about the money. You never know who you will meet, and it's networking without the forced feel that networking sometimes carries. These activities also help foster your own well-being—it feels good to do nice things for others. This can be a form of self-care. In our line of work, where emotions run high and we are often blamed by clients looking for someone to yell at, it is critically important to take care of yourself.

10. Networking

Some of our best clients come from colleague referrals. If you don't go out and expand your "net" of colleagues, you are limiting your referral sources, which ultimately limits your bottom line. Google and SEO are great, but word of mouth networking often takes you farther, and offers better quality clients, than both of those.