# IRS Representation

As an IRS Revenue Officer, I dealt with the gamut of taxpayer representatives.  Most were good at their job and really tried to help their clients.  But some hurt the people they represented more than helping.  Some of it was incompetence, some indifference and some were simply crooks.

When dealing with IRS Revenue Officers, there are a couple of things to be aware of.

1. The very definition of their job is to do what’s in “the best interest of the government”.
2. A lot of times they may not know about an alternative.
3. They are constantly under a time crunch, simply wanting to close the case as quickly as possible.
4. Most are overworked & underpaid.
5. And, of course, you have those few who love power.

A good representative is someone:

**You Trust**

That’s hard to establish in an initial meeting but look for a willingness to spend the time to make sure they understand your unique situation, answer any questions, and do not make promises that sound too good to be true or guarantee you a “favorable” resolution.   Of course, they should try, but anyone promising you a particular outcome is either deluded or trying to get your money.

**Have a Rapport**

Do they talk easily with you?  Are they patient in the discussion or trying to interject an answer at every breath?  Do they take the time to make sure they understand what you are saying and that you understand them?

**Offers Individual solutions.**

Offers more than “cookie cutter” resolutions.  While many situations with the IRS are similar and can be handled with those “cookie cutters”, the fact that you are seeking someone else to handle it and willing to pay for that help, should get you more than “run of the mill” service.

**Represents YOU**

Just like the IRS employee’s job is to represent the “best interest of the government”, it is the representative’s job to represent the best interests of you.

**Doesn’t know it all**

Dealing with taxes is extremely complex. There is no reliable “x=y” or “tit for tat”. Almost every situation has unique aspects and needs to be investigated on its own merit. Also, it’s impossible for anyone to know the answer to every question or know all the regulations without research.

*I once had a taxpayer cuss me out saying I could not do what I had done.  He said he knew the Internal Revenue Code and what I did was wrong.*

*I told him that if he knows the Internal Revenue Code, he needs to come up here, because none of us do.*

* The Internal Revenue Code is 10,000 to 11,000 pages long.
* Federal tax regulations increase it to about 70,000 pages.
* The Code Book Could Be Used as a Paperweight in a Tornado.
* Between 1985 & 2017, the tax code more than doubled in size.
* It is so long that nobody is sure how long it is.

Lastly, don’t believe the hype you see or hear about settling for pennies on the dollar. While it may happen, there is usually a lot more to the story than they tell you. For one thing, an Offer in Compromise (OIC), which is what they’re talking about, is not always a good idea. Often it can hurt more than help.

You need someone that will assess your unique situation and advise you on the facts, not *pie in the sky* to get your business.