

## The Glue Factor

Counseling is an important part of being an “attorney and counselor at law” and the longer your professional relationship lasts with a client the more important it becomes.

This may not be the case in all aspects and specialties of the practice of law but it is certainly true in the areas of business, transactional matters and estates. As my business clients have matured and taken their businesses through typical business life cycles, legal issues have given way to counseling issues. Inevitably, friendships form with most long term clients and with that come trust. This leads to a sizable amount of counseling on client questions such as, “how can I motivate my daughter to take over the family business” and “do you have any advice for me on when and how to sell my company and even “what do you intend to do in retirement because I (the client) have no idea what I’m going to do.” An attorney should be ready to deal with questions concerning investments, real estate, business succession, family matters, lifestyle changes and similar types of issues.

It is important for an attorney to be aware of his clients’ counseling needs. Clients rely on their attorney to hold things together, to provide direction in unfamiliar situations, to be a trusted friend of the family and to help them through whatever might come their way. The client should be advised by his attorney that he is a lawyer and not a qualified financial advisor or business planner or estate adviser or accountant but the attorney must be prepared to offer meaningful counseling on these issues as they arise. Clients will count on their attorney and his past experiences to help them keep things going through uncertain times.

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**\*\*Legal notes are not legal advice. Because legal problems are factually intensive, the reader must always consult their counsel before acting on any legal matter.**