

Communicating with Your Client

Direct discussion to support written communication is always wise—particularly for complex or critical matters—to confirm both parties have a common understanding of what has been written.

Keeping your client informed: A checklist

The following checklist provides communication recommendations specifically for lawyers interacting with clients. Keep up regular communication with clients by:

1. Notifying them of any developments and updates to progress.
2. Make every effort to explain things clearly. Legal terms and processes that are common to lawyers but foreign to most clients may need to be explained. Seek feedback that demonstrates clients have understood key terms or processes.
3. Establish practice management systems that enable efficient procedural responses to queries and complaints.
4. Keep all matters confidential and refuse to act for anyone else if doing so may compromise that confidentiality.
5. Provide an itemized bill clearly showing the work performed and amount charged.
6. Effective communication also involves being considerate of a client's concerns and priorities, as well as practicing good management and administration. This will minimize complaints and support a case if a complaint is made.
7. Communicating in writing as much as possible. Communicating in writing is an important professional skill. Good written communication is recognized by clear, actionable information and messages. A clear style should be used for both client communication and for communication with other lawyers and professionals involved in your case. Essential information should never be allowed to become lost in the fine print.