

LAWCROSSING'S GUIDE TO ALTERNATIVE CAREERS



LAWCROSSING™
THE LARGEST COLLECTION OF LEGAL JOBS ON EARTH

LAWCROSSING'S GUIDE TO ALTERNATIVE CAREERS



LAWCROSSING™
THE LARGEST COLLECTION OF LEGAL JOBS ON EARTH

LawCrossing's Guide to Alternative Careers

by LawCrossing

LawCrossing

175 South Lake Avenue
Suite 200
Pasadena, CA 91101
(213) 895-7300
(800) 973-1177
(213) 895-7306 (fax)
contact@lawcrossing.com

Visit our website at *www.lawcrossing.com* for more information on our services and products.

No portion of this book may be reproduced or transmitted without the express written consent of the publisher.

While the publisher has endeavored to provide accurate and up-to-date information, it makes no representations or warranties with respect to the contents of this book. LawCrossing Group may not be held liable for any loss or damage resulting from use of the information herein.

ISBN: 0-9788619-4-9

Printed and bound in the United States of America.

Introduction

Whether you adore the world of law or regretted your decision to attend law school the moment you read your first tort, you won't be the first attorney to dream of turning in his or her *Black's Law Dictionary* for something else. From the selfless world of nonprofit work to lucrative business opportunities, *LawCrossing's Guide to Alternative Careers* is required reading.

LawCrossing's Guide to Alternative Careers features profiles of attorneys who have made successful transitions into non-legal careers—inspirational stories of people who have dared to jump from the traditional legal-practice career path and hit the ground running in a host of varying fields. Yes, it really is possible to transfer your innate talents, finely honed skills, and diverse interests to the job of your dreams that will actually make you want to get up in the morning.

LawCrossing's Guide to Alternative Careers is chock full of relevant information and motivation presented in a well-thought-out and readable format that will benefit even those among us who are most frustrated with their previous professional decisions. If you've been dreaming of starting another career, now is the time to seriously consider turning your dreams of today into your realities of tomorrow by reading this book!

Table of Contents

Alternative Legal Careers, Part 1	1
Alternative Legal Careers, Part 2	5
Non-Attorney Legal Careers: The Crossroads of Changing Jobs	8
Is Considering Career Alternatives an Alternative for You?	10
Law Enforcement as a Career	12
Life Outside the Law Firm: Non-Legal Jobs for Law School Grads	15
Deborah Schneider Author gives no-nonsense advice	18
To Practice or Not to Practice	21
A J.D. in the World of Legal Publishing	25
Becoming a Lobbyist	29
Arthur Gross-Schaefer, the Rabbi-attorney	32
Linda M. Collier Finding her calling was a matter of debate	34
David H. Steinberg Slacking Pays Off for Lawyer Turned Screenwriter	37
Catherine Crier, Court TV Anchor	40
Michael H. Posner, executive director, Human Rights First	46
Lawyer Makes Business Look Like a Piece of Cake	53
Watch Me Now	56
Steven Shaw, Lawyer-Turned-Author and Founder of eGullet.com and thefatguy.com	61

Interview with Scott Turow: Facts and Fiction	64
Jeremy Blachman: Author, <i>Anonymous Lawyer</i>	68
Steve Sabludowsky: Technology Lawyer, Founder, and Writer of Bayoubuzz.com, New Orleans, LA	72
Marc Simon: Writer and Producer of After Innocence and Associate at Dreier, LLP	74
Linda Fairstein: Author and Former Head of the Manhattan District Attorney's Office's Sex Crimes Unit	76
Thomas Cole Edwards: A Career Journey from the Courtroom to the Caribbean	79
Therese "Teri" Cannon: Law school dean and author stays close to paralegal roots	82
Jed Babbin, attorney, column writer and author of Inside the Asylum, Why the United Nations and Old Europe are Worse than You Think	85
Evan Wolfson, Executive Director, Freedom to Marry	88
Jeffrey Hughes, Owner, Legal Grind	91
Vickie Milazzo: President and CEO of Vickie Milazzo Institute, Houston, TX	95
Warren Brown: Attorney Entrepreneur Turned Baker Restaurateur	97
Thinking about Becoming a Legal Search Consultant (a.k.a. a "Headhunter")? Here's the Inside Scoop.	99

Alternative Legal Careers, Part 1

By Danielle D. Hansen



So you went through three years of law school only to eventually decide that you don't want to practice law? No problem. Your J.D. offers you a plethora of other opportunities that don't involve typical attorney work.

We all began law school with a love of the law -- or at least a curiosity about it. Okay, let's be honest and admit that it might have been because of the inherent financial rewards that a J.D. affords us. For some of us, however, about midway through our third year we realized that perhaps we might not have it in us to spend our days and nights working our way towards becoming partner. It can be too daunting and far too time consuming.

So, the prospects of other careers became more appealing. Ah, but what to do with that precious J.D. you worked so hard (and paid so much) for? You certainly can't discard it, but you also know that you don't have the heart for traditional "lawyer" jobs. We're fortunate to be in a job market now where attorneys have plenty of career options in jobs that don't necessarily call for them to practice law.

You can still use your legal knowledge and expertise to your employment advantage. Moreover, you can combine that experience with some of your most passionate interests and find a job you truly enjoy. Such alternative legal careers are becoming more and more prevalent.

Obstacles:

Beginning an alternative legal career is difficult because you are straying from the traditional path. The largest hurdle you may face is trying to figure out how to use your degree. You may wonder, "Did I waste three years of my life in law school?" The answer is no, and we'll get to that.

Your family and friends may not (from experience, I could say *will not* with some certainty) understand your lack of interest in a traditional legal career. They think you go to law school to become a practicing attorney. Period. You will not hear the end of that argument. This can cause quite a bit of stress and confusion, and you may just want to give up and follow the pack, becoming a traditional legal professional.

Fortunately, a legal education is very valuable, and it can provide attorneys with the opportunity to work in almost any career field. Law school provides an intense training ground where students are given invaluable tools that would be assets to any employer in any career.

Law school stresses critical, analytical, and logical thinking and writing skills, as well as impartiality and the ability to see issues from all angles and points of view. You were also taught how to survive and thrive in an intensely competitive and stressful atmosphere. You may take for granted the basic skill set learned in law school, but these skills are not as common in the workforce among non-attorneys as you may think.

So, no, those three long, hard years of your life were not “wasted” in law school simply because you do not want to take the traditional path. If anything, they have increased your marketability.

Employers want the knowledge and skills you possess. Your job is to find such employers.

So what can you do with your hard-earned law degree, besides practice law?

Since a law degree is so valuable to employers, you can successfully enter any career field. The options are only limited by your imagination. We'll examine a few of the more typical positions attorneys seek here.

Academic Administration:

There are currently over 3,500 colleges and universities in the United States. Many retain in-house counsel, but there are also many other careers in academic administration which could put your legal skills to use.

Undergraduate institutions are required to follow confusing and intertwining state and federal regulations. In this atmosphere, legal degrees are not only practical, but often essential. Some academic administration options include: Affirmative Action / EEO Officer, Grants and Contracts Specialist, Disability Services Coordinator, Trust Officer, Licensing Director, Legislative Affairs Specialist.

In these positions, you won't be asked to practice law necessarily - which is your goal in pursuing an alternative career in the first place - but your legal background would prove extremely helpful. When it's time for you to confer with the general counsel, you'll be able to communicate with him or her far more easily than a non-attorney could.

