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HANDLING DIFFICULT CLIENT REQUESTS

Client Requests and Reponses

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Client Request	Response	Reasoning
"Can you do x as well?"	"How important is it?"	You'll be surprised how often the answer is "Oh, I just wondered." Don't spend hours working on something that isn't actually that important to the client.
"In addition to x, we'd like y and z. Yes, all of them are essential."	"What's the priority? Can you rank them in order?"	This is a good indicator of what's really important to the client. You might find that they're willing to let one or two things slip, as long as the main requests are met.
"We absolutely need x, y and z as part of the project, and we need them by the original deadline."	"I'm sorry, but this wasn't part of the original scope. If we include this addition, it will take x amount of time and cost y. Is this what you would like to do?"	Don't be afraid to ask for more money if they're making additional requests. Your services are valuable – you have a right to ask! This could even be a great upsell opportunity.
"We want Jane Smith in particular. She can start on Monday, right?"	"I'm sorry, but Jane is unavailable this Monday. We can bring her in in two weeks, but this may delay the project as she gets up to speed. Alternatively, John is free and carries the same skillset."	Don't promise things you can't achieve, and be realistic about the outcome of bringing someone in late. Be honest and offer an alternative.
"The figures don't look great from our end. Can we hide the bad news?"	"OK. What's the recovery plan?"	It can be difficult if the client team wishes to hide bad reports from their seniors, but you should respect their wishes - as long as there is an achievable recovery plan. If delaying bad news is just prolonging the inevitable, encourage the team to be up front now. Either way, ensure your own superiors are informed.

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For more information, please get in touch.