

What makes a client happy? Most lawyers don't really have a clue.

I'm an Attorney, however I feel like I'm really in a service industry. Yes, our success really hangs on our communication skills. I've been in management positions all my life: Construction Foreman, University Administrator, State Department Admissions officer, and Department Head Foreign Service Officer. Believe it or not, generally speaking it's not about how smart you are – it's about your communication skills. Any Attorney can handle the job. We're highly educated, we know the law. Some of us can even handle a Trial. However, what distinguishes us from other Attorneys is how we communicate with our clients, witnesses, experts, etc. Success comes into play with good communication – whether or not we care about our clients on a personal level as well as . I look at the qualities of an Attorney similar to that of a “family” Doctor. None of us are stupid. Clients want to feel important in the relationship. You know how patients rave about their doctor.

Since we only handle injury/ accident cases, it's important that we foster those personal skills such as sympathy and empathy on top of competence. That's how we meet the expectations of our clients. Since the cases Nelson & Natale receive are referrals from other clients rather than advertising, we want to perfect those interpersonal skills to the max. It's likely that half the Attorneys practicing today are disillusioned. They have no understanding of the business of law. Sure they can draft a 'Pleading' and they can answer 'Interrogatories.' But to really connect with the client where they look at their Attorney as an advisor as well as a wise and trusted mentor – this goes beyond the scope of practicing law. This is what separates successful lawyers from unsuccessful lawyers.

Clients want to feel important in the process of their Attorney handling their case. They want you to explain the process to them. They want to understand the steps of how Nelson & Natale navigate their case. That depends on your listening to them rather than them listening to you. Does your client look at you as a professional who treats them with utmost importance? These elements and skills you don't learn in law school – you probably didn't learn them at home. As a matter of fact you likely didn't learn them at all. If you are a natural communicator and you like people, then your challenges are far easier. You'll be meeting all your clients expectations. One of the reasons why Nelson & Natale maintains its loyal client base is that we develop that special relationship that we have with the client

Remember that clients don't want lawyers – are you crazy? They want solutions to their problems. Customers don't want drill bits – they want holes. Lawyers miss the boat if they act like a public utility in the process. They act as if they are part of a process likened to a client calling up Edison and having your lights turned on. But clients don't want that at all. They want you to be there for them. It's like when your wife comes home after work and anxiously tells you a long story about what happened during her day. She's not looking for a solution to any of

the problems she's encountered. On the other hand, your client is actually paying you for a solution – and you have to give it to them just as you would to a best friend.