



## How to Make Your Clients Happy at the Holidays and All Year Around

This time of year, as we review the gift wish lists of our little ones, we get the rare experience of knowing exactly what a person wants.

As overfull and unrealistic as some of those gift lists may be, at least we know precisely how to make the recipient most satisfied. But our professional relationships aren't always as straightforward, even though they may be as demanding, and there's always room for improvement when communicating with clients.

It goes without saying that good communication is at the root of good relationships. Unsatisfied clients who don't refer others cite poor communication as a key reason. Want to improve your client satisfaction and increase the number of referrals you receive? Use the American Bar Association's "client communication quotient" (CCQ) self-assessment to identify aspects of your communications with clients that need improvement, as well to understand how you thrive. Then try these tactics recommended by the ABA to help your client relationships grow.

**1. Identify your internal and external obstacles:** Become self-aware of your own communication style and professional presence. Reflect on past experiences with clients that went well, especially those that resulted in referrals. What were your strengths, and how have you changed since then? Also think about some of the more difficult client relationships you've had. Of all the factors within your control, what could you have done differently? Aim to develop an honest picture of your personality, strengths, weaknesses, and behaviors.

Next, become aware of the external factors that have impacted your communications with clients. Does your task management prevent you from giving enough attention to some clients? Does your work environment allow you to have uninterrupted, focused meetings? Are you using the most effective technology to support your work? One by one, figure out the most effective ways to improve these external conditions.

**2. Increase your client awareness:** Get to know your clients' backgrounds and personality characteristics, even beyond their particular legal issues. Doing so helps you to understand their perspectives and needs, which enables you to structure your feedback effectively and approach issues from their perspective.

Rather than being just an expert legal resource, build a partnership by including clients in decision-making conversations and discussions of possible solutions. And don't undervalue the importance of providing regular updates to clients, no matter how much or little progress is being made.

**3. Listen actively:** Of course we know that you *listen* to your clients; we want to make sure that your clients feel *heard*. Are you sometimes distracted from listening carefully each time you communicate? Do you tend to move on to problem-solving before understanding the complexity of the issues? Have you made assumptions that have gone unchecked because you haven't reflected your understanding back to the client? If so, work on developing your communication strategies by asking for the client's perspective, listening with full attention, and presenting questions to build clarity. Make it a habit to reflect your understanding back to the client to let them know you're on the same page.

Use the American Bar Association's website's search feature to find the CCQ self-assessment or go to: <https://shar.es/iMYPsq>



### A Note From the Editor

**For everything.... there is a season....**

Winter, my favorite time of the year. My hair finally looks good. I get to break out my Italian boots and scarves. And for some reason, I feel filled with energy, every time I go outside. My dog bolts across the yard when there's a cool breeze. I feel like I could do the same, but for my bad ankles. Even so, I still love this season and I look forward to sharing a little of it with all of you!

This year, **NorthStar Legal, Inc.** is proud to announce that we will be a Silver Sponsor of the **CFCALA-Central Florida Chapter Association of Legal Administrators** and also continuing our Patron Membership with the **CFPA-Central Florida Paralegal Association**. So glad to be a part if it all!

*-Jennifer Magnusson*

**NorthStar Legal, Inc.** is excited to present to you our quarterly newsletter, **POLARIS!**

Since early times, navigators have used Polaris, also called the North Star, to guide them towards their destinations. At NorthStar Legal, Inc., our goal is to assist you in navigating your hiring process.

Dear Santa,  
Please Refer All  
Inquiries Regarding  
Naughty Behavior  
To My Attorney...

### QUOTE OF THE DAY:

"Happy Festivus!!

A holiday for the rest of us!! May all of your grievances be aired, and your feats of strength be tested this holiday season!"

*~ Jerry Seinfeld*

### TEMP DISCOUNT OFFER

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Stu's Views

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