

**Recipe for Success**  
**2015 Family Law Dispute Resolution Class**  
**University of Missouri School of Law**

The following ingredients are not necessarily listed in the order of importance.

**Major Ingredients**

**work ethic / being prepared**  
**legal knowledge / issue spotting**  
**competence / ethics**  
**caring / compassion / kindness**  
**empathy / sympathy / rapport**  
**respect for the other side**  
**communication skills**  
**candor**  
**openness to new ideas**  
**creativity**  
**patience**  
**ability to work well with other professionals**  
**finding a mentor**

**Additional Ingredients**

**In General**

foresight and seeing the big picture  
self-control  
being reasonable  
being confident and optimistic  
grit and assertiveness  
curiosity and active listening  
acknowledging others  
knowing what questions to ask  
focusing on children's interests  
appreciating the "little things"  
collaboration and collegiality – competition doesn't work well in divorce  
discretion  
humility  
flexibility  
forgiveness of everyone  
asking for constructive feedback  
learning from your mistakes  
stress management

## **Dealing with Clients**

frequent client communication

letting clients talk (in separate meetings and negotiations)

careful analysis of clients' perceptions and the facts

giving wise counsel and setting realistic expectations

using plain English to explain things, especially finances

working effectively with difficult clients

separating yourself from your client's problems / making yourself happy in any case

encouraging clients to take responsibility for their decisions