

# Who Is the Client and Why It Matters

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Oftentimes when a person or entity engages a lawyer, there is little doubt or confusion as to the identity of the client. There are some situations, however, in which identifying the client—and just as importantly, identifying who is not the client—can be challenging. The consequences of confusion over the identity of a client can be dire.

To avoid confusion, frustrated clients, ethical dilemmas, potential privilege waivers, or worse, it is important for lawyers to carefully consider who they are representing at the outset of an engagement and as the matter progresses. It is easy to skip this step, especially when a new matter comes in and there is pressure to get to work on substantive issues quickly. But, as the adage goes, a pinch of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

[Read more about common issues when relating to this topic and how to avoid them in Marshall Senterfitt's latest piece, published by the American Inns of Court.](#)