



# SEVEN TIPS A DATE WITH YOUR LAWYER

Lawyers. Did that send a shiver down your spine? Well it shouldn't! If handled properly, conversations with a lawyer should be nothing to be worried about. We spoke to our very own legal master mind, Raymond Tan of Tan & Tan Lawyers in East Perth, and received some sound advice for handling a visit to your lawyer with grace and elegance. Here are some invaluable tips:

**1 BE IN CONTROL OF YOUR EMOTIONS:** It is your lawyer's job to give you advice devoid of any emotion. Likewise, emotion can cloud the view of the client. Your lawyer will try to have you step back emotionally during your visit, allowing yourself to have a different perspective on the problem. Raymond refers to an idea to illustrate this point. "You are in a swamp full of crocodiles. If I'm in there swimming with you, I can't help you. I need to be on the river bank so I can tell you which way to swim and to turn left or right when the crocodiles are coming."

**2 TRUST YOUR LAWYER:** It is your lawyer's duty to maintain the confidence of his/her client. In return, they will ask that you listen to what they have to say, and take their advice. Remember, you are paying this person for their expertise. If you are willing to spend your time and money on a particular lawyer, you should also be able to trust them. If you can't, find another lawyer to avoid wasting both of your time, and more particularly, your money.

**3 BE HONEST AND DO NOT LEAVE ANY DETAILS:** Like trust, honesty is an important part of the lawyer/client relationship. If your lawyer asks for information relating to your case, you should give it to them wherever possible so they can do their job to the best of their ability. Be prepared to tell the truth! Lawyers have lots of experience in dealing with people and many are skilled at

spotting a lie. It is better to be honest with your lawyer, than to go to court and be caught out there!

**4 ASK FOR CLARIFICATION:** Many clients are unfamiliar with legal terminology. Your lawyer should be able to break things down so that you can understand them. There is no point in listening if you don't understand, so just ask them to simplify. If they can't do this, you should try another lawyer.

**5 DON'T FEEL INTIMIDATED:** Again, a lawyer with good communication skills and the ability to relate to people, should not leave you feeling intimidated. Remember, they are there to act in your best possible interests, and obtaining a favourable outcome for you is their number one priority. Short version, they're on your side!

*"To me, elegance is coming in and not wasting anybody's time. It's saying what has to be said, and nothing more. Simplicity is elegance. Simplicity in giving the advice so that it's timely; that is elegance."*

**6 BE ORGANISED AND PREPARED:** A hot tip is to make a mind map of your questions before your visit to a lawyer. If it takes you three hours to do this at home, think about how much longer (and more expensive) your lawyers visit will be if you wait to think about your questions until you get there? If you have your list of concerns ready, a lawyer can read it in 10 minutes, rather than spending a few expensive hours asking you at his/her office. They will then probably know straight away what needs to be done. Also, you won't risk forgetting any of the points you need to make if you prepare beforehand.

**7 CALLING YOUR LAWYER:** If you have a concern, a question, or need something clarified, it is a good idea to call your lawyer. However, it is not a good idea to call them five times about the same issue. Remember, they have to charge you each time you call them. A great option is to take advantage of services such as Tan & Tan Lawyers free email question and answer services.



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