



Tips for working with your litigation lawyer

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Tips for Working with your Litigation Lawyer

Mann & Partners, LLP

At Mann & Partners, LLP, we recognize that clients are concerned with keeping legal costs under control.

It is also important to us that your legal fees be kept to a minimum, while ensuring that you and your legal matters are well taken care of. Accordingly, we offer some tips to assist you in communicating with your lawyers and minimizing costs.

WE WORK AS A TEAM

After we meet with you for an initial consultation, your file normally will be assigned to an associate lawyer to handle your file on a day to day basis, subject to review and guidance from a more senior lawyer. The amount of senior review and guidance required will depend on the issues in each specific case.

You benefit from being charged lower rates for more junior lawyers, who work on drafting of correspondence and written materials. You also have the benefit of knowing that these junior associates are more readily accessible to speak with you.

BILLABLE TIME CAN ADD UP QUICKLY!

Keep in mind that the primary way litigation lawyers measure the services that they sell to clients is by docketing time spent working on the file. This is also covered in our retainer agreement with you.

Some clients are not aware that once we are retained, all of the time spent working on your file—including telephone calls and email messages—is billable. It takes time for us to switch between files and think about your questions in order to provide you with satisfactory answers to questions and recommendations on how to proceed.

It is to everyone's advantage that you arrange times to speak with us on the telephone or group your questions together in one longer email for us to respond to fully, rather than several short emails. This approach benefits you as our client, and the lawyer, because the time that we spend on your file will be more focussed and productive.

It is our job to give you advance notice of key dates on which events in your case will take place. We will prepare you for those events and tell you when we need you to assist us to prepare documents and materials for your case or review and approve what we have drafted for you. It is also our job to frequently obtain instructions from you (based on our advice and recommendations to you) on the various steps in your case, especially regarding delivering or accepting offers to settle.

WE WILL KEEP YOU INFORMED

We appreciate that you may be feeling nervous about your case and that you may want to feel in control by taking proactive steps to move the case forward.

You will likely find, however, that asking us for status updates on too frequent a basis may become frustrating to you because you may feel that things ought to be happening on your case that are not, and you may also end up paying more legal fees than you want to.

We ask you to trust us to know when it is more appropriate to take certain actions in a case to move it forward and when it is prudent to wait. We are also good judges of knowing what we need to inform you of immediately, as opposed to what requires our consideration and analysis before we go to you. We want to approach you with answers to the questions that we know you will have regarding a specific development. We will keep you up to date on developments and seek your instructions as required.

OUR FOCUS

Please remember that at any given time we are handling numerous matters for numerous clients. When we are appearing for you at hearings or meeting with you to discuss your case, you expect to have the benefit of our full preparation and concentration. This means that we will have to be unavailable to other clients while we focus on your case.

Likewise, we may be out of the office or be concentrating intensely on files that we are preparing for hearings or other key litigation events for other clients when you contact us. As a result of other client dealings and litigation events, the length of time that it takes us to respond to your calls or questions will depend on the degree of urgency of your matter. We will do our best to respond to you in a timely manner and we request you to recognize that we are good judges of the urgency with which a response is required.

The best way to deal with this reality is to contact the assistant of the lawyer who is your primary contact. The assistant may have an answer to your question. If they do not, they will be able to judge the urgency of your matter and schedule a time for you to speak with us. In the event that we are away from the office, they will also be able to judge whether there is a degree of urgency that requires involving another lawyer from our office to assist you.

Should you perceive that an extended period of time has passed and that you want to communicate with us about your case, please contact the relevant assistant and schedule time for a face-to-face meeting or a telephone call, so that we can answer your questions or address your concerns in a meaningful way.

GOOD PEOPLE. GREAT LAWYERS.

It is our hope that these points will help you to better understand the process of litigation, and to minimize the costs of your legal pursuit. If at any point you have questions or concerns, please let us know.

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