

PRESENTATION 3: *What Client Representatives Really Want, Part 1*

Internal clients are other people or departments you serve within your organization. External clients are organizations. When you take a client to lunch, what you're really doing is taking a client representative to lunch.

Client representatives have internal clients. Your role is to help your client representatives satisfy the needs of their internal clients. Help your client representative become a hero.

Recognize that 60-70% of all claims filed against technical professionals are filed by clients. Yet about 80% of your new business is likely to come from 20% of your existing clients. Clients sue when client representatives are unhappy. Clients provide business (new commissions and referrals) when client representatives are happy.

By satisfying client representatives' wants, needs, and preferences, you can avoid the liability associated with an unhappy client, and gain the benefits of having a delighted client representative. Learning about your client representatives' wants, needs, and preferences should therefore be "job one."

The traits possessed by service providers who delight you are the kinds of traits you should adopt – and make obvious – to delight those you serve. Key attributes are:

- Honesty

- Integrity
- Trustworthiness
- Accessibility
- Friendliness
- Takes a personal interest in me
- Know my personal preferences
- Competence

- Active listening
- Attentiveness
- Generous in spirit
- Appreciative

Technical professionals too often do not live up to their promises about delivery dates and budgets.

Through expectations management, we can underpromise and thereby overdeliver.
The 10/10/10 project.

Clients do not know enough about your deliverables to assess their quality. They therefore cannot detect or appreciate higher-quality deliverables. Taking longer to deliver higher quality can be a fool's errand. Client representatives do not appreciate what you are working so hard to provide, and they assume you do not appreciate how important it is to deliver on time and on budget. Plan the time and budget required to deliver the quality agreed to.

Understand what client representatives do appreciate; deliver it.