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8 Questions to Ask Before Hiring a Criminal Defense Attorney
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1. Why do you practice criminal defense law?

This one is important and should help you understand how much passion will go into your case.

2. What percentage of your cases are criminal defense cases?

You want a criminal defense attorney. . . who does criminal defense. You may not want a “jack of all trades.”

3. Who else will be working on my case?

While it is good to have a team of professionals handling your case, it is important to know who will personally be taking initiative and responsibility for your case.

4. What other engagements do you participate in, in the community that are criminal justice related?

You don't want an attorney who just looks at this as another job. You want an attorney who is passionate and is committed to your defense and the defense of others. Learning about commitments outside of the office can often tell you a lot about how serious your case will be handled.

5. How often do you take cases to trial?

Many attorneys simply will not go to trial. It is important to know ahead of time whether your attorney is ready to take your case all the way if necessary.

6. How many times have you handled a case like mine, and what were the results?

It is important to understand if the attorney you are hiring is familiar with the charges levied against you and if they have the resources at their disposal to mount a successful defense.

7. How and how often will we communicate?

Communication is key in representation and unfortunately this is the biggest area where lawyers fail their clients. Establish realistic expectations for communication from the very start.

8. How much will my defense cost, and what are some of the possible outside charges I may incur as my case progresses?

This is important for obvious reasons. That said, remember that attorneys are generally like everything else – you get what you pay for. It might be worth spending the extra dollars to get a passionate fighter on your side.

NOTES:

Everyone is different – ask about what is important to you.
