

Professionalism as a Magistrate

What IS “professionalism”?

The conduct, aims, or qualities that characterize or mark a profession or a professional person.

Merriam-Webster Dictionary

The skill, good judgment, and polite behavior that is expected from a person who is trained to do a job well. **Merriam-Webster Learner’s Dictionary**

The core essence of professionalism can be expressed as follows: character, competence, commitment, and courtesy. **Defining Professionalism: I Know it When I See it**, Rizzardi, 79 Fla. Bar Journal (July/Aug. 2005)

Aspects of professionalism

Remember that stereotyping can be your friend: managing perception

- Appearance
- Body Language
- Language

“I began wearing hats as a young lawyer because it helped me to establish my professional identity. Before that, whenever I was at a meeting, someone would ask me to get coffee.” –**Bella Abzug**

Interact with others in a serious, focused way, observing the boundary between professional and personal interaction.

“The professional must learn to be moved and touched emotionally, yet at the same time stand back objectively; I’ve seen a lot of damage done by tea and sympathy.” –**Anthony Storr**

Do your work in a manner that doesn’t produce entertaining stories.

Going beyond faking it: Ultimately, professionalism is grounded in a certain attitude about your work.

Professionals:

- Take pride in the quality of their work.
- Evaluate what is needed and then do it fully, rather than “doing enough to get by.”
- Take ownership of their work and responsibility for their mistakes.
- Are dedicated to performing a service.
- Value training and opportunities to increase their knowledge and competence.

“The society which scorns excellence in plumbing as a humble activity and tolerates shoddiness in philosophy because it is an exalted activity will have neither good plumbing nor good philosophy . . . Neither its pipes nor its theories will hold water.” - **John W. Gardner**