

Session Five
Successful Small Firm
Practice Course

Fee Agreements

October 18, 2021

The Fee Agreement is part of
our first interaction with the
prospective client

Rule 1.18

What does it feel like
for the prospective client?

What is empathy?

**Understanding what it feels
like to be someone you never
imagined being.**

Session One, Slide 72

[Brene Brown on Empathy](#)

The public's perception of lawyers

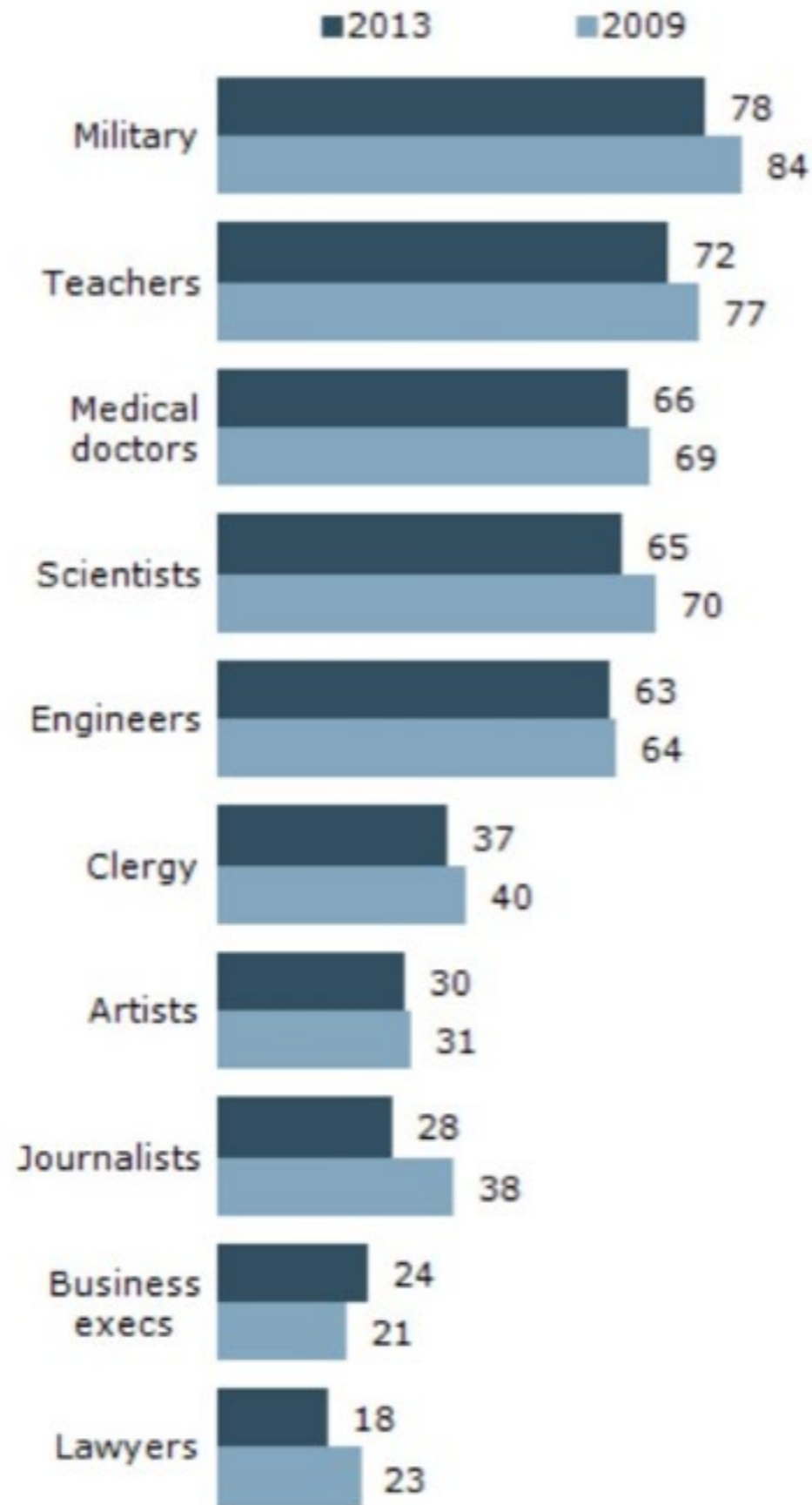
Please tell me how you would rate the honesty and ethical standards of people in these different fields -- very high, high, average, low or very low? How about -- [RANDOM ORDER]?

	Very high	High	Average	Low	Very low	No opinion
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Nurses	41	48	10	1	*	*
Medical doctors	27	50	19	2	1	*
Grade school teachers	26	49	17	5	2	*
Pharmacists	20	51	23	4	1	*
Police officers	16	36	30	11	7	*
Judges	9	34	40	12	4	1
Clergy	10	29	41	11	4	4
Nursing home operators	8	28	43	15	4	1
Bankers	5	24	48	16	5	*
Journalists	6	22	31	18	22	1
Lawyers	3	18	48	24	6	*
Business executives	2	15	46	26	10	1
Advertising practitioners	1	9	45	31	12	1
Car salespeople	1	7	53	29	8	*
Members of Congress	1	7	29	39	24	--

GALLUP, DEC. 1-17, 2020

Trend in Perceived Contribution

% saying each group contributes "a lot" to society's well-being



What is our intent with the
fee agreement?

Rule 1.5

What else?

The fee agreement is a plan for:

solving the client's problem,

getting paid,

building trust.

It starts with a conversation

Is the client properly identified?

Is the scope of the
representation complete?

Is the fee clearly
established?

Are the expenses & means of
payment set out?

Is a third party paying
the fee?

Do you need to cover
inside & outside costs?

Are the client's duties set
out?

How & when will you
communicate with your client?

Are other lawyers
involved?

Is fee sharing involved?

How does it end & what happens to the file?

When do you start? Signed
agreement? Money?

How do you handle the
advance fee?

Is consent to waiver
really informed?

Is a line of credit
involved?

Are you being paid
by credit card?

How will you handle a fee
dispute?

How do you handle
termination of services?

Is a third party service provider needed?

What is the billing or
accounting process?

Do you address
expectations?

What about pro bono
work & fee recovery?

Does your fee agreement
build trust?

You may request a zip
file of Word forms
dmills@dcbar.org

Examples from the zip
file

Next week's session . . .

October 25, 2021

Client Relations / Employee Relations;

- Create a Concept Map for your Ideal Client & the Problem you will solve. Who are they and how have they related to the Problem?
- Create a Concept Map of your life cycles and how they relate to your small firm being a service & relationship enterprise.
- Create a fee agreement for your primary problem solving.

Lunch & Learn in Oct/Nov

[Register Here](#)

October 21 – Protect Your Law Firm from the Biggest Security

Threats of 2021

November 4 – Tax Planning: Ten Must Do's Before Year End

November 18 – Working with a Virtual Receptionist