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Initial Consultations: What Should You Bring?

[Kristie Prinz](#)**Q.** At an initial consultation, should I bring documents describing my ideas?-- *Kym***A.**

It depends on the nature of your initial consultation.

If you are meeting with an attorney in private practice for an initial consultation, then what you discuss with that attorney will be protected by attorney-client privilege, and the attorney will be bound to maintain the confidentiality of your documents and ideas.

On the other hand, if you are meeting with anyone other than an attorney in private practice for an initial consultation, then you should probably think twice about taking your confidential documents along. Before sharing any proprietary or confidential information with another party, you should have a nondisclosure agreement in place that adequately protects that information (with terms you can adhere to). Also, if your proprietary ideas are patentable inventions, then you may want to get a patent application filed on those inventions prior to disclosing information about them to another party at any meeting.

You have to remember that the theft of proprietary ideas in the business world is very common. Thus, you need to closely guard anything proprietary that is important to you. Even a nondisclosure agreement is not bulletproof and does not provide absolute protection to your proprietary information, but without that agreement in place, you should assume that whatever you share of value will be taken and used to the economic benefit of the other party.

-- *Kristie Prinz***Browse for a Lawyer**

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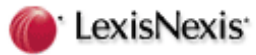
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