

Tips for Students from Students

JOB SEARCH: OUTSIDE OUTSIDE OF THE RECRUIT PROCESS

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Searching for a job can be a very stressful experience. The law school recruit process is far from perfect, and while it works out well for many students, many others do not find post-law school employment through the recruit. It may feel like all doors are closed if you come out of the recruit without a job – that's certainly how I felt for a bit. But this is not true – many, many firms do not hire through the recruit process. These jobs are just as good as recruit jobs – sometimes even better, depending on what you're looking for!

Here are a few of my tips for finding a job outside of the recruit process.

- 1 Cold Call:** Don't be afraid to reach out to firms directly if you don't see information about hiring students on their website. Many smaller firms don't update their websites with this information but are still open to hiring a student. This includes sole practitioners! A good way to make this connection is to reach out to an associate to speak with them about their experience at the firm and end your informational interview by asking if they know whether the firm will be hiring students. They will either know the answer or will suggest which partner you can contact to find out more information/apply.
- 2 Tailor Your Resume:** It's always a good idea to tailor your resume to the place you're applying. All firms want to see that you have a demonstrated interest in their practice areas. Even if you don't have direct experience in an area like family law, you can emphasize certain experiences on your resume that you think fit certain aspects of that practice area (for example, for family law, you might emphasize oral advocacy, any experience you have with alternative dispute resolution, your interpersonal skills, etc). If you feel you don't have any relevant experience for that firm, you might consider attaching an Anticipated Course List which indicates which classes you plan on taking in future semesters and ensure those courses are relevant for the firm's practice areas.
- 3 Use Your Resources:** Ask your professors and peers for help! This can be a bit intimidating, but most people are more than willing to help and want to see you succeed. A good place to start may be your school's Career Development Office, as it is the job of the people who work there to help students move ahead in their careers. However, don't limit yourself to the Career Office. Professors also often have great suggestions and contacts, and you should use them to the extent that you feel comfortable. Your fellow students, especially those in the year ahead, will also have great suggestions on what worked for them and names of firms that you might consider exploring. Ideally, find a student who is interested in the same practice areas as you and ask them for advice. I've found that most students are happy to offer their advice and serve as mentors for other students.

Overall, don't give up! Be creative with your job search and push yourself to reach out to lots of people. Even if a job inquiry doesn't work out, that connection becomes part of your network. It can be stressful and exhausting to search for a job, and sometimes it takes a very long time. Try not to take it personally (easier said than done) and keep pushing on. In the end, something is bound to stick. Good luck!

For interview preparation, don't forget to use [this Lexis Advance Quicklaw tip sheet](#) on how to research the firm or person you're interviewing with.

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