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Over the last two years, Wilson has secured settlements worth about \$5.5 million for plaintiffs in legal malpractice litigation.

One reason he succeeds, he said, is the frequent failure of large law firms to litigate sensibly for their own clients. Rather, the lawyers rush into big matters without fully evaluating them.

"They are not spending the time up front to really understand what the cases are about," he said. They take a "paint-by-the-numbers" approach to the litigation. "File the complaint, take depositions, take discovery, collect documents, blah blah blah... [and] learn the case along the way."

Soon, the large firm's client has spent several hundred thousand dollars in fees but hasn't received an analysis letter or any realistic plan to solve its problem, Wilson said. At that point, "clients start getting angry... and all sorts of bad things happen."

Wilson obtained a settlement totaling \$2.1 million for a client several years ago in a case that fit that pattern. He represented an Orange County company that had hired a local law firm because it was being defamed by a competitor. Although the company's sales were increasing even as the defamation increased, the law firm pushed ahead with a trial. "I think the jury awarded a dollar," he said.

When the firm sued the company over fees, Wilson cross-complained.

The firm settled on the first day of jury selection. "My mini-opening statement scared them to death," he said.

A few years ago, he won an arbitration award for a San Diego employer whose law firm had given it incorrect advice on how to improve its payroll and other employment operations. After spending \$1 million on the recommended software and procedures, the company was hit with a second wage-and-hour class action, which it had to settle.

At the arbitration against the firm, Wilson showed the firm's advice did not comply with employment law, securing an award of nearly \$2 million for his client.

More recently, he just wrapped up an arbitration dealing with the very tricky issue of a law firm that signs a confidentiality provision in a settlement along with its client, but then discloses the settlement when it sues that client for fees. Wilson sued the firm to obtain an injunction and a ruling the firm violated confidentiality with its fee suit. An award is pending, he said.

Other malpractice litigation in the works includes one for \$25 million against a large law firm whose failure to properly handle electronically stored information resulted in terminating sanctions and a hefty settlement against its client.

He also is pursuing a large law firm for about \$15 million for bungling an estate plan. In a recent case, he is

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seeking \$10 million against a firm that botched a lease, he said.

— DONDEBENEDICTIS