



Core Value #1

Close Relationships With Clients

What To Expect When Working With A Lawyer

With close relationships with clients and close relationships among team members as SHIFT's two core values, we'd like to be back to basics on how we, lawyers, can best serve clients and be client oriented. These two values, we believe, will always be relevant regardless of what the circumstances are. Apparently, close relationships with clients begin with close relationships among team members¹.

Like any other professional relationships, a client-attorney relationship begins with trust. At SHIFT, we value the trust given to us and therefore, we consider close, positive and long-standing relationships with clients to be crucial. We know that clients' businesses are important that we need to keep their best interest at heart.

One of the key things to develop close relationships with clients is to know what you may expect from your lawyer and what your lawyer may expect from you. Here are a few general thoughts we can share based on our experience working with Indonesian and international clients:

What you may expect from your lawyer

Involving a good (and not necessarily expensive) lawyer from

¹ Close relationships among team members will be discussed in a separate article.

the very beginning would be a good investment because not only will your interests be protected, but you may also avoid or at least minimize the possibility for a dispute to occur in the future. Obviously, engaging a lawyer could also ensure that your business is safe and in compliance with the laws and regulations.

Once you decide to engage a lawyer, you may expect the following from your lawyer:

1. Your lawyer should tell you whether he/she can represent you and handle the matter. Your lawyer should also be able to communicate effectively. Although there are similar transactions or cases, please bear in mind that every transaction or case is different, so you may expect that your lawyer's fees, approaches, time, etc. will be different too.
2. Your lawyer should provide you with a proposal on how and how much the matter will be handled and charged. Certain terms and conditions may also be included in the proposal. In the proposal, you will find out whether your lawyer understands the matter or further clarification requires to be made. For both parties' sake, an Engagement Letter should be signed to ensure that the terms and conditions of engagement bind both

parties. Fees must also be considered carefully because engaging an unskilled lawyer with lower fees may cost you more in the end rather than engaging a skilled lawyer with higher fees. The bottom line is that your lawyer should bill his/her fees fairly. Value could be used to determine whether your lawyer bills fairly.

3. Your lawyer should provide updates on the matter being handled and the fees incurred, particularly if the actual fees are about to exceed the estimated fees.
4. Your lawyer should be able to meet the deadline unless unforeseen circumstances arise or variation to work is made.
5. Your lawyer should deliver quality services.
6. Your lawyer should adhere to ethical guidelines.

What your lawyer may expect from you

On the other hand, to ensure that a mutual understanding between a client and a lawyer is achieved, there are certain things you need to communicate or do because as partners, you want to have the best possible representation from your lawyer and your lawyer wants the best possible result for you. Open and honest communication between you and your lawyer plays an important role in achieving a mutual understanding.

You lawyer may expect the following from you:

1. You need to be forthright and honest with your lawyer,

and this also includes the budget you have for lawyer(s) to handle your matter.

2. You should provide all relevant information and documents to your lawyer in a timely manner so your matter could be handled in the most efficient and effective manner.
3. Although we are aware of transactions with tight and non-negotiable deadlines, reasonable time would allow your lawyer to handle the matter properly.
4. You should stick to the time agreed upon or you may end up being charged more than the amount agreed upon in the beginning. Depending on the reasons, you may try to negotiate with your lawyer if time extension is indeed required.
5. You should settle your lawyer's bills in the manner agreed upon to allow your lawyer to maintain their operations well.

Note: This article contains general information only and is not intended to be legal advice. For further information, please contact us at info@shiftlegal.id.

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