

## **Assessing what is occurring in Career Services offices in different areas of the United States:**

**1. Are you seeing marked increases in lay-offs or decreased hiring in your area?**

**Generally, career services' professional are reporting:**

**Some schools started feeling the affects of the downturn in the economy about one year ago with the hurting real estate market. Others, in areas less affected by the immediate problems with the real estate market, began feeling the affects about six months ago with the failing financial markets. Still others are only recently feeling the affects and/or concerned about what is to come.**

**2. What specifically to you see occurring in your local market with both alumni and students?**

**Generally, career services' professionals are reporting:**

**Increased calls from alumni in the ten plus years out category – partners being bought out; partners leaving to seek other opportunity; 1-2 year associates being laid-off and/or given six months to secure other employment; whole sections of firms do not have work so although both parties (attorneys and firm) are happy with the work the associates are producing, there is not enough work (billable hours) to justify their salaries. 3L offers, although fewer, are holding. No one has reported any “rescinding of offers” from 3Ls. 1L programs are non existent or dramatically cut. Schools are reporting that their Spring OCI Programs are very small as compared to past years.**

**3. In light of the economic situation, have you reassessed the types of programming/classes you are conducting? Specifically:**

**A. What programs/classes have you added? Most schools have not reported adding classes but Loyola has added a business law seminar class on starting and managing a business. The class is marketed as a seminar which will teach law students how to advise clients who seek to open and manage small business; however, the principles taught and learned may be applied to their own possible solo practices one day.**

**B. What programs/classes have you discontinued, if any?**

**Generally, career services' professionals are reporting:**

**Most schools are not reporting discontinuing of past programming, but several schools reported that they have discontinued the basic, “Careers in .....” Instead, they are encouraging specific student organizations to bring in the speakers they are most interested in. Only a few schools reported the addition of new programs which specifically address “job searching in a downturn economy”: networking, creativity, alternative and/or non-traditional legal career paths, teaching through experience, the benefits of volunteering, work-study, externships.**

- A. Discussion groups.**
- B. Alternative career panels.**
- C. Teaching by Example panels – 1994 survivors.**
- D. Speed networking in small groups.**
- E. Solo practice as an option, “Tool Kit for ..”**
- F. Focusing on student initiated programming**
- G. Faculty supported programming**

**For the most part, programming is standard: resume and cover letter writing, interviewing techniques, networking, etc. These programs address basic professional skills which are needed no matter what the economy is like.**

#### **4. How are your students reacting to the news?**

**Generally, career services’ professionals are reporting:**

**Most schools are reporting that students seem to be accepting the news reports and casually “going about their business.” Students are not blaming their career services offices for lack of positions as they may have in the past. They have accepted the fact that it is “not their school.” Students may have started out their job searches very motivated, but now have become discouraged with the lack of immediate satisfaction, so they have just given up. While some schools have reported their younger students are not handling the stress well, the stress “may” be contributed to the idea that their grades were not as good as what they thought they would or should be and/or was law school just an afterthought of they did not know what other direction to follow from college.**

**Some positive thoughts which were verbalized about or from the “trophy generation:”**

- 1. They are the “positive” generation. They have been taught that “history repeats itself but they are the generation that can and will make positive changes.”**
- 2. Since they are already “informed,” they seek transparency/truth from the law school and once they receive it, accept the facts.**
- 3. Willing to “step-up to the plate” and do whatever it will take.**

4. **Focusing on just getting the experience they need to be marketable once the economy does turn around.**
5. **They are use to positive reinforcement and they are now giving positive reinforcement to the career services office, “We appreciate all you do.”**

**Some not so positive thoughts which were verbalized about or from the “trophy generation:”**

1. **Do not know what failure is so they do not know how to prepare for it.**
2. **Solution: ignorance is bliss. They are planning to just spend the summer in summer abroad programs, traveling, summer school classes.**
3. **Not worried – three years down the road is a long time away, no need to worry about getting experience now.**
4. **Withdrawing instead of fighting for what they want.**
5. **Searching for someone else to blame.**
6. **Not flexible, “what they want is what they have gotten.”**
7. **Do not really want to be a lawyer.**

**5. What would you like to suggest to other career counselors for advising students and/or alumni in tough economic times?**

- A. **Remain positive and focused. Others are looking to you for solutions. This is your role.**
- B. **Take your own advice: read and network.**
- C. **Be creative, and teach creativity.**
- D. **Seek out innovation, seek out advice from others.**
- E. **Help a client prepare a concrete written plan that is visual and supportive.**
- F. **If you cannot give them a job listing – give them what anyone needs in hard times – a concerned listener. Remind them that there is “nothing wrong with them.”**
- G. **Statement from the Dean to seek out your career services’ professionals.**
- H. **Reminders that the economy will rebound.**
- I. **Reconnect with your college career professionals and counseling departments to form a support group for collaborating on events and ideas, and to share expenses.**
- J. **Remind yourself of the times when law firms and legal staffing companies were being proactive with you because they couldn’t find enough attorneys. Now, you need to be the one to be proactive.**
- K. **Have you ever heard the saying, “There’s always room for one more GOOD attorney?”**
- L. **It’s all about Serindipity.**
- M. **Refresh your library resources.**

- N. **This is the time to build your future “best supporters.” Give to the legal community as a whole – offer open reciprocity to build long-lasting relationships, professionally and personally.**
  - O. **Document and be prepared for disgruntled alumni and students who may go over your head to the Dean.**
5. **What have you noticed that others are doing for “you?”**
- A. **Asking, “How are you handling this?”**
  - B. **Faculty and Dean support.**
  - C. **Firms asking, “What can we do to help?”**
  - D. **NALP peers reaching out to each other.**

6. **Has your office budget been affected? And if so, by what percentage?**

**Generally, career services’ professionals are reporting:**

**Most drastic budget cuts are appearing in the State schools’ budgets. Most private schools are not experiencing severe budget cuts. Law school tuitions are still high and bringing in capital flow. This is a great opportunity for career services professionals to be recognized by showing their administration support:**

- A. **Don’t wait until your budget is cut – reduce unnecessary spending. You would do this with your own money – be responsible with others.**
- B. **Prepare an estimated projected self induced budget expenses cut-back and meet with your Dean. We have all had times when we have asked for more money and received it. Show support for your Dean and ask if he/she needs some of your budget this year or next. Self promote your management skills.**
- C. **Meet with your law school finance administrator.**
- D. **Work with other schools in your area on collaborative projects.**
- E. **Include your staff’s input.**
- F. **Get your student bar association president’s feedback on expensive programs – sometimes you may think they are interested in certain speakers, but they are not.**

## **PRIORITIES**

- 1. **Discipline**
- 2. **Assessment**
- 3. **Feedback**

