

You have been approached by a less-experienced colleague who is facing some challenges in a current project. She is working with the owner of a \$10 million annual revenue company to manage an expected sale of the business within the next six to eight months. The parties with whom she is working, beyond the owner, are the company's CFO (who is the owner's daughter and has been in the position for five years), the company's long-time outside CPA, the company's external counsel (who the CFO brought in a few years ago), and the owner's long-time personal attorney.

While your colleague is seasoned enough to discount the usual frictions of such a project, she feels that the owner's personal attorney is hurting representation of the client. Beyond the dismissive and condescending attitude the personal attorney directs at her, the personal attorney constantly seems to be doing an end round on the rest of the team. One result is that the expressed desires of the owner seem to shift following each recommendation, resulting in a repetitive process of criticisms of both your colleague's work and the entire process. Your colleague has had the support of the other transaction team members, but everyone currently is becoming increasingly frustrated with the absence of progress and a process of recrimination and blaming has begun.

Your colleague would like your best advice on:

- 1) Managing the owner's personal attorney, including steps she should take to move the project forward
- 2) When she should acknowledge that the situation cannot be fixed and she needs to withdraw, and how she should do it