

8 ways to save money on your lawyer's fees



01

Attend to tasks yourself if you can do so. Ask your lawyer to allow you to do any tasks which you are able to do (for example: calling your accountant to obtain copies of your tax returns). If you do not have time and prefer your lawyer to attend to those tasks, you will be charged for the time your lawyer spends on those tasks.

02

Think long term gain. Look at the likely total fees rather than the immediate costs. Pursuing lengthy but unproductive negotiations in the hope of avoiding Court may be much more expensive than simply lodging your claim and forcing the other party to reconsider their position.

03

Tell your lawyer the full story. If you leave out a detail or provide the wrong details, your lawyer will be required to revise your documents and possibly your case. Again, the additional time spent on revisions will increase your fees.

04

Providing information and instructions quickly. This will avoid delays and reduce costs as you will be charged if your lawyer has to constantly chase you for outstanding information and instructions.

05

Do your homework. Make sure that you have the necessary materials or information will save you money. For example: secure your finance before you negotiate to buy a property. Many people spend a lot of money negotiating and investigating a property only to discover that they cannot borrow enough money to follow through

06

Batch communications. Lawyers charge in 6 minute units. It is cheaper to have 1 six minute conversations rather than 6 one minute conversations. Gather your material together and send one email at the end of the week rather than daily. Don't call your lawyer daily to ask if they have received a reply from the other side. Instruct your lawyer to contact you as soon as a reply is received.

07

Follow the advice provided by your lawyer. Your lawyer will advise you as to the best way in which to prepare your matter. If you don't understand the reason for the advice, ask! If you do not follow the advice, it may not only jeopardise your matter, it will almost certainly increase your legal fees if you lawyer has to later fix the problem caused by your failure to follow advice. Remember, you are paying good money for advice so why ignore it?

08

Act early regarding issues with your lawyers. If you are unhappy with your lawyer, raise those issues and you'll be surprised at the result. Most lawyers will bend over backwards to accommodate their clients. If the issue cannot be resolved and you have lost confidence in your lawyer, instruct another lawyer as quickly as possible. The later into your matter, the greater the cost to you to move your matter to a new lawyer as there is a cost for your new lawyer to read your file and bring themselves up to date.