

## The Difference Between Personal and Professional/Business Success



**In my view a sense of personal success comes with achieving elements of the other two. It also depends, I suppose, on how you measure success.**

Businesses will measure success in a number of different ways, including the clientele it attracts, its market reach and reputation, and of course, how much money it makes. As a much-loved colleague in chambers, PJ Kirby QC, often said when chairing meetings about business and budgets as Joint Head of Gatehouse Chambers: *"Life's more than work, work's more than money, but bills have gotta be paid!"*. PJ's words always seemed to sum things up perfectly. He then often used to break into song lyrics which only a handful of us could ever work out! He used to perfectly combine seriousness with irreverence when running chambers meetings, and that in itself I think was an indicator of confidence and

success. PJ has just stepped down as joint head of chambers to hand over the baton to Charles Bagot QC.

At Gatehouse Chambers we have just reviewed our 10-year plan. We call it our 2030 Vision. It contains the expected targets involving income, quality of work and size of chambers. The reason we have reviewed it only 2 years into the 10-year plan is because we exceeded our income targets in the first 2 years, so we needed to review, reflect and reset our financial targets. In some ways, that is a way of measuring success. However, our 2030 Vision also includes other factors that are indicators of professional success, including building an inclusive environment to attract and retain talented people and operating with a strong emphasis on driving sustainable and responsible values.

Personally, I get vicarious pleasure in other people's success, and that's how I measure

and value my own achievements. Seeing other people hit their career milestones, get promoted, develop into new roles and responsibilities, or get involved in great cases is a powerful indicator of success, and makes it all worthwhile. Likewise, watching those work colleagues settle into new relationships, setting up home, starting a family, being involved in their community or going on great holidays are also important in maintaining balance and perspective. Because as PJ Kirby would remind us: *"Life's more than work..."*.

*"Personal success comes with achieving elements of the other two"*

**Amanda Illing**  
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## Success Can Only Be Measured by Happy, Repeat Customers

**In any competitive, client-facing, professional service industry, the only true measure of success and ensured longevity has to be happy customers. Because happy customers return and become repeat customers – ergo, CLIENTS.**

This is even more true in a market which is, traditionally and by design, a transactional one. The nature of 'the law' is dealing with specific matters and therefore, it has always proved more difficult for firms to transition the customer with a legal issue into a lifetime client who will always look to the same solicitor firm, as future legal requirements or advice needs arise.

It is the law firms that recognise this fundamental issue as a barrier to success and adapt their business model to address it who will be winners. The 2019 introduction of a Code of Conduct for firms was a hugely positive prompt to this end. The requirement to introduce firm-wide processes/systems for all client-facing

activity was, in part, designed to assist law firms develop a recognisable identity – to say to potential clients, this is how we work. Alongside this, 'transparency' encourages firms to portray this identity and how they would work with clients.

There are, I believe, two obvious ways for law firms to adapt to facilitate this client retention success:

1. You need to make better use of the customer data you hold. A mortgage will often be the first legal transaction for a young potential client/s, but do you use the personal information you have to subtly cross-market the other legal services you offer? Making better use of your CRM systems is fundamental to this, and this is why the SRA is so focused on technology and innovation.
2. You must make better use of your relationships with your carefully selected financial advisory partners. Your regulator expects you to have an established

process for third-party referrals, but are you perhaps paying lip service to this rather than embracing it as an opportunity to enhance client retention success? Recommending a quality impartial financial planning firm is a huge step to success. They will implement a financial plan for life, incorporating your referred clients' objectives, having the ability to offer solutions from a whole of market approach, and they, in turn, will need to send the client back to you periodically as the plan evolves, for LPAs, wills and more.

On any journey through life, an individual will have ongoing legal and financial needs. It is integral to the financial planner to review plans regularly, so that the law firm that develops genuine partnerships with the financial planning firms they refer to, is almost certainly enhancing its future success.

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