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The Legal Connection

KEEPING LEGAL PROFESSIONALS CONNECTED

LegalTypist's Thoughts On:

Dealing With Attorneys

Hiring an attorney can be a daunting task for many not familiar with the law. Just as with any profession, there are good attorneys and not so good attorneys too. Here are a few items to consider in the selection of any trusted advisor:

- Lawyers are Humans

We are all humans. If you think that an attorney has attained some level of humandome unavailable to those of us lesser mortals - WAKE UP!

Along with inspiring a feeling of trust, respect and the certainty that you can discuss anything with your attorney; ultimately, you are going to get better service from a practitioner you like. It's a fact - humans like to do business with humans they like. Do you like your doctor? What about your accountant? Same principle applies to attorneys.

- You are Paying for a Service - Not an Outcome!

Everyone forgets this. Throwing

gobs of money and hiring only the most costly lawyer can have little effect on the outcome of your case - other than assuring the attorney will get a great deal of exposure from your matter should it be newsworthy. Ultimately, you need a champion - someone willing to put in the time and thought required to protect or advance your case. Not all champions charge top dollar! A smart, resourceful associate or single practitioner with lesser overhead can be the perfect lawyer to handle your matter.

- The Consultation is Key

The consultation is generally where an attorney will meet with the potential client and learn/discuss the merits of the case. Call it a "consultation" but consider it a mutual interview.

Make sure to discuss how/when you are kept informed as a client on the status of your case; a contact telephone number for a support staff member should the attorney be unavailable; and any other issues regarding the management or details of your case you feel is relevant.



If there are no attorneys in any of your networking groups, contact the local County or your State Bar Association for a referral to a member in good standing.

TECHNOLOGY COMMON SENSE

WHO'S TERMS? HOPE FOR THE BEST, BUT PLAN FOR THE WORST!

When signing up for an on line account, not only should you read any posted Terms of Service - you should print and store a copy too.

Terms of Service are considered a contract between you and the other party within the Terms (sometimes NOT the same company as the website you are currently visiting). If you do not read the Terms, how do you know you are not agreeing to crazy cancellation or termination fees; monthly minimums and the like?

Additionally, companies change their Terms of Service without notice all the time. Remember the laws have barely caught up with e-mail, let alone the internet!

Along with reading, **always** print to paper and/or .pdf , a copy of every Terms to which you agree just in case there is ever an issue.

Digital Technology

Do It Right!

Slow Down. Just because digital tools afford us the ability to shoot off an e-mail within seconds of having a thought or leave a voicemail immediately following a question entering consciousness, does not mean we should!

All messages should be short and to the point and be respectful of the recipient's time. By taking a few moments to mull over your message, you may stumble across a resolution yourself or additional points which need to be addressed may come to light.

Be Professional At All Times. Yes, that joke your buddy sent you last night was a hoot, but you should never forward such communications to business contacts.

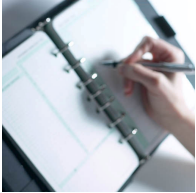
To protect against spam, you also should also not disclose your recipient's e-mail addresses when sending to a list. Use the "bcc" (blind carbon copy) for multiple addresses and place your own e-mail address in the "To" field.

Carefully Use "Forward To All" and "Reply To All" Functions. I have witnessed embarrassing moments of others (and recall my own painful "oops" in this regard) when messages intended only for the original sender, are, in fact, sent to everyone who may have been cc'd on the original e-mail. Be especially careful when responding to a messages from a group list.

Do A Full Read Of Each E-mail. With e-mail, always read through your message from start to finish before hitting "Send".

This last reading is crucial in catching any missing information or attachments and allows you to get a feel for the "tone" of the message.

On important communications, I suggest a break between drafting and this final read. Sometimes a trip away from your PC to get a drink or wash your hands will make you "fresh" for the final review and help you catch those typos or grammatical errors even spell checkers miss!



UPCOMING EVENTS

Mark Your Calendar

Free Technology Teleconference Series presented by Master Virtual Assistant, Andrea Cannavina. Join **Andrea Thursdays at 4:00 pm EST** via telephone for 20 minutes of practical tips and tricks on the day's topic



LEGALTYPIST

Date	Topic
02/01/2007 -	E-Mail
02/08/2007 -	Creating A Digital Workflow
02/15/2007 -	Go Virtual! Tools of the Trade
02/22/2007 -	Websites

More info: registerme@legaltypist.com with course topic as subject or in body.

Class size is limited. All classes recorded.

Register by 1-25-2007
FOR COMPLIMENTARY ADMISSION TO EXHIBIT
HALL AND KEYNOTE SESSIONS



<http://www.legaltypist.com/LegalTechApp.pdf>

THE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION

Date	Topic
01/18/2007 -	Capturing More Time ... and Keeping Your Clients Happy While Doing It
1/23/2007 -	Cybercrime, Privacy and Ethics: Domestic and International Implications
02/13/2007 -	Copyright Basics: What Litigators Need to Know to Protect Clients in the Internet Age

For a list of all classes available and whether they are CLE approved: navigate to: ABA Calendar (<http://www.abanet.org/cle/calendar.html>)

Registration required. Click on individual class links to register.

Top 5 Reasons Not to Hire a Virtual Assistant

By Bisi Adepo-Bassey

Virtual assistants are becoming extremely popular especially in the small business realm. This fast growing group of professionals often possessing a specialty in one or more of marketing, graphic design, general administration, bookkeeping, web design, event management, phone answering service... and the list goes on. Think of any segment of your business; there are probably virtual assistants out there that can provide support to you in that area. Here are a few reasons why you should not hire one.

1. You are a Jack of all trades and a master of none. You don't care about the quality of work or service you provide to your clients or the business image you project with your unprofessional documents and work. You are happy taking on the job of 4 or 5 people even if it results in half-done projects. A virtual assistant can take a number of mundane or specialty tasks off you so that you can focus on managing your business effectively.

2. You are a glutton for stress. You thrive on stress and will rather go without vacations, downtime or quality time with your loved ones. You enjoy working when you are ill and run down. Your aim is to burn yourself out while working round the clock and you love to sweat the small stuff. Virtual assistant can take on your overflow work or cover your business during vacations or sickness. You can hire them for ongoing projects or one-shot projects.

3. Who cares about money anyway? You are a small or mid-sized business owner who would rather hire full-time staff to cover seasonal or part-time positions. You are happy to pay your staff even if the their workday activity allocation is similar to the example below:

- Daydreaming – 20%
- Keeping in touch with family and friends – 30%
- Online shopping – 10% (20% at Christmas)
- Pay personal bills - (5%)
- Office discussion group on Survivor, American Idol or The Apprentice – 25%
- Performance of duties according to job description – 10% (75% when the boss is in the vicinity)

Virtual assistants are only paid for the work they do, not the work they don't do.

4. You would rather use office space and equipment inefficiently. You appreciate dust-gathering office furniture and office equipment that would not operate themselves. Virtual assistants work out of their own fully furnished offices and are able to provide finished projects to you whether you are on a cruise in the Bahamas or at your home office.

5. You aspire to receive an award from your local chamber of commerce in recognition of your efforts in one or more of the above listed points.

Enjoy the humour intended in this article, but thoroughly consider and explore ways in which a virtual assistant can partner with you for success.

Bisi Adepo-Bassey is the owner of Business Aid, providers of business support services. <http://www.mybusinessaid.com/>

Article Source: <http://www.EzineArticles.com>

FEBRUARY 2007



February 2 – Groundhog Day



February 19 – President's Day



February 14th



February 20 – Mardi Gras

February 4 – Super Bowl Sunday



February 21 – Ash Wednesday

DEALING WITH ATTORNEYS

- Know The Name and Phone Number of a General Practitioner

You should know the name and phone number of a general practitioner with an office close to your home or business.

Unfortunately, many of us only think to locate an attorney when a specific need arises. Often such needs are due to a sad or stressful event - a time when most people are apt to make rushed or emotionally charged decisions. This may include signing a retainer with an attorney simply to move a process along (such as a divorce or probate) rather than to establish a trusted relationship.

But you can't know what type of attorney you will need until the time arises - which is why you should know a good, general practitioner - to use for little items like applying for a permit or working through a traffic violation. This person then becomes a trusted resource you can turn to get a referral to a specialist. Think of it like your general doctor who refers you to medical specialists when needed - same concept only there's no insurance company footing the bill! ;)

- Laws Don't Remove the Need for Judgment or Common Sense!

The law can be so stupid. This short film (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kLJrBSfAabM>) illustrates how breaking something down to the lowest common denominator ends up being where it all began in the first place!

Only now we've had too many law suits, the creation of organizations, institutions and laws to protect the differences rather than advance the common.

The law is not always right and a very astute attorney once told me a successful negotiation is where everyone walks away feeling like they lost. Very rarely does one "win" when the judicial system is in play.

In the end, use your best judgment and apply common sense to every situation, including hiring an attorney.



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