

THE PERFECT LEGAL JOB SEARCH BOOK

What They Do Not Teach in Law School About Getting a Legal Job



LEGAL AUTHORITY

IT'S HOW ATTORNEYS GET JOBS

A Juriscape company

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The Perfect Legal Job Search Book

by Legal Authority

Legal Authority

175 South Lake Avenue

Suite 200

Pasadena, CA 91101

(800) 283-3860

(213) 895-7306 (fax)

contact@legalauthority.com

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for more information on our services and products.

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no more job boards.
no more recruiters.
no more dead ends...



Author (Institutional): Legal Authority

Principal Author: J. Murray Elwood

Contributors: Jefferson Byrd, Marty Schultz-Akerson, Karen Lupinetti

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READ WHAT LEGAL AUTHORITY CLIENTS ARE SAYING

I have been so impressed with Legal Authority. The service that I have received has been outstanding, and the materials that I have been provided with have been above and beyond what I expected. I think very highly of Legal Authority and would recommend it to any attorney looking for a professional and reliable service.

- *Andy R.*

I have been so impressed with Legal Authority's customer service and dedication to finding people jobs. Depending on a professional service to write my cover letter and resume has taken the stress out of my job search. Legal Authority is a hassle-free way to find a legal job.

- *Martine P.*

I tried my own mailing, but marketing myself did not work. The counselor I spoke with explained how sending out 20 or 30 letters randomly isn't even worth my time. I turned the reins over to Legal Authority and you helped me send out 560 letters throughout the Bay Area. I got six interviews and a solid offer. The firm is great, and I never would have found it my way.

- *Jennifer R.*

Thanks to Legal Authority, I went from a \$35K paralegal at a top firm to an actual attorney making \$80K at a mid-sized firm. I'm getting to do the IP work that I wanted, and I got several interviews out of the 300 or so letters I sent out. This was one investment I'm proud of. Thanks.

- *T.H.*

I recently accepted an attractive offer of full-time employment that, but for Legal Authority, I never would have gotten. After months of trying to work with recruiters to no avail, I tried your service and had an interview scheduled in two days. More followed, including callbacks and a couple of offers. It was nice to be in the position of choosing, and without you I could not have done that. Thank you!

- *Hannah B.*

I got a new job in civil litigation, which is just what I wanted (I was an assistant D.A. before). Legal Authority is an excellent, effective service, and I would recommend it to anyone. Thanks.

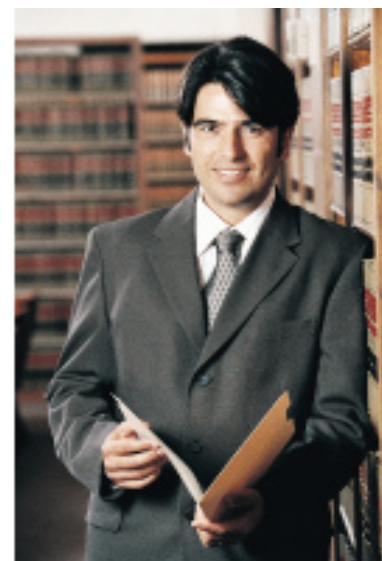
- *Lyle*

I was doing litigation and hated it, but saw no hope of moving into healthcare law. Legal Authority gave me a lot of hope and confidence when you said it could be done. I mailed 300 letters and got 26 interviews and three offers, and I ended up in a big firm I thought was beyond my reach. Your service really is invaluable to those of us stuck in horrible jobs.

- *Victoria C.*

I did a New York City search in environmental/energy and got several offers in the \$100K range. I am of course thrilled, and I have recommended Legal Authority to my classmates. I told my buddy that he WILL get a job if he uses you. Another satisfied customer!

- *Brian*



I was practicing in a small firm where I saw no growth opportunity for myself (I am a litigator who used to be in insurance). I got an offer from a place where I feel I can get on partner track. Thanks. I needed this.

- *Robert*

I have been practicing law for 20 years and decided to switch from litigation to estate planning. I sent out 600 resumes throughout New York and New Jersey, and I got six interviews and one offer! Thank you for helping older attorneys.

- *Cyrus*

I sent 300 letters and got three interviews within one week, and eight days after sending the letters, I had a great offer. I love the firm and the environment. I am enjoying my new job immensely, and the location is so perfect. Thank you again for all your help. I could not have done this without you or your company.

- *Angela*

I wanted to move to a different state, where I am unlicensed. I wasn't sure how to inquire about work there, so I turned to Legal Authority. I received two job offers in the new area!

- *Richard*

I received my first call only 23 hours after mailing out my letters. From there, I went on 11 interviews and received two firm offers.

- *Kim W.*

Moving back to New York from Los Angeles to do entertainment law seemed like a pipe dream to me. Legal Authority helped me send out hundreds of letters, and I got two interviews and a great job with a great entertainment firm.

- *Mike S.*

I wanted to be a litigator, but didn't have experience and didn't think I could compete with people from prestigious law schools. I got four interviews and four offers. Thank you very much.

- *Pete J.*

I wanted to transition from my government job to an in-house position. I got the interview I didn't think I'd ever get. Thanks, Legal Authority.

- *Robin A.*

My firm moved, and, presto, I was out of work. Legal Authority got me back in the mix immediately. I've already had four offers. When I get ready to move again, I'll head for Legal Authority.

- *Nicole J.*

I wanted a job in Texas. I sent out 700 letters on Monday afternoon and got my first call on Tuesday morning at 8:00 a.m.!! So far, I've had 11 interviews! Thank you so much for all of your work.

- *Kim W.*

As an eighth-year attorney from a low-ranked law school, I hoped to move from Florida to Colorado, but "experts" said I'd be lucky if I could even find contract work. Legal Authority got me 11 interviews in Denver and several offers. It's definitely more than I expected, and I am very impressed with your company. Thank you.

- *Ken F.*

Introduction

Every person is different, and thus, so is every job search. There are some people who go through their lives finding every good opportunity and others who struggle just to maintain steady employment. The difference is often a reflection not of their skills or qualifications, but rather the manner in which they market themselves.

This book focuses on attorney-job searches; however, the principles contained herein can be applied to other legal-job searches and indeed to job searches outside the legal field. Still, much of what is here is specifically tailored to helping attorneys find their next positions, whether they are looking for their first job fresh out of law school or executing a lateral move as a senior partner.

In any job search, marketing yourself bears great importance. Consider the following hypothetical, but perhaps familiar, situation:

Bill and Sharon both interview for the same associate position with their favorite local law firm. Their experience and qualifications are nearly identical, and this interview is to be the deciding factor between them.

Sharon shows up five minutes early and comes through the main reception entrance dressed in an impeccable business suit. Bill shows up 15 minutes late, dressed in rumpled slacks and a polo shirt. He attempts to save time by taking the stairs to the second floor rather than waiting for the elevator. He enters through the back stairwell and wanders around the firm's office for a few minutes looking for the reception desk. During that time, the partner with whom he is to interview sees Bill's meandering.

Sharon is calm and composed during the interview. Her voice and her movements all seem natural, and she maintains eye contact when appropriate. Bill, however, is flustered and embarrassed by his tardiness. It shows in his nervous answers and his jerky body language. He also fixes his eyes on points around the room instead of meeting the interviewer's gaze.

Needless to say, Sharon is called that same evening and offered the job. Bill is sent a nice letter of rejection.

While this example is a bit extreme, it illustrates how important one's self-presentation can be in an interview situation. The importance of self-presentation, in fact, applies throughout a job search. The difference between a resume prepared with this principle in mind and one

prepared using a dry template is noticeable immediately. Likewise, a cover letter addressed to “To Whom It May Concern” is far less presentable than one addressed to “Mr. David Shaw, Recruiting Coordinator.” Overall, there are important points during a job search in which self-presentation can mean the difference between a job and a stack of rejection letters.

The manner in which you present and market yourself in your job search is almost as important as your qualifications for your job of choice. This book will not only teach you where to look for your next legal job, but also how to tailor your presentation and marketing approach so that you can maximize your chances of landing that job.

The book deals with how to get your foot in the door and what to do once you get into the interview. A job-seeker probably will have little success if he or she simply uses traditional job-search tactics, such as random mass mailings or responding to classified ads. We will explain how you can find out about unadvertised jobs that fit your particular interests and skills by using tactics such as well-focused targeted mailings. Legal Authority has used this tactic to help thousands of job-seekers find employment.

With salaries for most attorneys exceeding \$50,000, delay can be extremely costly. At an annual salary of \$120,000, for example, you are losing \$10,000 each month you are not working. This doesn't even include the amount of money you are losing in benefits and other employer-sponsored perks. If you're unhappy with your current position, or your organization is in trouble, the emotional costs of remaining with an employer can be even more severe. Whether you are a partner at an Am Law 100 firm, the General Counsel of an important corporation, or a law student, Legal Authority wants to help you get to where you want to be, as soon as possible.

We will deal with several different methods for finding interview opportunities. These methods include working with recruiters, initiating targeted mailings, using classifieds and job boards, and networking. Each of these methods has its advantages and disadvantages. Furthermore, different job-seekers will find success using different job-search strategies.

For example, a very experienced attorney with transferable credentials and a superior academic record from a top law school will be a likely candidate for using a legal recruiter. However, recruiters work with only a very small percentage of the legal market, and most lawyers would be best served by conducting a targeted mailing to legal employers in their desired practice area(s) and geographical market. We will analyze the usefulness of each search strategy, discuss who can take advantage of each, and explain how to most effectively utilize each method to land the perfect job.

Our goal is not just to help you find a job. We want to help you find the best job. We want to help you find the right job for you. There are many ways to get just any job; we will help you find one in the right practice area and in the right geographical market, with the right type of legal employer, the right size of legal employer, and the right professional environment. Legal Authority works with each client to find not just any job, but the best job based on the client's individual interests. In this book, we will share some of our strategies.

As mentioned above, marketing oneself is essential to a successful job search. When conducting a targeted mailing, you need to know where to direct your mailing, you must mail sufficient volume to achieve your desired results, and you must have a stellar cover letter and resume. When you work with Legal Authority, one of our Employment Advocates (each of whom is an attorney) interviews you in depth to understand what type of legal employment you seek. Each of our Employment Advocates is well educated about the legal market and can assist you in making decisions about the appropriate number of employers to contact. This evaluation will be made based on your practice area, your location, and the strength of your background. You then work with one of our skilled and experienced resume and cover letter writers to ensure that the material you send out best reflects your skills, talents, and interests.

Many job-seekers are unsuccessful at self-marketing. They fail to identify and effectively market their own strongest selling points. Legal Authority works with our clients to uncover the skills and experiences that they can use to successfully market themselves to legal employers. For those clients with less experience in a particular field, we identify transferable skills, which are vital for getting a start in a new practice area. We also advise clients on how best to deal with difficult marketing circumstances, such as termination from a prior job, gaps in work history, a change of practice area, or a lack of experience. Effective self-marketing is an indispensable feature of any successful job search, regardless of one's career path or level of experience.

This book will share tips on how to personalize your cover letter and resume for a targeted mailing and offer further advice on marketing yourself to potential employers. While this isn't quite the same as working closely with one of our expert professionals, who know from experience how to creatively market your skills, we will provide you here with some clues as to how you can succeed in your own self-marketing.

Then, we will discuss how best to go through the interviewing process, starting with the phone call inviting you to interview with a firm or company. Legal Authority's clients regularly land 10 or more interviews from the targeted mailings we prepare for them. While targeted mailings are successful in obtaining interviews for our clients, ultimately it's up to the individual job-seeker to ace each interview and to land the job of his or her dreams.

Legal Authority wants to help you accomplish this. Our involvement with a client does not end when the cover letters and resumes are mailed. Rather, a client's personal Employment Advocate is available to continue offering advice on every step of the interviewing process, from scheduling an interview to negotiating a salary. In this book, we will offer some of our tips on handling each step of this process.

Finally, in Section 2, we will offer specific tips on how to prepare your resume. Again, marketing is the key to a successful job search, and your resume is your best marketing device. It is your opportunity to demonstrate to potential employers why they should hire you. Legal Authority's expert resume writers work closely with each of our clients to make sure that each resume effectively communicates and markets the client's own particular skills. If you choose to write your resume on your own, this book will give you guidelines on how to transform it into an effective marketing device.

In recent times, lawyers have been changing jobs more than ever. Additionally, with technological developments such as PCs and the Internet, more people are distributing more resumes. The old job-search techniques simply don't work as well anymore. In this extremely competitive environment, it is particularly important to reach the right people and to effectively market your skills to those people. This is Legal Authority's specialty. It's what we accomplish with our clients, and it's also what this book is designed to help you achieve.

Legal Authority has helped thousands of attorneys and law students obtain the jobs of their dreams. Because we work only with attorneys and law students, we are experts at finding jobs in the legal market—and we have experience assisting clients with all levels of legal experience and from all legal fields. So whether you are a second-year law student or a senior partner, the secret to finding your next legal job can be found inside this book.



SECTION 1: PLANNING YOUR JOB SEARCH



WORKING WITH RECRUITERS

BEFORE YOU BEGIN YOUR JOB SEARCH, be sure that your resume is updated and professional. For tips on writing the perfect legal resume, refer to *The Attorney Resume Guide to the Perfect Legal Resume*. Once you have your resume ready, you have several options. One option preferred by many attorneys, but not possible for every attorney, is that of working with a recruiter.

The movie *Jerry Maguire* told the story of a sports agent hounded by phone calls from an aspiring professional athlete who kept insisting, “Show me the money!” Sometimes lawyers, although they know better, think of legal recruiters or search specialists in the same way—as if they might be their personal agents. So they wonder why their resumes are often not acknowledged or their phone calls never returned. Though recruiters such as BCG Attorney Search can be quite helpful in searching for an attorney position, there is a significant difference between an NFL player’s agent and a legal “headhunter.” Legal recruiters court skilled lawyers and work very hard to market their abilities to potential employers, but they are not paid by the lawyer. Their fees are paid by the client company or law firm to locate, screen, and then recommend qualified legal candidates.

In addition, recruiters work with a relatively small but select percentage of legal-job seekers. The Drake Bean Morin annual Transition Survey suggests that executive recruiters fill only about 12 percent of corporate positions. This percentage would seem to track comparably for job placements by legal recruiters.

Retainer and Contingency Arrangements

Legal-search firms are not all the same. Some are described as “contingency,” others are called “retainer,” and many are hybrids of the two. In general, the difference is primarily in the manners of their remuneration, but their market niches, and the roles they play in the hiring process, also differentiate them.

Contingency firms receive their fees on a placement-by-placement basis. As the name suggests, they are paid a percentage of the salary of the lawyers they actually place. They

Legal Authority's service is the most trusted and reliable way for attorneys in the United States to obtain positions. The growth of Legal Authority has come almost entirely from word of mouth in the legal profession, as satisfied and happily employed clients referred their closest friends and acquaintances. Legal Authority's proven strategy has helped thousands of attorneys and law students find the jobs of their dreams.

In this book, Legal Authority's experienced professionals share valuable advice on how to conduct an effective legal job search in today's competitive environment. Because they work only with attorneys and law students, they are experts at finding jobs in the legal market and have experience assisting clients with all levels of legal experience and from all legal fields.

The advice in this book covers every step of the job-search process. You'll learn about the effectiveness of strategies such as working with recruiters, initiating targeted mailings, using classifieds and job boards, and networking. You'll also learn how to effectively carry out each strategy and which strategies will work best to find the perfect job for *you*, based on your own interests and skills. In particular, you'll learn the importance of marketing your skills to potential employers and how to prepare a resume to best achieve this goal. Additionally, you'll learn how to handle every step of the interviewing process, from scheduling an interview to negotiating a salary.

Finding a job is no easy task. Legal Authority has helped thousands of clients find not just any jobs, but the *best* jobs for them, based on their own unique interests and skills. The advice in this book is designed to help you accomplish what so many others have accomplished with Legal Authority. If you follow the advice in this book, you will be well on your way to finding the perfect legal job for you.