

A list of dos and don'ts for tracking attorney time

Time tracking is a central part of running a viable legal practice. That's why it is so important to handle this task in the proper manner. Below is a list of "Dos and "Don'ts" for tracking your tasks and time spent.

THE DON'TS

Let's start with a list of things you don't want to do when tracking your attorney time. These are practices and behaviors that can start you down the unprofitable and unethical path to inaccurate time tracking and billing mistakes.

Don't proceed without an effective legal time tracking system in place

Before you begin tracking your first client matter, you should have a time tracking system in place. Proceeding without one can open you up to inaccurate time tracking and lead to inaccurate invoices sent to your clients. You know the old saying "Don't put the cart before the horse?" Well, this is a perfect example of that cart getting you and your law firm into serious trouble.

Don't rely on memory

No matter how good you think your memory is, your brain is fallible. You should not rely on it for time tracking purposes. You need a system in place to properly track your attorney tasks.

Don't try to guess

One potential outcome of relying on your memory is guessing about the time spent on a task. You are sitting at your computer, going through files

as you prepare billing statements. You can see that work was completed, but you have no record of how long it took... so, you decide to guess. There are two outcomes that will likely result from this behavior. You will underestimate the time spent and not get adequately compensated, or you will overestimate the time and send your client an overinflated bill. Neither of these outcomes are conducive to a successful law practice.

Don't pay too much for time tracking software

Your time tracking software should not break the bank. But unfortunately, many of the legacy systems on the market are far from economical. Not only is the software expensive, but it may also require expensive hardware, expensive upgrades, and expensive tech support. Don't get caught up with legacy systems that not only drains your bank account but leaves you needing more effective and efficient time tracking.

Don't jot down your times

You complete a telephone call while sitting at your favorite restaurant. You grab the receipt from the table and jot down "20-minute call in the Johnson case." Two weeks later, as you sit down to complete your invoice, the receipt is nowhere to be found. Jotting down your time on the closest piece of paper is not effective time tracking.

Don't choose a server-based software

Another problem with legacy time tracking systems is the need for an in-house server. Many of these programs require a dedicated server on your premises in order to provide the services you need. A server can be extremely expensive to install, and even more costly to maintain and fix should something go wrong. Stay away from server-based software.

THE DOS

So, now that we have gone over "the don'ts" of tracking attorney time, let's get into some of the practices that you do want to have in place for accurate and comprehensive time tracking.

Do choose an efficient legal time tracking system

First and foremost, choose a time tracking system that provides all of the features you need for precise and convenient time tracking. In making this decision, it's important to do your homework. So often, new attorneys rely on the traditions of practicing law instead of researching innovative alternatives. If you look at the reviews for many legacy time tracking systems, like Clio, you will find a significant amount of dissatisfaction among users, with complaints ranging from cost to difficulty of use.

TimeSolv's legal time tracking software offers an impressive alternative to the legacy systems commonly found within the legal community. Keep reading to learn more about the features provided through the TimeSolv legal time tracking and billing system.

Do track immediately

Once you have an effective system in place, put it to work immediately... every single time you complete a task. Don't wait to track your time, particularly when you don't have to. TimeSolv offers the flexibility and mobility you need to track your time from virtually anywhere on earth. Whether you are sitting in the courthouse or having lunch on the beach, TimeSolv's mobile application allows you to simply pull out your cell phone, tablet, or laptop and immediately track your time spent on a task. Even if you don't have internet access at the time, you can track your time and sync it with your main TimeSolv software once an internet connection is available.

Do keep it detailed, but simple

When tracking time, don't forget to include the details of your task. Clients like to see details when they view their invoices, so make sure you add them when tracking your time. As I explained earlier, your memory is unreliable. Adding details, like who you were talking to or what type of meeting you conducted, is much more effective than guessing at specifics when it's time to invoice.

Do rely on the cloud

One reason for TimeSolv's impressive mobility is its cloud-based technology. Unlike the legacy time tracking systems that rely on a cumbersome server

within your office, TimeSolv utilizes the cloud to store your firm information quickly and securely. So, you can track time on your various devices.

Do keep your records secure

Your memory can fail you. A piece of paper can get lost. The server may crash. Your tracked time is the way that you get compensated for your hard work. Protect it with the same effort you put into protecting your money. TimeSolv utilizes a state-of-the-art data center to keep your data safe from hackers and highly available to you. They take the security of your information seriously, so you can rest assured that your time tracking records are safe.

There you have it... the “dos and “don’ts” of attorney time tracking. Click [here](#) to learn more about TimeSolv and put these tips into practice to make your time tracking is accurate, efficient, and profit generating.

About Erika Winston:

Erika Winston is a freelance writer with a passion for law. Through her business, The Legal Writing Studio, she helps legal professionals deliver effective written messages. Erika is a regular contributor to [TimeSolv](#) and a variety of other publications.