

# THE JOB MARKET- HOW TO STAND OUT FROM YOUR COMPETITORS

By Rachel Sabo and Dimitrios Makridis

With law school enrollment at an all time low and an uncertain job market, Rachel Sabo and Dimitrios Makridis sat down with Shawn Beem, Assistant Dean for Professional Development at Capital University Law School, to ask him a few questions about what young lawyers can expect after law school and how to differentiate themselves from their competition.

Q: How has the percentage of law school enrollment changed since 2008?

A: According to the ABA Section of Legal Education in December, 2014, legal education has seen “a 17.5 percent decrease from the historic high total J.D. enrollment in 2010.”

Q: Has the job market effected that change?

A: I think the job market is one of many factors. Student loan debt, realistic career expectations, law school transparency, a changing legal profession, etc., are just a few of the reasons that many law schools across the country have seen a decline in enrollment.

Q: What percentage of graduates find a job out of law school?

A: For the class of 2013 nationally, 84.5% were employed in some capacity nine months after graduation. Of the 84.5%, 76% were employed in positions that required admission to a state bar.

Q: Has that number increased or decreased since 2008?

A: Decreased. For the class of 2008 nationally, 89.9% were employed in some capacity nine months after graduation.

Q: How many of those jobs are with a firm, self-employed, or other?

A: For the class of 2013 nationally, 49% were employed in a law firm with two or more, 3% were employed as solo practitioners, 12% were employed in a government agency, 18% were employed in a business or corporation, 3% were employed in a school or university, 9% were employed as a judicial law clerk, and 7% were employed in a public interest organization.

Q: What are the 3 most important things a new lawyer can do to find a job?

A: Assess, Network, Prepare. All successful job finders complete extensive self- and market assessment, engage in networking activities, and prepare applications and for interviews with thoughtfulness. Taking the time to consider strengths, weaknesses, values, needs, and skills as well as researching the market, employers, and opportunities ensures a better employment fit. Networking is key to learning about available opportunities and to connecting with the profession. Preparing solid cover letters, resumes, and writing samples coupled with thorough interview prep and practice is necessary to gaining employment.

Q: Given the large number of people that pass the Ohio Bar each year and the limited number of jobs available for all of those new lawyers, what has Capital Law done to (1) help their students find employment, and (2) prepare their students for the nuts and bolts of opening their own practice?

A: Like all law schools, Capital provides ample opportunity to explore the profession, to prepare quality application materials, to engage in networking and relationship building, and to practice skills necessary to finding employment opportunities. We also actively engage employers and post available opportunities. And we maintain an extensive print and digital resource library as well as subscriptions and memberships to regional and national job posting boards, organizations, and online resources.

Q: What are some ethical pitfalls new lawyers encounter and what is your advice on how to avoid them?

A: Failing to maintain trust accounts, missing deadlines, not returning client calls and emails timely, taking on too many clients, representing clients in matters in which the attorney lacks competence, etc., are just a few examples of ethical and professional issues young lawyers encounter. To avoid these and other issues, young lawyers should

have a mentor, maintain a calendar, learn to properly prioritize, and know the rules of professional responsibility.

Q: Are there any specific programs that you recommend for lawyers who want to start their own practice but don't have a mentor?

A: The CBA Inc. program is great and one that all serious future solo practitioners should consider. All new lawyers should participate in the Supreme Court of Ohio's Lawyer to Lawyer Mentoring program. I also recommend joining the CBAs various committees, as they provide wonderful opportunities to network, to learn, and to find possible friends and mentors. Not a program, but a valuable resource nonetheless, I recommend purchasing and tackling the book, *How to Start and Build a Law Practice*, by Jay G. Foonberg.

Q: As a new lawyer, sometimes we deal with co-counsel in very contentious situations. What tips do you have for remaining firm in your position but still treating opposing counsel with respect?

A: First, always treat people the way you want to be treated even when dealing with rude behavior. Second, if you're well prepared – you did your research, you considered all sides, you showed up ready to make your case – you should have no issue remaining firm and in control of your argument. Third, pause, then speak and always remain calm!



Rachel A. Sabo  
The Friedmann Firm LLC  
rachel@thefriedmannfirm.com  
Dimitrios N. Makridis  
Makridis Law Firm LLC  
dimakridis@gmail.com