

# BUILDING RAPPORT WITH OTHER PARTIES IN DEPENDENCY MATTERS

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Presented by:

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## THE “ZEALOUS ADVOCATE”

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- Zealous advocacy is the traditional, expected approach to legal representation, but sometimes we may be viewed as an “over” zealous advocate for our clients, and this may back-fire on us.
- Emphasis is on the attorney’s duty to the client to intensely pursue the client’s interests, within the boundaries of the law.
- This approach is governed by rules of professional conduct, but the rules do not necessarily require the lawyer to consider issues of morality, social duty, or social responsibility.

## STRATEGIES TO BUILDING RAPPORT

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### VINEGAR

- Openly on the defensive
- Only using the party’s professional title
- Always waiting for an opening to make your point
- Disregard the other party’s professional limitations in handling the matter
- Only talk about business
- No acknowledgement of the other party’s good work

### HONEY

- Be pleasant; smile
- Know and use the person’s name
- Listen to other party’s position and rationale
- Make small-talk, light conversation from time-to-time
- During court, advise the Court of your appreciation of the other’s “great work” on the case (only if true, of course)

## TECHNIQUES FOR APPROACHING CRITICAL DISCUSSIONS

### VINEGAR

- Criticizing the other party's actions
- Complaining about the process or policies
- Finger-pointing and blaming the other party for issues
- No suggestions to help resolve issues
- Giving orders about what you want to be done on the case

### HONEY

- Keep personal feelings in check
- Put yourself in the other party's shoes
- Offer to help in resolving the issue, and follow-through
- Be sincere during conversation
- Indirectly call attention to other party's errors or shortcomings

## PERSUADE PEOPLE TO YOUR WAY OF THINKING

### VINEGAR

- Arguing with the other party
- Disrespectful tone, manner
- Digging in heels on issues
- Starting off discussions aggressively
- Start with all of the negative and/or conflicts in the case

### HONEY

- Avoid arguing; find common ground on the case
- Be respectful of the other party
- Be flexible with the approach to resolving issues
- Begin conversations in a positive, friendly way
- Begin discussions with items with which you think everyone is in agreement
- Make the other party think the thing you want was their idea

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