

How to Pick a Lawyer

Article by: Robin Gronsky

Lawyers are like doctors. They specialize in anything from zoning to wills to personal injury. You want to find a lawyer who specializes in the area of law that concerns you. The lawyer who handles criminal matters does not know about the issues that concern a business owner. A good lawyer is like a partner who will help you understand everything from government laws and regulations to details of your particular matter. That's why you need to put in the legwork to find your best match. When choosing a lawyer, think long term. You should be looking for a lawyer who will help you to avoid making costly mistakes.

To actually find a lawyer, start by talking to lawyers you already know or to people who have used a lawyer in the specialty that you are looking for. Your accountant is also a good source for a referral. Many accountants network with lawyers.

Do some research about the names that you have been given. Check the websites of relevant law firms to get a sense of attitudes and specialties. The right lawyer will spot issues and point out solutions you might not have thought of.

Interview more than one lawyer. When interviewing law firms, meet with the lawyer who will be actually handling your matter. Evaluate the style and attitude of each lawyer that you interview. Here are some questions you should ask each lawyer:

1. What is your experience in this field?
2. Have you handled matters like mine?
3. What are my options in resolving this matter?
4. Approximately how long will it take to resolve?
5. What are your rates and how often will you bill me? Do you bill for expenses?
6. What is your ballpark figure for the total bill, including fees and expenses?
7. How will you keep me informed about progress and how often?

If the lawyer does not seem knowledgeable or interested in your matter or case, move on to the next name on your list. Choose the lawyer who gives you the answers that make you comfortable and whose personality meshes with your own.

You need a smart lawyer who will work hard on your behalf and complete all assignments in a prompt and efficient manner. You also need a lawyer who you get along with and like. Selecting the right lawyer will save you both time and money while decreasing your stress level. Robin M. Gronsky has been practicing law since 1982. She is admitted to practice in New York, New Jersey and Florida.

As a former general counsel of a national mortgage lender, Ms. Gronsky is experienced in corporate matters, mortgage licensing on a nationwide basis, and all facets of real estate transactions.

Ms. Gronsky's practice is geared to maintain personal contact with her clients and develop a close-working professional relationship over a long period of time. This helps assure that her clients' work will be performed by the lawyer they have chosen.

Ms. Gronsky graduated magna cum laude from the State University of New York at Buffalo and received her J.D. from Boston University School of Law.