

Mental Health & Wellbeing at the Bar

Mistake at work



Wellbeing
at the Bar

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"I think I made a mistake that may cost me my career!"

The early years of practice are your most vulnerable, and it is common for junior practitioners to make some mistakes while finding their feet.

Here are some tips when dealing with a possible mistake

- **Rationalise** - There is a major difference between real errors (negligence) and poor judgments on tactical issues.
- **Take a step back** - Some barristers are ruminators and perfectionists, and as a result, are masters at replaying events and wishing they had done something else. Take a step back, pause, and try not to obsess over a situation that you cannot change.
- **Analyse the situation** - ask yourself whether this was a negligent error or a poor judgment call?
- **Take control** – after evaluating the situation, take ownership of your actions. Whatever you think can be done to remedy the situation, take steps to do so.
- **Speak up** - If you made an error and could face disciplinary action or a professional complaint as a result, the best thing would be to share with your Pupil Supervisor or employer. There is nothing worse, for magnifying the scale of the problem, than internalising.
- **Ask a colleague** – Seek the views of others in chambers or another barrister friend for their view of the issue.

Where can I find out more?

Contact

Bar Council's Ethical Enquiries Service: 020 7611 1307

Email: Ethics@BarCouncil.org.uk

Pupillage Helpline: 020 7611 1323

(09:15-17:15 Monday-Friday)