

"We've received feedback from our clients that they don't trust several of our lawyers, and for no concrete reason. We know who they are - what can we do?"

Mark Beese responds:

This question raises several important questions pertinent to all law firms:

- 1. Can the firm save the client?** Trust is fundamental to the attorney-client relationship. In the end, we are in the trust business. Trust is hard to earn back once it is lost. Send your managing partner or an emotionally intelligent attorney to meet with the client to get the details on the issue and ask what the firm can do to make it right. Communicate that the client is important to the firm and that you are willing to do anything to keep a valued client.
- 2. What are the behaviors that led to a lack of trust?** Giving (and receiving) constructive feedback is a critical skill for law firm leaders. The managing partner needs to identify the specific behaviors that resulted in a lack of trust and work with the attorneys on modifying and monitoring those behaviors.
- 3. What are the opportunities for system improvement?** If you know of a few clients with client service/trust issues, there are likely others who are not as vocal, but ready to switch firms at the next available opportunity. This is a good time to initiate a client feedback program to determine satisfaction levels through personal visits, phone or web surveys.

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