



Bressler Risk Blog:

Risk Perspectives

August 2024

A Blueprint for Better Conflicts Management: Balancing Precision, Process, and Professionalism



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In legal conflict management, precision, accuracy, and strategic insight are paramount.

Professionals in this field navigate a complex landscape where errors can have significant consequences. To thrive, it is essential to acknowledge the inevitability of human error, leverage advanced systems and data, guide resolutions effectively, and maintain a balanced perspective. Here's how to navigate these challenges successfully while maintaining professional integrity (and sanity).

1 — Embrace Human Error but Implement Robust Safeguards

No matter how experienced or diligent a legal conflict professional is, errors are an inherent part of the human condition. To “err is human, and to forgive” is costly in a law firm.

The key is not to deny this reality but to proactively implement systems that safeguard against potential mistakes. Establishing a well-documented process for every aspect of conflict management can act as a critical backstop.

This involves creating detailed checklists, conducting regular audits, and setting up rigorous review procedures. Leveraging state-of-the-art technology in conflict management can also help build protocols to capture potential errors—think of it as “Diet AI,” which cannot replace anecdotal knowledge but can highlight potential pitfalls.

A common approach to managing resource demands in practical risk management is either to increase headcount or invest in better technology. While technology alone is not a panacea, a combination of both is often beneficial. Detailed policies help ensure that no step is overlooked in conflict assessments or resolution strategies. Periodic reviews of case files and procedures help identify discrepancies or areas for improvement, and technology promotes efficiency, allowing staff to focus on key issues.

Additionally, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and learning within your team can help mitigate the effects of human error. Encourage open communication and feedback, and regularly update processes based on lessons learned from past experiences. While conflicts professionals might not always be popular, defending the larger picture and the firm as a whole has value. Remind yourself of this often—it helps maintain perspective.

2 — Keep Your Head on a Swivel: Leverage Data and Advanced Systems

In the fast-paced world of legal conflict management, relying solely on manual processes can lead to inefficiencies and missed opportunities. Even small and midsize firms face challenges in innovating to meet the growing demands of legal risk management. Embracing data-driven approaches and advanced systems is essential for optimizing workflows and enhancing decision-making.

By leveraging technology, professionals can transition from manual, repetitive tasks to a focus on strategic, knowledge-based work.



Implementing advanced conflict management software can streamline data collection, improve accuracy, and provide valuable insights. These systems centralize information, making it easier to track and analyze conflict-related data. With better access to data and insights, professionals can make more informed decisions and resolve conflicts more effectively.

The accuracy and comprehensiveness of intake data in a law firm are paramount, as they lay the groundwork for downstream data efforts, ensuring that subsequent processes such as finance, billing, marketing, and deal management are built on reliable data, enhancing operational efficiency and decision-making.

Moreover, adopting forward-thinking systems can help automate routine tasks, freeing up valuable time for more strategic activities. For example, automated conflict tracking and reporting systems can reduce manual documentation and compliance efforts, allowing professionals to concentrate on higher-level analysis and resolution strategies.

Transparent workflow updates enable attorneys and staff to see where their requests are in the queue. Systems that allow for notation of clearance or summaries can be leveraged for downstream reports, avoiding duplicate tasks, and maintaining a record for peace of mind. Uploading extensive lists of lateral parties can be tedious, but technology enhancements allow for automated uploading and Boolean searches, freeing up mental bandwidth for results-oriented tasks.

Integrating these technologies and systems not only enhances efficiency but also empowers legal conflict professionals to leverage knowledge work effectively. This shift from manual busywork to strategic thinking can significantly improve conflict management and client service.

3 — Maintain Balance: Remember to Disconnect

A successful career in legal conflict management requires not only professional expertise but also personal well-being. It is essential to remember that your professional identity is only one aspect of who you are. Maintaining a healthy work-life balance is crucial for sustaining long-term effectiveness and avoiding burnout.

Engaging in activities outside of work, such as spending time in nature, pursuing hobbies, or simply disconnecting from work-related stress, helps maintain mental and emotional well-being.



This practice, often referred to as “touching grass,” provides valuable perspective and relaxation, contributing to overall job satisfaction and effectiveness.

Conflicts can be a 24/7 job; you may find yourself stepping away from vacations, holidays, or even dentist appointments to handle a risk management crisis. However, you must work harder to find balance. You cannot continuously prioritize work over personal well-being.

Regularly stepping away from work allows you to return with renewed energy and a clearer mindset, fostering creativity and problem-solving skills essential for navigating complex legal conflicts.

4 — Building Networks and Community: Leveraging the Free Marketplace of Ideas

In legal conflict management, building strong networks and engaging in active community discourse are crucial for staying ahead of emerging trends, solving complex problems, and navigating ethical dilemmas. Participating in a free marketplace of ideas allows conflict professionals to exchange perspectives, explore innovative solutions, and adapt to the evolving landscape of legal ethics.

Actively participating in industry conferences, workshops, and seminars allows professionals to discuss current issues and share best practices. These connections offer diverse viewpoints, valuable resources, and collaborative opportunities beyond your immediate circle. Plus, sharing experiences and challenges can be both cathartic and enlightening.

A dynamic network facilitates the exchange of ideas about emerging problems and trends in legal conflicts. For example, attending webinars on recent developments in legal technology or participating in roundtable discussions on ethical dilemmas helps you stay informed and proactive. Such dialogue also enables you to benchmark your strategies against those of your peers and refine your methods.

Building and maintaining these networks not only aids professional development but also upholds the integrity of the conflict management role. Engaging with diverse perspectives fosters a well-rounded understanding of legal conflicts and helps you navigate ethical challenges with greater clarity, supporting continuous learning and adaptation essential for staying relevant and effective in your role.



Final Thoughts

Navigating the complexities of legal conflict management requires a multifaceted approach that balances precision, process, and professionalism. By acknowledging the inevitability of human error and implementing robust safeguards, leveraging advanced systems and data, and maintaining a balanced life, legal conflict professionals can excel in their roles and deliver exceptional service. Embracing these principles enhances conflict management effectiveness and contributes to personal and professional growth, reinforcing your ability to navigate responsibilities with greater confidence and success.

