How to Succeed at Your Summer Job Experience

This year I moderated a panel of law firm partners at a national legal employment conference. The panelists were asked to provide advice to law student audience members about how to succeed at a summer job and beyond. Their advice (below) was invaluable no matter where you may work this summer.

Topics to Consider When Being Given a New Assignment
Get clarification from the person assigning you the project on:
1. The applicable jurisdiction;
2. Whether your supervisor or someone else previously worked on the same topic (find samples of your supervisors work so you know what style/substance he/she prefers);
3. What your supervisor wants you to produce (an eight page legal memo with analysis or a quick one page overview summarizing court decisions);
4. The deadline;
5. The number of hours you should work on the project;
6. Whether there are cost constraints to be mindful of;
7. Terms or acronyms you don't understand.

How to Ask Follow-Up Questions:
If you have follow-up questions after you begin the research, don't pepper your supervisor with them. Instead, try to ask all of your questions at once. Compile your list of questions and contact your supervisor to learn when he/she has some time for a short discussion. Some supervisors communicate better via email. Some like in-person conversations. Take the time to figure out which approach your supervisor prefers and approach him/her that way.

How to React to Constructive or Not-So-Constructive Feedback:
In this economy, every job (unpaid and paid) and every project you work on matters. If you happen to botch a project, the key is to know how to rebound. If you are told your work needs improvement, demonstrate maturity and a team attitude. Do not get defensive. Listen, learn and appreciate the feedback your supervisor has taken the time to share with you and then incorporate what you have learned into all future projects.

Be Professional:
- How you behave on the job matters – whether the job is a paying job or not.
- Make a positive impression – you will mostly likely need a reference from this summer’s employer and the legal community is smaller than you think.
- Show up every day on time and stay until your work is done – in other words – be reliable.
- Work really hard, write well, and proofread (use your bluebook to check those citations).
- Be curious and self-motivated (ask for work if you run out of it).
- Be considerate, use tact and diplomacy.
- Do not gossip or complain and stay positive.
- Be objective and unemotional – show that you are mature.
- Be respectful to everyone inside and outside the organization.
- Be grateful for the opportunity by expressing your thanks and appreciation.
- Be resourceful, creative and a problem solver (it’ll make you appear indispensable).
- Maintain a professional image at all times.
- Take ownership of the client’s issue/problem and bottom-line (produce accurate, cost-effective research).
- Know as much about the client as possible.
- Do not use your Blackberry, IPhone, cell phone while at work and do not have them out on your desk.
- Do not use the employer’s computers for personal use.
- Meet all deadlines. If you think you won’t – tell the assigning attorney ASAP!
- Keep everything you hear, learn, work-on confidential.
- If you go to Las Vegas for the weekend with friends, do not share stories about your wild weekend on Monday at lunch with your supervisors (especially partners). What happens in Las Vegas stays in Las Vegas!!

-Marianne Deagle, Assistant Dean for Career Services
Fall On-Campus Interviewing
Important Information:

- Interviews begin August 16th—THE WEEK BEFORE CLASSES BEGIN. Plan to be back by this date if you'll be gone for the summer.
- All preparation for OCI will be conducted during the summer.
- All OCI emails will come from law-oci@luc.edu, so be sure to check your email frequently!
- Prepare for OCI by updating your resume and scheduling a mock interview with your counselor.
- Read the OCI information on the CSO website at: http://www.luc.edu/law/career/students/oci_students.html
- Have questions? Post them to the OCI discussion thread on our Facebook page and a CSO staff member will post a response: www.facebook.com/pages/Chicago-IL/Loyola-Law-CSO/247775867902

Law Students for Reproductive Justice: Fellowship for 3Ls & Recent Grads

The RJFP will provide lawyers with new entry points and professional development opportunities in reproductive justice law and policy advocacy. Placement organizations will benefit from enhanced research, analysis, and advocacy capacity, bolstering their ability to achieve desired outcomes and lasting change.

The RJ Fellow will receive a $50,000 stipend and be placed at a selected reproductive justice organization in Washington D.C. from August 2010 through August 2011—ideal preparation for anyone interested in a career in reproductive justice advocacy.

Visit the LSRJ website for more information or to download the application: http://lsrj.org/documents/RJFP_Fellow_Application.pdf

Upcoming Job Fair Info

Registration is currently taking place for many job fairs nationwide. These job fairs will be held in the late summer/fall of 2010 but many have early deadlines!

Questions? Contact Deborah Gutman at 312-915-7867 or dgutman@luc.edu.

**UPCOMING JOB FAIR DEADLINES**

- **Council on Legal Education Diversity Job Fair, June 14** ◊ www.cleodiversitynetwork.org
- **National Black Prosecutors Association Job Fair, July 20** ◊ www.blackprosecutors.org
- **ABA Law Student Division Career Fair, August 6** ◊ www.abanet.org/lsd/career/
- **Heartland Diversity Legal Job Fair, August 6-7** ◊ Early bird registration deadline: May 24
  ◊ Final registration deadline: June 21
- **Bay Area Diversity Career Fair, August 7-8** ◊ Registration deadline: June 11
- **Cook County Bar Association Minority Job Fair, August 13** ◊ Registration deadline: May 31
- **IMPACT Career Fair, August 13** ◊ Registration deadline: July 11
- **Indianapolis Bar Assoc. Diversity Job Fair, August 19-20** ◊ Registration deadline: July 16
- **Boston Lawyers Group Minority Job Fair, August 19 & 26** ◊ Registration deadline: July 12
- **Tri-State Diversity Recruitment Program, August 20-21** ◊ Registration deadline: July 23
- **Virginia Bar Association Diversity Job Fair, August 21** ◊ www.vba.org/diversityjobfair.htm
- **Lavender Law Career Fair, August 26-28** ◊ Registration deadline: July 31
- **Hispanic National Bar Assoc. Job Fair, September 8-11** ◊ www.hnba.com

For more information about these & other job fairs, visit: http://www.luc.edu/law/career/job_fairs.html
I vividly remember the fear that gripped me and my classmates as we worried about finding jobs last May. Some of us had jobs, others had a few leads, and still others had nothing to go on but faith. Initially, I had a job lined up and was heading to a firm in another state. I thought I was all set. But, like they say, life is what happens after the plans go out the window. Just prior to graduation I learned that someone in my family had serious health issues, which meant I could no longer take the out of state job.

As I began to quickly begin my job search, I learned that there is no substitute for resiliency, optimism, creativity, and faith in a job search. It can be brutal out there, and if you want to survive you have to be ready to take a few blows. I and every one of my classmates received far more rejections than offers. I learned that sometimes when an employer rejects you it can indicate that you and the job were not a perfect fit. I remember being on one interview where I was convinced that it was the perfect job for me. When the employer rejected me I took it really hard because I believed there was no better job out there. A few months later, I heard that most of the partners at the firm jumped ship and the firm had dissolved. Sometimes the people interviewing you know better than you do whether it is a perfect fit.

Be creative - make a list of every possible way that you could find a job or at least get an interview. There are many ways to find a job. I know people who found jobs by sending out mass mailings of resumes, cold calling law firms, bumping into people on the street, meeting someone at a law school event, and befriending people on Facebook. One person got his job by walking into a law firm and requesting an interview. Some opened their own firms, some became writers, and two of my law school classmates moved to California and are lawyers for their family farm.

I went a slightly more predictable route and listed every person I knew who might be able to help me get an interview and then I talked to them in person. There is no substitute for talking to someone face-to-face, as opposed to by phone or email, about finding a job. Eventually, one of my prospects panned out, and I got a job.

Your job while searching for work is to choose a direction, pursue every opportunity in that direction, talk to lawyers doing the kind of work you want to do, and put your best self forward. An often-overlooked aspect of a job search is that once you get a job you still have to pass the bar exam and then actually go to work. I strongly believe that the resiliency, optimism, creativity, and faith that you maintain during your job search will serve you well throughout your career.

**ABA Health Insurance Plan Enrollment for Graduates—Deadline is May 22!**

The ABA Law Student Division health insurance plan with United Healthcare Student Resources (UHCSR) offers a health insurance coverage **extension** for up to one year for 3Ls who are currently unemployed or who are on deferred employment. Students **must** be a member of the ABA Law Student Division, and must either currently carry the Division's plan with UHCSR **OR** must enroll & purchase the last quarter of the 2009-2010 plan. Detailed information in Law School Announcements.

Visit [http://www.abanet.org/join](http://www.abanet.org/join) to enroll in the ABA & [https://www.uhcsr.com/ABA](https://www.uhcsr.com/ABA) for health plan benefits.

**Take Note of Every Learning Opportunity: Q&A from The National Jurist**

**Q:** How can I make sure I work on something substantive and learn something practical at my summer job?

**A:** Whether you’re an intern or a first-year associate, chances are it’s important to you to have meaningful assignments. Many career counselors have commented on the importance that this generation of new lawyers assign to professional development and meaningful work.

First things first, you should understand that you most likely won’t get the kind of work you’ve always dreamed about when you’re first hired as an intern, summer associate, or new graduate. Remember that each assignment, though, is a learning opportunity. You may be working on projects that are widely considered to be “grudge work,” but you’re still learning practical application and adding practical experience to your resume. So, approach each assignment with a positive attitude, no matter how meaningless it may seem to you at the time. Sometimes, energy, enthusiasm, and, of course, doing good work are all it takes to get noticed and receive more meaningful assignments on the job.

You should also be very clear about the process of receiving, working on, and completing your assignments. For example, you should know who you might turn to for guidance and what types of formal or informal training you may expect to have before you undertake certain types of assignments. You should also know who to turn your assignments in to, who is responsible for overseeing your work, and where can you get constructive feedback.

Finally, remember that when you’re looking for additional work assignments, sometimes all you have to do is ask. But rather than talking about why you want to take on the new assignment, propose the assignment or project with the employer in mind. For example, use terms such as: “The project will benefit the client by...” or “The project will increase the firm’s visibility by...” to show the benefit to your employer in allowing you to work on the proposed project.