BRIDGING THE GAP: CLIENT-CENTRIC LEGAL SERVICES

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AUGUST 14, 2015
WHY THEY’RE NOT CALLING

- Many more people could be using lawyers’ services than currently are.
  - Americans experience millions of civil justice problems every year.

- They’re not thinking about law or lawyers (i.e., they’re not thinking about you).
  - The most important reason that people do not take their problems to lawyers or courts is that law is simply not considered. People usually do not think of these problems as legal problems and often do not think that there is anything anyone could do to help.

- Meet them where they are.
  - Successful strategies for connecting these problems with assistance, whether market-based or subsidized, will be
    - Timely
    - Targeted
    - Trustworthy
CIVIL JUSTICE FROM THE PUBLIC’S PERSPECTIVE

- Situations that have civil legal aspects, raise civil legal issues, and have consequences shaped by civil law.
CIVIL JUSTICE AS A SOCIAL INSTITUTION†

- Everyday Problems of Ordinary Americans
  - Focus group studies
  - Randomly selected participants (represents low to high middle-income)
  - Two middle-sized cities (350,000-450,000) in the middle part of the USA

- Community Needs and Services Study
  - Door-to-door survey
  - Randomly selected participants (represents entire population)
  - A third middle-sized city in the middle part of the USA

†This research was made possible by financial support from the Stanford University Office of Technology and Licensing, the UPS Endowment, the National Science Foundation (SES-1241288), and the American Bar Foundation.
THE SCOPE OF IMPACT
PREVALENCE OF CIVIL JUSTICE SITUATIONS
MIDDLE CITY, 2013

- 34% One or more situations
- 66% No situations

Source: Community Needs and Services Study
PERCENT EXPERIENCING ONE OR MORE, BY TYPE
MIDDLE CITY, 2013

Source: Community Needs and Services Study
PERCENT EXPERIENCING ONE OR MORE, BY RACE/ETHNICITY, GENDER, AND HOUSEHOLD INCOME: MIDDLE CITY, 2013

Source: Community Needs and Services Study
THE DEPTH OF IMPACT
PERCENT REPORTING EACH AS A “RESULT” OR “PART” OF THE CIVIL JUSTICE SITUATION

Two or more of these
Any of these
Verbal/physical assault or threat
Damage to relationships
Loss of confidence
Fear
Loss of income
Damage to health

Source: Community Needs and Services Study
“So I got nothing.”
How did you handle the situation?

- 46% Self-help
- 16% Help from both
- 15% Help from family and friends
- 16% Help from advisor/representative
- 7% Do Nothing

THE CLIENT’S PERSPECTIVE: WHY NOT GET HELP?

THE CLIENT’S PERSPECTIVE

- bad luck / part of life
- moral
- private (i.e. not something to involve others with)
- criminal
- part of God’s plan
- legal
- social
- bureaucratic
- family / community (i.e. something to be dealt with within the family/community)
- none of these
WHAT KIND OF A SITUATION IS THIS?

- Bad luck/Part of God's Plan
- Private/Family and Community
- Legal

“He was like a father to me.”

“And a sister came in…”
BRIDGING THE GAP WITH SERVICES THAT ARE

- Targeted
  - specific to the problem the person faces

- Timely
  - appearing when the problem is being recognized

- Trustworthy
  - from a source that the person trusts
Bridging the Gap: Co-location

- Tennessee Faith and Justice Alliance
  - “The notion is to connect with people in need in a place they already go to seek help with a problem. That place is quite often their place of worship.”

- Medical-legal partnerships
  - Nearly 300 hospitals, clinics and medical schools partnered with nearly 250 legal aid offices, law schools, and pro bono projects.

- Extending Our Reach: Reducing Homelessness through Library Engagement
  - Providing assistance with shelter, benefits, transitional housing, health and legal issues.
BRIDGING THE GAP: ACROSS THE DISTANCE

- Opportunities of the internet
  - Human mediation
Are you eligible to apply for citizenship?

This website will help you answer questions about your eligibility for citizenship through naturalization. It will also help you understand the naturalization process and prepare for the naturalization tests.

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Learn About Naturalization
- Get the facts about the naturalization process.

Prepare for the Naturalization Tests
- Find out how to prepare for the naturalization tests.

Other Citizenship Resources
- Explore other resources on citizenship and naturalization.

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Think like the people you want to work with, meet them where they are with assistance that is

- Timely
- Targeted
- Trustworthy