

How to Fire a Client!

Posted by [Martha Newman, J.D., PCC, TopLawyerCoach, LLC](#) • February 25, 2010 • [Printer-friendly](#)

Replace a Bad Client with a BETTER CLIENT!



Talking about dropping clients may seem like a strange topic in this economic climate where ADDING CLIENTS is what all of us are focusing on.

We need to build that client base no matter what, right?

Wrong!

Tough times make **SELECTIVITY** crucial.

Troublesome Traits.

Troublesome clients are not only energy drains, they can literally suck the life out of your practice.

So, which clients generally fall at the bottom?

Top Lawyer Coach, LLC
601 Penn Street
Fort Worth, TX 76102

817/992-6711
newman@toplawyercoach.com



David Leffler, a New York City-based lawyer, lays out some troubling characteristics in a recent [GPSolo Magazine](#) article.

- Constant complaining about your work, your availability, your bill, etc.
- Doesn't heed your advice - ever!
- Skips out on a bill or is slow to pay.
- Is unreachable until a day before trial.

Wasted time. Wasted energy. Personal misery aside, these types of high-maintenance, low-return clients are bad for your practice...and for your HEALTH.

Think about it. All the time you spend with a huge headache of a client who drives you nuts or doesn't pay on time could be otherwise devoted to a better-quality client who follows your advice, pays your bill, and is a pleasure to work with.

In addition, Leffler writes:

"The amount of time and emotional energy taken up by this [bad] client is way out of proportion to the amount of revenue brought in. Not to mention, you're affected when you're NOT working with them. Trouble clients can challenge your self-esteem, making it harder for you to do well with other clients."

While it's hard to actually cut a client loose, it's important to understand that doing so will most likely lead to **more work**. Once you fire a counter-productive client, you'll have:

- More time to devote to your professional relationships with existing clients.
- More time for [lawyer marketing](#) and business development.
- More time for [networking](#) and [pinging contacts](#) and referrals.

How to Delicately Fire a Client

Once you've determined which clients are weighing you down, it's time to give them the boot!

Termination of services should always be carried out politely and in person. Never do it by e-mail!

Leffler reminds attorneys to keep malpractice in mind as well.

"You can't just leave a client high and dry in the middle of a lawsuit. Be sure to observe all local rules in this regard."

Top Lawyer Coach, LLC
601 Penn Street
Fort Worth, TX 76102

817/992-6711
newman@toplawyercoach.com



Finally, be courteous enough to make yourself available to the next lawyer. Make sure the client's file is ready and waiting for new counsel ASAP! Be proactive!

A proactive lawyer is a productive lawyer.

Don't be bogged down by unhealthy attorney-client relationships.

Cut **bothersome clients** loose and start reaping the rewards!

Top Lawyer Coach, LLC

601 Penn Street
Fort Worth, TX 76102

817/992-6711
newman@toplawyercoach.com

