

# Personal Injury

Lawyers who practice in the area of personal injury law quickly discover an undeniable truth: insurance companies and corporations do not look for ways to give their money away. Most generally do whatever they can to avoid paying even the fair value of a claim, regardless of the claim's merit. Above all else, defendants and/or their insurance carriers look to settle cases cheaply. One frequent approach involves a "low-ball" offer made soon after the event occurs. The bet here is that a number of injured individuals quickly encounter financial problems when they are injured and forced to miss work. Therefore, they might well settle for a fraction of the fair value of their claim if an offer is made quickly. Another approach is to drag the matter out as long as possible and simply wear the plaintiff (injured party) down until he or she is ready to "surrender" and agree to a settlement on terms favorable to the defendant and/or the insurance carrier.

Insurance companies are adept at sizing up a plaintiff's attorney. They feast on young ones, attorneys who don't regularly handle personal injury claims, attorneys who want to settle quickly (which always means cheaply), and those hesitant to walk into a courtroom and try a case. These are things well worth considering when choosing your lawyer.

I do not recommend settlements to my clients that represent a fraction of the value of their claim simply to close the file and collect my fee or to avoid a trial. I believe my attitude, which insurance carriers and defense attorneys I've opposed are well aware of, clearly works to the benefit of my clients. It is an approach that has worked well throughout my legal career. The clients I've represented agree, since my source of clients is exclusively referrals from other clients and attorneys.

The size or financial resources of a defendant is of no consequence to me when I am representing a client for injuries and other losses caused by that defendant. I have successfully represented clients against defendants of modest means to those of great wealth, including corporations such as Wal-Mart, Ford, McDonalds, Merck, K-Mart, Dell Computer, to name a few.

Like virtually all attorneys who handle personal injury claims, my fee for handling such a case is a contingent one. This means it is based on a percentage of the recovery I obtain for my client. There are attorneys who like to talk about themselves and their self-proclaimed ability to obtain great settlements easily and quickly. This is pure nonsense. I'd prefer to tell my clients the truth: fair resolutions of personal injury claims do not come easily or without effort. What I can offer a client injured by another party is an aggressive attitude, attention to detail, determination, extensive experience, and a reputation among defense attorneys and judges for these traits.