How to Succeed at Your Summer Job

Please take a look at the advice below from a panel of Chicago law firm partners about how to succeed at a summer job and beyond.

**Topics to Consider When Being Assigned a New Project**

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 supervisor’s 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.
- 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— 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 co-workers). 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 15, 2011—THE WEEK BEFORE CLASSES BEGIN!
• 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? Email Greg Veza at gveza@luc.edu.

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 “drudge 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.

Fellowship Application Deadlines
Skadden Foundation Fellowship:
Skadden Foundation Fellowship applications are due by October 3. Students interested in applying must identify a sponsoring public interest organization before the application deadline. www.skaddenfellowships.org

Equal Justice Works Fellowships:
The 2012 Equal Justice Works Fellowship application will be available online in July. www.equaljusticeworks.org/post-grad

U.S. Department of Justice Upcoming Deadlines
• The Attorney General Honor’s Program is Justice’s recruitment program for entry-level attorneys, and is the only way Justice hires graduating law students. Current 2Ls (rising 3Ls) should apply online between July 25 and September 6 for post-graduate opportunities.

• The Summer Law Intern Program (SLIP) is Justice’s competitive recruitment program for compensated summer internships. Current 1Ls (rising 2Ls) who are interested in a paid internship for Summer 2012 should apply online between July 25 and September 6. http://www.justice.gov/oarm/

Judicial Clerkship Registration Deadline
If you missed the April 29th Judicial Clerkship registration deadline, please contact Maureen Kieffer at mkieffer1@luc.edu as soon as possible.

Upcoming Job Fair Info
Registration is currently taking place for many job fairs. For a list, see http://www.luc.edu/law/career/job_fairs.html.

These job fairs will be held in the late summer/fall of 2011, but many have early deadlines!

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

Office of Career Services
Corboy Law Center, Suite 1370
Chicago, IL 60611

Phone: 312.915.7160
Email: law-career@luc.edu
Website: www.luc.edu/law/career
Alumni Spotlight: Bill Luby, Class of 1994

Why did you attend law school and become a lawyer?
I wanted to be a trial lawyer. I came from a family of lawyers. I watched them practice and live a lawyer’s life. I knew that a life dedicated to helping people by fighting for their rights under the law was honorable, rewarding, and fulfilling. Law school was a must.

What do you wish you had paid more attention to as a student or new lawyer?
How the law profession is also a business and developing a plan for successfully running the business side of law.

What professor/event/issue did you enjoy most in law school?
My first year lineup: Purcell, Cooper, Michael.
Torts Charles Purcell: Palsgraf v. Long Island Railroad
Contracts Christine Cooper: Doctrinal underpinnings
Civil Procedure Richard A. Michael: Strawbridge v. Curtiss, 3 Cranch 267

What was the hardest thing to adjust to after graduating and beginning your career?
Realizing I was a lawyer. There is an awesome responsibility that goes with representing clients. Shouldering that burden takes adjustment. You need an outlet and an optimistic attitude to realize that if you do your best, things tend to work out.

Talk about a case/project that had the biggest impact on you and your client.
I had a client who was innocent. However, he was being identified as the one who committed the crime. We went to trial and lost. He was looking at doing time. We won a motion for new trial, went to the appellate court, and four years later the jury acquitted the client. It was a long road but it proved that persistence is paramount to success.

How important has networking been in your practice/career?
Networking is key to a successful practice. I was lucky to be from a family of lawyers. Having grown up here, I had a lot of contacts in the legal community and the community at large. These contacts continue to drive most of my business.

What do you like the most and least about being a lawyer?
Likes: Helping people and the thrill of doing trials. It is really a purposeful existence.
Dislikes: That fact that the job is not residual. In the criminal practice you hope your clients do not come back. Each case starts from scratch and doing it over and over again is the only option. Getting paid is also difficult, you spend a lot of time making sure your fees are paid.

Are most of your Loyola classmates still practicing law and what have you noticed about how your and their law practices have changed over the years.
Yes, I believe so. The practice changes every time the legislature changes sessions. The practice has become harder—harder to make a living and more pressure on the cases you handle.

How do you balance your work life with your home life and what do you do in your free time for fun or relaxation?
Being a sole practitioner, making time for the most important things is easy. No one tells you when to go home, you can work from home, and court hours dictate when you can get real work done. I have been able to coach my kids’ teams, be at their school events and be home for dinner. I like music, boating, and golf. If I have a chance to fill my free time with these activities, I feel lucky.

Which Chicago restaurant is your favorite?
I am a big fan of Sola in the Lincoln Square area! I also like Roma’s for Italian beef.

What are you currently listening to on your iPod?
I listen to a lot of everything: Jazz, Classical, Rock, Rap, and Folk music. I go from Madonna to Marley, Vince Guaraldi to Eminem, Miles Davis to Arcade Fire. The Gap Band to Beethoven. Love the shuffle.

ABA Health Insurance Plan Enrollment for Graduates
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. 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 2010-2011 plan. Detailed information in Law School Announcements. Visit http://www.abanet.org/join to enroll in the ABA & https://www.uhcsr.com/ABA for health plan benefits.