

THE LAW VENTURE LETTER

People Don't Like Me

When standing firm gets personal.

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I had one case that would make outstanding TV.

It had everything: perjury, hidden evidence, sanctions, angry lawyers, a smoking gun, and a happy ending for my client.

But what stood out most wasn't the evidence -- it was the psychological warfare.

After I took a compelling Zoom deposition of my client's husband, defense counsel asked to speak about potential settlement.

Keep in mind, we were still in the Zoom lobby, which is recording every word.

She pushed for me to drop my client's demand for the full \$250,000 in UIM limits:

"If there is an amount that you'd like me to shoot for, other than limits, because you have to be somewhat reasonable."

- Defense Counsel.

Translation: *We don't care that our insured's life was permanently altered. She's not getting full policy limits.*

Notice the psychological trap. She wasn't debating the facts of the case. She was trying to anchor the idea that asking for contractually owed limits makes you the unreasonable party.

When I told her our position hadn't changed -- "*My hands are tied on this one. It's limits or bust*" -- she didn't offer a counter-argument.

Instead, she shifted from policy math to personal guilt:

"Oh man, Jarrett. Every other attorney is so much easier to work with... Every email that you've sent is just the weirdest email. And you don't negotiate. I've tried to be helpful. I've tried to be kind."

- Defense Counsel.

Deconstruct what happened in this sharp exchange:

- **She benchmarked me against "every other attorney"** who routinely surrenders leverage just to maintain a friendly rapport.
- **She weaponized social guilt**, criticizing the way I was exercising my client's boundaries.

When legal logic fails, the conversation turns to social pressure. The goal is no longer to evaluate the claim, but to make you feel uncomfortable for standing firm.

In isolation, this single instance doesn't faze me.

However, the problem was that this wasn't my only case. In fact, at the time, I had well over 60 cases.

As a result, my days consisted of standing firm for clients and, as a result, facing a barrage of personal attacks:

- I'm unreasonable
- I don't understand the law
- I'm unprofessional
- I'm clueless about what juries do
- I don't know "how things are"

As someone who has played basketball my entire life, these personal attacks are so odd to me.

With basketball, if someone thinks they can beat me for XYZ reason, lace up your shoes and let's go find out.

With law, I cross paths with adjusters and defense lawyers that would rather throw out personal attacks than "lace up" and go to the courthouse to find out.

Which brings me back to the title of this letter.

People don't like me. Or, more accurately, defense lawyers don't like when a plaintiff attorney refuses to play along with their usual script.

In this line of work, being liked by opposing counsel is rarely correlated with getting your client full value. If standing firm means being labeled as "difficult" or "weird," that isn't failure of rapport -- it's the cost of treading new ground.

If you're wondering if I got my client her \$250,000 outcome, the answer is no.

I got her almost \$1 million.

3 KEY TAKEAWAYS

First, personal attacks are an admission of lost leverage.

Second, social guilt is an institutional tax -- and your client pays for your desire for social comfort.

Third, force them to "lace up." If the other side truly thinks they will win, they shouldn't hesitate to do it.

WHAT'S NEXT?

If you're a member of Law Venture's community, you can listen to the recording of my conversation with this defense counsel by [clicking here](#). Let me know your thoughts in the comments!

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Wishing you massive success (on your terms)!

See you next week,

Jarrett Stone
Founder, Law Venture

