

A - Z

Archives

Make sure you know how long all completed files should be kept for (expiry of limitation periods), and that they are easily obtainable if necessary. Create inventories of all completed files where possible.

Business Continuity

Make sure you have proper disaster recovery procedures in place.

Checklists

When a file is completed, it should be reviewed to ensure that all tasks have been finalised and bills paid.

Diary

Ensure that all staff have access to a central diary and everyone knows when deadlines are.

Emails

Ensure that an email is as professional as a letter would be. Also ensure that another lawyer checks your email if you are out of the office or set your email to autoreply, with another lawyer's contact details for urgent matters.

Filing

All files should be kept up to date and be easily accessible should another lawyer need to pick up on work.

Generation Gap

Ensure that senior members of the firm are up to date with all basic modern technology, i.e. emails and electronic calendars.

Holidays

Make sure there are sufficient staff resources so that all work can continue in a seamless fashion. Clients are also to be informed of any lawyer's absence.

Induction Courses

All new staff should be properly trained on all aspects of their job scope and risk management procedures.

Joint Instructions

Ensure that all instructions are in writing. Check in with the other lawyer(s) periodically that everything is going according to plan.

Knowledge

Problems arise with changes in areas of law that are improperly understood, or the failure of staff to keep up with changes in legal processes.

Limitation Periods

Ensure that critical dates are noted from the outset, taking into account international time differences (if applicable). Set reminders.

Manager

Appoint a risk manager, someone who can coordinate circumstances and coordinate. It is also to ensure procedures are in place to prevent

Notification

If you have reasonable grounds for notification may be required to act accordingly and coordinate management partnership

Open-door Policy

All staff should feel comfortable about possible problems which may have been

f Risk Management

Based Risk

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are unfamiliar and
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management partner,
coordinate all claims,
complaints. He/ she
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future problems.

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Policy

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P_rivacy

All clients are entitled to complete confidentiality, make sure that all work is kept confidential and sensitive documents are stored safely.

Q_uoting Fees and Time

Be realistic when quoting probable expense and time to clients. Do not be tempted to underestimate in the hope of winning the client over. If the client feels misled, a negligence claim could be the result.

R_etainers Letters

One of the most important aspects of risk management in a law firm. Outline in your letter everything that will be undertaken, and cover all aspects of the case within the initial retainer letter.

S_uper_uision

Remember, good supervision involves follow-up and retaining responsibility of work assigned.

T_raining

Staff development is not limited to 'hands-on' experience. Firms should include staff training needs in their annual plans and/or budget.

U_nusual Requests

Be wary of clients who are reluctant to provide details of their identity or make unusual requests. Avoid unreasonable obligations. Say no to work if you are at all unsure.

V_ocabulary

Whilst documents may require legalese, it is important that you communicate with clients in a language that they understand.

W_orkl_oad

Learn to delegate. Too much work may result in missed deadlines, oversights and possible claims of negligence.

Y_ear-end Festivities

Whilst it is important to enjoy yourselves at this time, remember to ensure the client still receives professional service at all times. Inform clients ahead of time if the firm is going to be closed and provide emergency contact numbers.

Z_eal

Zeal for your work is good, however, human concern and genuine compassion for your clients could also reduce would-be complaints, as well as increasing the likelihood of future work.