



Online Ethics Center
FOR ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE

Expert Witness Services (adapted from NSPE Case No. 98-7)

Year

1999

Description

An engineer agrees to provide his services as a witness for free as a favor to his attorney friend. The client dismisses his friend as counsel and now the engineer wants to charge for his services.

Body

Client retains Attorney Adrian in connection with litigation relating to a structural failure. Attorney Adrian contacts her friend, Engineer Alan, to conduct a preliminary investigation. Engineer Alan agrees to provide the services. As a favor to Attorney Adrian, Engineer Alan says he will not charge Client for the preliminary investigation.

Shortly after retaining Engineer Alan's services, Client dismisses Attorney Adrian because of a dispute and hires Attorney Albert. Client contacts Engineer Alan to prepare a written report of his preliminary investigation.

Engineer Alan agreed not to charge for this service as a favor his friend Attorney Adrian. He now feels that he can charge Client since Client no longer retains Attorney Adrian as counsel.

Should Engineer Alan now charge Client for the preliminary report? Why or why not?

[NSPE Code of Ethics](#) An earlier version may have been used in this case.

Notes

See the original NSPE case at: [Expert Witness Services - Case No. 98-7](#).

Rights

Use of Materials on the OEC

Resource Type

Case Study / Scenario

Parent Collection

Professional Ethics in Engineering Practice: Discussion Cases Based on NSPE BER Cases

Topics

Expert Witness

Engineer/Client Relationships

Discipline(s)

Engineering

Publisher

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Authoring Institution

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