



## Free, and worth it! *Property & Casualty 360*

*An article written by Louie Castoria, partner and chair emeritus of KD's Professional Liability practice group, was published by Property & Casualty 360 on August 9, 2019.*

*Should insurance professionals provide free advice?*

*Oh, you're a doctor!" the party guest gushes. "You see this blotch on my wrist? Is it something to worry about?"*

*"Well, I'm a podiatrist, but it looks fine. If it's still there in two months go see a dermatologist, okay?"*

*This exchange gets played out daily in thousands of parties, chance meetings and business offices. Sometimes the person offering a polite response, which in reality is advice, is a lawyer, psychologist, accountant, insurance agent or other licensed professional, but the pattern is the same: An acquaintance or relative asks for free advice, and, not wanting to seem impolite, the professional puts the errors and omissions liability policy on the line.*

An internet search of the phrase "the high cost of free advice" finds examples from varied professions. Many describe the risk to the advice recipient, such as the party guest with the wrist blotch. Fewer describe the risk to the advice giver, the podiatrist, which is equal and opposite to the recipient's risk, as Isaac Newton might have put it.