

How To Choose The Right Bankruptcy Lawyer

<http://fpbankruptcylaw.com/how-to-choose-the-right-bankruptcy-lawyer/>

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So you are in over your head and the bills are starting to pile up. You may have a lien on your bank account, your wages are being garnished or creditors simply won't stop calling. Your car has been repossessed or you have been hit with a [foreclosure](#). Whatever the case, you are fed up and have decided to do something about your financial situation. You have decided that bankruptcy may be the right option for you.

So, you go online or open your local paper and you start your quest to choose the right bankruptcy lawyer. Quickly you are overwhelmed with the sheer number of lawyers and the unbelievable amount of information available. There are literally thousands of lawyers in Long Island and Queens and many of them practice in the bankruptcy area.

It does not have to be a difficult process. There are many bankruptcy lawyers who are experienced, compassionate and competent. Remember, filing bankruptcy is a very complicated process. There is no such thing as a simple case so finding the right lawyer for you is crucial.



#1: The Free Consultation

Many lawyers believe that they should bill for every minute of their time spent dealing with client matters. In fact, many still bill on an hourly basis and charge for consultations. [This method of billing is outdated and wrong.](#)

The first step in choosing the right bankruptcy lawyer is obviously the free consultation. If a lawyer is refusing to offer a free consultation, move on. This is an important meeting for both the lawyer and the potential client. As a potential client, you get a feel for the lawyer's personality and professionalism. As a lawyer, the free consultations provides the proper atmosphere for correctly assessing a client's case and the probability of success.

Take advantage of free consultations and meet with more than one lawyer. You will be surprised with the information you will receive and you will have an easier time assessing who you feel comfortable with.

#2: Privacy (The Lawyer's Office)

Recently, I have had two clients come to me after consulting with someone else. Both clients said they felt extremely uncomfortable with their meetings with this other lawyer because of the office environment. "The office was hectic and messy," my client said. In addition, my client told me that other client files were open and visible during the consultation, a very bad sign in my opinion.

[Attorney/Client privilege](#) is not only important, but it is part of the ethical code. Exposed client files in a lawyer's office violate this confidentiality. More importantly, this type of display shows an extreme lack of respect for client dignity, especially in the bankruptcy area.

While there is nothing wrong with a "messy desk," client documents should never be exposed and available during meetings.

#3: Read The Blog

Most lawyers today maintain a blog where they openly communicate news and update readers on

their views and opinions. I suggest you read a lawyer's blog before consulting with them. While not a requirement, I think there is something to be said for choosing someone who is willing to share information with the public and communicate on a more personal level.

In many cases, a blog can serve as a small window into a person's soul and yes, lawyers have souls. Reading the blog can connect you with that person on a personal level before your initial consultation.

In addition, a blog helps demonstrate a lawyer's commitment to staying current and up-to-date on bankruptcy related issues and news. Again, this may seem meaningless, but an informed lawyer is usually a successful one.

#4: Disregard The Fee

This may be bad news for people contemplating bankruptcy, however, I feel this is extremely important. It is so tempting to simply choose the lawyer who quotes you the "cheapest" fee. This cannot be the deciding factor.

Lower attorney fees usually means higher client volume. Initially this may seem like a good thing. This attorney handles a ton of cases so he must be good right? Well, maybe but not necessarily. Remember, [McDonald's serves over 68 million people daily](#). It does not mean they serve quality food to those customers. It is important to remember that the other cases a lawyer has handled are insignificant. There is only one case that matters and that is yours.

Also, lower fees may also mean less attorney involvement. Again, bankruptcy cases are all complicated and an experienced lawyer should work on your case from beginning to end. Important case work should never be handled by a non-attorney employee.

Shockingly, I have attended Bankruptcy Court hearings where people come up to me and ask me if I know who their attorney is because they never met him/her. In my opinion, this borders on unethical, but I am certain that they paid an "affordable" fee.

#5: A Lawyer Should Represent You Holistically

By this, I mean that the lawyer you hire should take a true interest in who you are and the problems you are facing. Bankruptcy is a tough and stressful decision and a compassionate, respectful lawyer can ease you through the process relatively painlessly. You need to feel comfortable not only with the lawyer's professional credentials, but with their personal connection as well.

In addition, representation should not end at the close of your bankruptcy case. Hire a lawyer who is willing to help you [post-bankruptcy to get back on your feet](#), combat abusive creditors, repair your credit and move on into a successful financial future.

So, while this is an extremely difficult time in your life and you don't know where to turn, choosing the right bankruptcy lawyer could make all the difference. Make sure you do your research, [read their blog](#) and meet for a free consultation. Hire the lawyer you feel most comfortable with who respects you and your situation and treats you with the dignity that you deserve.

Do not settle for less.