



How to Be The Paralegal Everyone Wants On Their Team

Miscommunication and workplace tension can do more than create stress—they can **derail cases, strain client relationships, and slow career growth.**

Understanding is nice. ADAPTING is what makes you invaluable.

1. **IDENTIFY** their personality style (watch for communication patterns, see what motivates them, and look for triggers)
2. **ANTICIPATE** what will frustrate them
3. **ADAPT** your approach BEFORE the conflict starts (be the chameleon!)

Matrix showing practical adaptation strategies for each style

When Working With...	What They Need	What Frustrates Them	Your Adaptation Strategy
Eagle	Quick results, control, challenges	Wasting time, indecision, excuses	Get to the point fast; offer solutions not problems; be confident; confirm deadlines clearly ("You need this Friday morning by 9am?")
Parrot	Recognition, interaction, enthusiasm	Isolation, negativity, being ignored	Start with personal connection; recognize contributions publicly; help them stay on track gently; bring energy to meetings
Dove	Stability, harmony, appreciation	Conflict, sudden change, pressure	Give advance notice of changes; show sincere appreciation; be patient; create predictable processes; check in personally
Owl	Accuracy, data, time to analyze	Errors, rushing, emotional arguments	Provide detailed information; give them time; use logic and facts; respect their expertise; double-check your work



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Five (5) Key Strategies to Be The Paralegal Everyone Wants On Their Team

1. ANTICIPATE NEEDS BEFORE BEING ASKED (Be the "Mind Reader")

Know what the attorney needs before he/she needs it.

How to Be the "Mind Reader":

- Read EVERYTHING related to your cases—every email, every filing, every correspondence
- Keep a running list of upcoming deadlines and what's needed for each
- When you see a new motion filed, start gathering the documents the attorney will need to respond
- Notice patterns in how your attorney works and prepare accordingly
- Before trial, have exhibits organized, witnesses confirmed, and documents ready before being asked

2. OWN PROJECTS FROM START TO FINISH (Don't Come with Problems, Come with Solutions)

Attorneys like working with a paralegal who owns the project from start to finish. They like paralegals who solve the problems that come up and get the project done.

How to own projects from start to finish:

- When assigned a task, clarify expectations upfront, then execute independently
- If you hit an obstacle, try to solve it yourself first (within your scope)



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- When you DO need help, come with: "Here's the problem, here are 2-3 possible solutions, which would you prefer?"
- Follow through completely—don't stop at 90%, finish the task
- Report back when completed with a summary

3. BECOME THE EXPERT IN YOUR PRACTICE AREA AND TECHNOLOGY (Make Yourself Irreplaceable)

Paralegals often become the go-to experts in handling technology tools. Their role includes managing digital files, ensuring proper e-filing, monitoring deadlines through software, and troubleshooting minor issues. Be the person everyone in the office goes to for information!

How to become the expert in your practice area and technology:

- Learn your firm's case management software inside and out
- Master e-filing systems for your jurisdiction
- Become the expert on legal research databases (Westlaw, LexisNexis)
- Stay current on changes in your practice area (new laws, updated procedures)
- Volunteer to learn new software or systems

4. COMMUNICATE PROACTIVELY WITH CLIENTS (Be the “Bridge”)

As a paralegal, you'll often act as a liaison between the client and the lawyer. This is helpful to the attorney and gives the client a familiar face and a voice to call when they have questions regarding their case.



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How to Be the “Bridge”:

- Build rapport with clients so they feel comfortable sharing information
- As a paralegal, it may be your job to find ways of building the trust and rapport required for clients to open up to you.
- Provide regular case updates
- Translate “legalese” into plain English for clients
- Keep the attorney informed about client concerns

5. MASTER ORGANIZATION AND DEADLINE MANAGEMENT (Be the “Safety Net”)

Make sure you have a system to track deadlines and to keep the attorney informed. Missed deadlines can have serious consequences, including:

- ☐ Case dismissal
- ☐ Sanctions against attorneys
- ☐ Loss of Client Trust
- ☐ Default Judgments
- ☐ Ethical Violations

Why This Matters for Paralegals Too

Paralegals play a key role in **tracking deadlines**, organizing case files, and ensuring attorneys have what they need on time. Being proactive and detail-oriented can literally save a case, reputations and careers.

How to Be the Safety Net:

- Use/create systems for tracking every deadline (court deadlines, statute of limitations, discovery deadlines, etc.)



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- Organize case files so anyone can find what they need quickly
- Use checklists for repetitive tasks (trial prep, client intake, data entry)
- Set reminders well in advance of deadlines
- Keep meticulous records of everything (correspondence, phone calls, document versions, etc.)
- Catch errors before they happen (double check documents)

OTHER TIPS:

- ✓ Get to work early
- ✓ Make the coffee
- ✓ Organize the supplies or office activities

ALL personality types can be indispensable – they just do it in different ways.

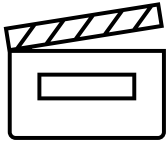
ALL styles can be leaders!

The key is playing to your strengths and flexing your style as needed in order to “treat others as they need to be treated.”

See Next Page for “**My Conflict Prevention Action Plan**”






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My Conflict Prevention Action Plan:

1. My primary style:
2. One personality type I find challenging:
3. What typically frustrates others when working with me:
4. One adaptation I'll make this week:
5. How will this help me prevent conflicts and build stronger teams:

Contact EmpowerU2Be to talk to a Communication Stylist today and get a free quote for custom training for you or your team!

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