

Selling Your Lawyers On Client Surveys

Lawyers often balk at the idea of client surveys. The following article gives suggestions for convincing the naysayers and advice on whether to move forward without lawyer approval.

By Sally J. Schmidt

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One positive outcome of the increased competitive nature of the legal profession has been a growing appreciation for a firm's existing clientele. As research has shown, a firm's current clients can be responsible for up to 80 percent of its business through on-going work or referrals. Beyond the research is common sense; it simply stands to reason that a firm should satisfy its existing clients before striking out to develop new ones.

This attention to clients has taken many forms in law firms, the most important of which is to implement procedures to monitor client satisfaction. To this end, many law firms are beginning to explore the concept of client surveys or audits.

Unfortunately, for many proponents of the client survey or audit process, the firm's lawyers can provide a formidable obstacle. The following reactions are not atypical:

"I don't want anyone talking to my clients."

"I know what my clients think."

"Clients will start to focus on negatives."

"Clients will think it's tacky."

"Clients will think we're in trouble."

"Clients are too busy."