

## Tip of the Month

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### Be Wary of Unrealistic Client Expectations

Clients complain when their expectations are not met, whether it is an expectation about the result obtained, the time it took to achieve the result or the amount of the fee charged. Lawyers who want to avoid claims of malpractice or Bar grievances should tune in to the expectations of their clients. No good amount of lawyering will ever completely satisfy a client with unreasonable expectations. It is usually best to decline to represent such clients, but if the unreasonable expectation is revealed during the representation, take steps to bring the client's expectations back into the realm of what is possible. Document your efforts to advise the client about what the client should reasonably expect. If the client's expectations cannot be brought into line with what is possible, then it is best to terminate the representation. If termination is not possible (because a court refuses to allow you to withdraw, for example), continue to make a solid record of the client's refusal to accept sound legal advice.