

Are You about to Lose a Client?

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Action Steps to Help You Save a Valuable Client from Defection

It's very rare for a valuable client to defect without warning. The signs are there - you just have to know how to look for them.

Sadly, most attorneys simply ignore signs of discontent. Signs, like:

- **Increased invoice disputes.**

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- **Increased late payments.**
- **Specific negative feedback.**
- **Buying a reduced number of services.**
- **Long lapses of time between assignments.**

Some clients are straightforward about their relationship with you. In fact, they may feel comfortable enough to call and terminate business with you. Others may be a little more passive, choosing to say nothing about their discontent but still display the signs.

Whichever types of clients you have on your roster, you need to **SPRING INTO ACTION** if you sense a defection on the horizon. Harry Mills, author of *The Rainmaker's Toolkit*, recommends the following three-step formula, also known as the **EAR recovery formula**.

1. Empathize.

Prove that you understand the client's problem and his or her needs. Learn their breaking point. What caused them to say, "That's it, I've had enough!"

Next, get to the heart of the anger festering inside them. Ask about the problems they've experienced with your firm before.

2. Ask.

You've listened to your client's problems and concerns, now it's time to ask what you can do to save the business relationship. Be upfront.

You could ask, "What can we do to compensate for all the trouble we've put you to and keep you as a client?"

3. Respond.

This is your time to shine. Respond in a way that demonstrates that you understand the seriousness of their complaints and that you're committed to making them right. Do not come across petty or insensitive. Low-cost or grand offers will only send clients running for the door - faster!

Use this system to help you identify which clients are about to defect. **Lend an ear, ask the right questions, and then respond with a tailored solution.**

A happy client is a client for life.

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