
Never Have A *Difficult Client Again!*

Jeanette Nyden

Never Have A Difficult Client Again

Have you ever scratched your head and wondered how a terrific client turned into a “difficult client”?

Never Have A Difficult Client Again

Whenever you're in conflict with someone, there is one factor that can make a difference between damaging your relationship and deepening it. That factor is attitude.

William James

■ About Jeanette Nyden

- ❑ Founded J. Nyden & Co.
 - ❑ Teach negotiation skills to small to mid-sized companies
 - ❑ Mediator for 3 years
 - ❑ Litigator for 10 years in Chicago
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Never Have A Difficult Client Again

- Three easy ways to work more profitably and productively with difficult clients:
 - Set boundaries
 - Communicate effectively
 - Stick up for yourself when the going gets tough
-

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Case Study

- J. Nyden & Co., Inc.
 - Got a call from a larger, regional training company asking me if I would agree to develop a negotiation skills training program for one of their clients.
 - Received an email from program manager asking me for three things:
 - Resume
 - Daily Rate
 - Travel Availability
-

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Case Study

- I returned the email.
 - I attached my resume.
 - I asked what I was going to be doing so I could give them a quote.
 - I asked them when? 2005-2006-2007?
 - The program manager called me back and said that the email was inadequate.
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Case Study

- What I did
 - Quoted and hourly price based on his verbal assertions on the number of hours needed to complete work.
-

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Case Study

- What I ***SHOULD*** have done
 - Clearly define the scope of the project.



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Case Study

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 - Jointly establish a timeline and schedule for deliverables.



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Case Study

- What I ***SHOULD*** have done
 - Clearly define the scope of the project.
 - Jointly establish a timeline and schedule for deliverables.
 - Not assume that I understood what he meant when he said that I was going to design the program.
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Case Study

- What I ***SHOULD*** have done
 - ❑ Clearly define the scope of the project.
 - ❑ Jointly establish a timeline and schedule for deliverables.
 - ❑ Not assume that I understood what he meant when he said that I was going to design the program.
 - ❑ Ask more questions about where the project was at.
-

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Case Study

- In the end what I did right . . .
 - Had a clear and written process for terminating the relationship.
 - Walked away from project.
 - Told them the truth about how uncomfortable I was with the state of the project.
-

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- Set boundaries to stop scope creep
 - Clearly define the scope of your work before you start the project.



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 - Clearly define the scope of your work before you start the project.
 - Jointly agree upon clear and written billing rate or project rate and put it in writing.
 - Jointly establish a timeline or schedule for deliverables.
 - Set clear boundaries for *yourself*. Know what you are and *are not* willing to do for a client.
-

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- Communicate effectively
 - Have clear conversations with the client. In other words, do not assume that you understand what s/he is asking for; spell it out.



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 - Have clear conversations with the client. In other words, do not assume that you understand what s/he is asking for; spell it out.
 - Ask questions that clarify the client's true interests.
-

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■ **Sample Clarifying Questions:**

- ❑ What is your greatest concern here today?
 - ❑ What about that is important for you here today?
 - ❑ Tell me more about that.
 - ❑ What does that look like to you?
 - ❑ How do you see us accomplishing . . . ?
-

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- Communicate effectively
 - Turn a defensive client into a happy client by really hearing what s/he is trying to say.



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- **Restate what you heard word-for-word.**
 - It seems to me that you are saying
 - What I hear is



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 - **Ask clarifying questions.**
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- **Mediator's trick for active listening:**
 - **Restate what you heard word-for-word.**
 - It seems to me that you are saying
 - What I hear is
 - **Ask clarifying questions.**
 - **Reframe the comment** in a way that will allow the other person to be heard and reflects their interests.
 - I hear what you are saying. You are saying that _____
{positive statement} is important to you.
 - So _____ {positive statement} is important to you.
-

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- Communicate effectively
 - Always tell the truth – no matter how much the client does not want to hear it.



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- Stick up for yourself when the going gets tough
 - Have a clear and written process for terminating the contract. One of you may need to back out before the work is completed.



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- Stick up for yourself when the going gets tough
 - Have a clear and written process for terminating the contract. One of you may need to back out before the work is completed.
 - Have a clearly defined method for resolving disputes.
 - Mediation
 - Arbitration
-

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"And, like a fool, I said, 'So sue me.'"

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 - Is your time being spent on what you were hired to do?



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Never Have A Difficult Client Again

- Stick up for yourself when the going gets tough
 - Is your time being spent on what you were hired to do?
 - You may have to say “No” to a client request.
 - Adhere to the IMC Code of Ethics in all business dealings.
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Thank you!
