

9 Ways You [and Your Clients] Benefit from Paralegal Support

By Kris L. Canaday, Freelance Paralegal

Whether you're thinking about hiring a paralegal or retaining paralegal support services for the first time, you'll benefit both personally and professionally from the support – as will your clients. Here are just a few of those benefits.

- 1. More Time.** Having a paralegal on your team, whether regular or on-call, gives you more time to work on other tasks that demand your attention. In turn, you maximize the time you invest in your practice and your clients' legal matters.
- 2. Reduced stress.** Delegating substantive legal work to your paralegal means you have fewer items on your "to-do" list and more time for other matters, which reduces overwhelm and, by extension, a significant amount of stress.
- 3. Support.** Whether you're a solo or a corporate attorney, you benefit from working with a paralegal – from having someone to discuss and think through the case with you to having someone performing much of the substantive work and client communications for you while you work on other aspects of your client's legal matter.
- 4. Work-life balance.** Seriously. It is possible. When you have paralegal support, the time you gain and the stress you lose means more time for life.
- 5. Improved organization.** By nature, paralegals are organized. They have to be in order to develop case files, obtain and organize information, develop and analyze fact patterns, organize witnesses, and prepare trial binders. When you work with a paralegal, everything tends to become better organized and easier to move forward.
- 6. Increased efficiency.** Similarly, paralegals have the ability to see both the big picture and the finest of details, allowing them to make connections that may otherwise be missed, be it in a litigation case or office functionality. They're capable of prioritizing and reprioritizing to keep everything running smoothly (and . . . forward). Together with their organizational skills and problem-solving abilities, they significantly improve work-flow efficiency.
- 7. Enhanced client service.** Paralegals provide a level of service to your clients that you might otherwise be unable. As an attorney, your job and focus is on resolving your clients' legal issue. Your paralegal is a voice for you and an ear for your clients; a continual connection between attorney and client. The work product your paralegal produces provides an extra level of detail and understanding for your clients and allows their legal matters to move forward at a

faster pace than they may otherwise. Happy clients = increased referrals; the number one source for new business.

8. Lower legal fees for clients. There's much controversy today about legal fees and many firms are looking at alternative billing practices as a result. In-house attorneys must demonstrate value to the entity or corporation while private consumers are demanding lower legal fees from private practice firms. Assigning a paralegal to your clients' cases allows you to provide enhanced legal services while minimizing your clients' legal fees as a result of the lower paralegal billing rate.

9. Increase in billable hours. You can only bill so many hours in a day, especially if you're a solo practitioner. However, because paralegals perform substantive legal work, you can effectively double the number of hours your practice bills each day when you use a paralegal. Increased billable hours = increased profit margin.

I realize these are just a few benefits of paralegal support. Which are most beneficial to you? What other benefits do you find essential to your utilization of paralegals? Share your thoughts and experiences in the comments section below.

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