



Insights: Publications

4 Key Takeaways | Professionalism Panel: Views from the Bench and Bar

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Kilpatrick recently hosted the annual “**Susan A. Cahoon Annual Ethics & Professionalism Seminar.**” The firm's Associate General Counsel [Betsy Hodges](#) moderated a panel discussion on professionalism titled “**Views from the Bench and Bar**” with three industry thought leaders including Kilpatrick partners [Henry Walker](#) and [Mitch Stockwell](#), Georgia Supreme Court Justice Carla Wong McMillian, and Fulton County Superior Court Judge Robert McBurney.

Ms. Hodges, Mr. Walker, and Mr. Stockwell offer their key takeaways from the discussion:

1. When dealing with a difficult client, remember that professionalism is about controlling your clients and encouraging them to do the right thing despite their anger or frustration with a potential opponent.
2. Effective communication with a client includes managing the client's expectations in a matter you are handling. Sometimes email is not the best way to communicate. Picking up the phone and having a meeting or call with a client is always best.
3. While it can be stressful to deal with difficult opposing counsel, always strive to remain as patient and calm as possible while still advocating for your client to the best of your ability. Remember that professionalism is about doing the right thing and treating opposing counsel in the way you want to be treated.
4. Always ensure that confidential discussions with your client take place in private. If your client wants to discuss his or her case over lunch, have the discussion in your office or a conference room in your office and not at a restaurant.

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