

[Rant] People with No Voicemail

Am I the only one with prospective clients & existing clients that when you try to call back, you get an automated message that they have not set up their voicemail or their voicemail box is full? It drives me nuts. I think this seems to be a thing though. Are people doing this intentionally for some reason or are they just lazy?

I hardly ever check my cell phone voicemail. Once every 2 weeks or so. Most of my friends text me these days, and my cell phone is usually sitting in my purse in another room while I'm in a conference room with clients. Most of the messages on my voicemail are either my husband (who I have since called back when I saw the missed call) or wrong numbers/solicitations.

I didn't set up voicemail for my kids' cell phones, either.

But, then again, I have a work number that is staffed during the day and where I do check (and return) phone messages. The only problem is that one of my doctors, despite the number of times I've told them to call me at my work number, refuses to do so.

Some of my older clients don't even have an answering machine or voicemail, and are sometimes on top of that hard of hearing and no email. They are always fun to try to get a hold of.

Cynthia V. Hall, Florida

I've found that more and more people are available on Facebook Messenger's telephone call feature. free.

Jacob M. Small, Virginia

Not an attorney, but I face that problem when contacting civilians for some of our clients. Sometimes it's age. An elderly person often just doesn't see the point of voicemail, if I can use my father-in-law as an example.

He has an answering system but never checks it and it drives us and my sister-in-law nuts. Dad's response is that if he isn't home, call back.

He doesn't know how to use or clear the "contraption" that his daughter purchased for him and doesn't care to know. If you are not speaking of elderly clients, the attitude may still be the same. I feel your pain.

Lyza L. Sandgren, (not an attorney)

I can see your point regarding elderly clients, but I deal with a lot of millennials that don't have working voicemail. I guess they are used to texting.

Jason Komninos

I find this to be the case with two groups of folks in general - old folks who don't know how to do voicemail, e.g. my father, or young people, particularly millennials, e.g. my daughter, who don't use voicemail, or don't respond to anything but a text, so their voicemail box fills up with messages which they don't retrieve. We must meet our clients where they are, and just get over it. (It drives me nuts also)

Ed Burcham, Kentucky

Saw a show on TV where the person tells their assistant - my box is full - can you log in and listen to my messages and delete some?

This is always a good excuse about calling back late or having missed a call back to someone. I called but your box is full...

P. Jayson Thibodaux, Washington

My younger sister, solidly Millennial, has her voice mail set up but states that she never checks it and instructs callers to text her instead. At least she's honest about it.

Kelcey Patrick-Ferree, Iowa

It's not just you. They seem to prefer texting, but I don't text people for work purposes and make sure they know that.

Lesley A. Hoenig, Michigan

I hate both... I have no memory anymore and so I like emails so I can remind myself and go back and review them... I am the last of a baby boomer and beginning of Gen X I think... thanks

Patricia E. Kefalas Dudek, Michigan

Stupid people don't know they're stupid. Crazy people don't know they're crazy.

And, people who haven't set up their voicemail don't know they haven't set it up. How would they? When you don't set it up, nothing happens. It's almost the same for voicemails. The inbox gets full because they don't check it. If they're not checking it, they don't know it's full.

Dave Hiersekorn, California

A lot of people aren't into voicemail anymore. Most messages are simply "hey it's me, call me back at my number..." This information is typically available on the missed call log.

Most of my clients are Gen X or millennial and if I want a response, email works. Or better, a calendar request to set a call.

Jonathan Tobin, California

Many prospects owe lots of people money. Collections cannot leave a message if the VM is full.

Nick A. Ortiz, Florida

I get slightly annoyed when someone doesn't have a greeting set up but as long as their voicemail works I'm happy.

I have a lot of assigned cases and I try to call folks to remind them of their court dates. Sometimes I can't get through and then they don't show up to court and the judge puts out a warrant.

I get email address from all private clients now so that I can always email them. I really don't want to be texting with clients unless it's a quick "I'm waiting at the courthouse, where are you?"

Jason Komninos

Meh. I get this a lot with my clients and prospects.

I'd prefer for their voicemail to be full and not waste my time leaving a message than to leave a detailed message that's never listened to.

I've had a couple clients with honest greetings such as, "Don't leave a message, since I won't listen to it. Please text me." I appreciate the honesty.

My current cell phone greeting says something like "You can leave a voicemail, but I prefer an email or text message. My email is..."

Andrew Flusche, Virginia

I too deal with a lot of people who have "full" voicemail boxes. My question is how many stored voicemails would, say, Verizon permit. 10? 20? 100?

I have some clients whose voicemail box is full about half the time I call, and the other half they either answer or I can leave a message. So they are deleting the messages, but can't keep up. I assume these folks are dealing with debt collectors.

Marshall D. Chriswell, Pennsylvania

I represent only criminal defendants, many of them appointed. I frequently get no voice mail, full voicemail, or my personal favorite, "the caller is not accepting calls at this time." Apparently, that means they have no minutes on their "minute phone." All of these responses lead me to contact their bonding company after they have failed to respond to mail. Mail is another story. Apparently, many of them "stay" somewhere as opposed to living somewhere. Even better, they don't receive mail where they "stay." It's sometimes like herding cats...

Eric C. Davis, Alabama

Actually, I think herding cats is easier! :)

Lyza L. Sandgren

As to voicemail, I use phone.com and all my office voicemails are transcribed and sent to my inbox. So very useful and time saving. I have text and the voice file forever.

I am on cricket and they don't offer that. I had boost, I think they did that. As to my phone providers, you can tell I am cheap. This is how I've survived solo since 2008.□

P. Jayson Thibodaux

--VM was just fine for me. I appreciated the time and date stamp as a CYA method.

Typically, I'd transcribe the message into a Note to File w/date and time. Also noted when and how I responded. That was my successful CYA for "you never Whatevered me" ... Yes, I called back 10 minutes later at 3:27pm and left a message. You called back at 6:15 pm, after the office closed. I called you the next day at 9:10 am and left a second message. You didn't respond."

Child of an engineer. "Failure rate" and "preventive maintenance" were early additions to my vocabulary. PM is always cheaper in the long run.

CJ Stevens