Tips for Working with a Lawyer

This article will highlight some of the best tips for working with a lawyer. Although it may seem like a strained relationship right off the bat, if you can form a solid bond with your legal representative, it may have a big impact on the future success of your case. If you feel comfortable working with your lawyer, and, in turn, your attorney feels comfortable working with you, it can do wonders for your case, not to mention reduce the stress that you will likely be putting on yourself when at trial.

However, like any type of relationship, the relationship that you have when working with a lawyer is a two way street, meaning that your attorney will have to work at it just as much as you will. Lawyers can work on attorney-client relationships in many ways, but perhaps the best means is to keep lines of communication open. A good attorney will always update you with necessary information and also be able to answer questions for you in a timely fashion. In addition, good attorneys will also help you prepare for important moments in your case, like testifying in court or answering questions at a deposition.

As just mentioned, you too will also have a great impact on the working relationship that you have with a lawyer. There are plenty of steps that you can take that will better the workflow and ultimately save you time and money, and may even increase your chances of winning your case.

Pass on pertinent information. After you have gone through the process of selecting and hiring a lawyer to represent you in your case, you should round up every scrap of information that is relevant to your case and give it all to your attorney. Give as much information as possible, even if you think it may not be that pertinent. Lawyers are much like human sieves when it comes to information; they can sort out what will be needed in the lawsuit much better than you will be able to. The information that they find may be used to bolster certain parts of your case. In addition, some types of information can also be used to predict what kinds of arguments will be brought against your case.

Be sure to keep copies of all the information that you give your lawyer, though, in case something terrible happens like a fire at the law office.

Do what is asked. Not only should you do what your lawyer asks you to do, but you should also do it well. At the beginning of your legal representation, your attorney will most likely ask you to write down everything that has happened up until you hired your attorney. They do this for many reasons, but perhaps the most important is to make sure that they file your case on time. Often, if you do not complete this timeline, the lawyer may miss crucial deadlines that could stop your case before it starts.

Get requested information. You will often have better and easier access to certain types of records and information (such as medical histories and reports) than your attorney will. If your lawyer asks you to obtain any of these documents, you should do so as quickly as possible. Remember, the law typically establishes tight deadlines that have harsh consequences if not met.

Respond to your lawyer quickly. As just mentioned, there are numerous deadlines in any case that must be met by your attorney. If your lawyer asks you to do something or get a document, he or she probably has a very good reason for asking you to do so. If you cannot respond in a timely manner to your attorney (perhaps you are working out of town for work for two weeks), be sure to tell your attorney about your situation. It will look much better for your case if your attorney is able to ask for an extension of a deadline rather than just missing it with no explanation.

Know your schedule and tell your attorney. When working with a lawyer on your lawsuit, you will often need to be in attendance or participate in many parts of your case. For example, in a personal injury case, you may be called upon to answer questions at a deposition about the accident that injured you or about the extent of your injuries. These depositions and other procedures are often scheduled months in advance. If your work or personal schedule will call you away from town at a critical time, let your attorney know so that he or she has the opportunity to try to reschedule the procedure.
Be honest. The more open and honest you are with your attorney, the better your case will go. If you were perhaps a little bit tipsy when you were rear-ended by the truck that caused you have severe back pain, you must tell your attorney this. Even if the issue is never brought up during your case, the more that your attorney knows, the better he or she will be able to prepare for your case. It is better for you to be a little embarrassed about telling the truth than it is for your attorney to be blindsided by an argument he never considered before hearing it in court.

Ask for explanations. Sometimes lawyers get so caught up in the legal world that they forget that most people have not heard of words like "res ipsa loquitur," "mandatory pre-trial arbitration," or "stare decisis." If you are unfamiliar with what is going on in your case, ask for an explanation from your attorney. The more you understand about what is going on, the more you will be able to make important decisions about your case.
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