

4 Ways to Manage Client Expectations

Posted by [Martha Newman, J.D., PCC, TopLawyerCoach, LLC](#) • March 16, 2011 • [Printer-friendly](#)

Clients Judge Service Based on Expectations - and Whether They Were Met or Exceeded.



Managing client expectations may seem like a tall order for many lawyers, but there are many simple strategies that almost appear to be a matter of common sense.

Since attorneys play a large role in setting client expectations, it's important for them to feel like those expectations were met - or even exceeded. To do this, clients have to be constantly managed so that they are not set up for disappointment down the road.

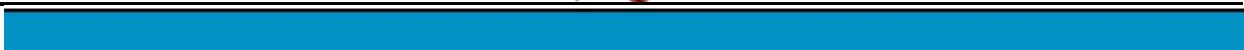
Here are some strategies, presented by behavioral scientists Richard B. Chase and Sriram Dasu, to help you keep clients happy and loyal.

1. Finish strong.

The end of a service encounter is critically important. Why? Because it stays with clients; it's what they remember most when they recall working with you.

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

817/992-6711
newman@toplawyercoach.com



While first impressions count, last impressions endure - so, try to go out with a bang.

2. Don't delay bad news.

No client wants to receive bad news, and no lawyer wants to deliver it. Yet, waiting until the last possible second to pass on bad news is the worst thing you can do. Get it out of the way as soon as possible. You don't want the bad news to dominate the client's recollection of you.

3. Offer choices.

Clients are much happier and satisfied when they believe they have some control over a process. That said, give clients choices especially when it comes to choosing between undesirable alternatives.

4. Stick to consistency.

Consistency and rituals provide comfort during legal service encounters. They are used to mark key moments in a relationship, establish credentials, and create a feeling of inclusion. Common rituals include kickoff dinners, weekly summary calls, and progress reports.

Small lapses in rituals - like a forgotten summary call - can easily shift a client's impression from success to failure.

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

817/992-6711
newman@toplawyercoach.com

