

What's holding you back? How can students and associates overcome barriers to success and move forward with their job searches and careers?

Handout Materials

NALP Conference 2010

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Counseling/Self Assessment Tools

With some barriers, it might be helpful for students to take a step back from the actual search and work through self-assessment to determine what they're interested in and what personality factors may be holding them back or may constitute strengths moving forward. Obtaining more information about themselves, may help unblock them or at least give them clues as to what is blocking them. These are only some of the tools—there are many more.

Getting Unstuck: How Dead Ends Become New Paths, Timothy Butler (2007)

Attorneys can follow exercises in book; identify “impasse” and work through it.

The Artist's Way, by Julia Cameron (1992); The Artist's Way at Work, by Mark Bryan and Julia Cameron (1998)

Julia Cameron created this plan as a way to cure writers' block. One exercise, the daily pages, is a way to unblock creativity in general; books includes various exercises to increase creativity in everyday life.

MBTI (Every law school and firm should have someone who is MBTI-qualified, useful in team-building as well as in assisting individual students and attorneys); Do What You Are, Paul Tieger & Barbara Barron (2007)

Can help identify strengths and blind spots both in the search and in oneself
(Extraversion/Introversion, Sensing/Intuition, Thinking/Feeling, Judging/Perceiving)

DiSC Profiles (many resources available online)

Similar to Myers-Briggs in that it is personality instrument but more focused on one's personality at work and leadership style. Four dimensions: dominance, influence, steadiness, conscientiousness. Combine to form 15 patterns; helpful with teamwork analysis; looks at various traits like persuasive, empathic, need structure and rules, obstinate, impatient, agreeable, etc. Provides understanding about one's success (and challenges) in the work environment. Helpful in identifying “fears” and how one can increase one's effectiveness.

Strengths Finder 2.0, Tom Rath (2007)

If people are blocked because they are focusing on the negative (my grades are so bad, I'll never get a job, I don't have a significant book of business) or are having a hard time identifying their strengths, the Strengths Finder can re-focus them on the positive—what they have to offer. The online instrument (you need to buy the book to get online access) identifies 34 strengths from Achiever to WOO (winning others over). Knowing this information can help in identifying jobs in which one will be successful and in crafting one's approach to interviews. It can also build confidence in one's abilities.

Interests, Skills and Values (exercises can be found in many versions and in resources such as What Can You Do with a Law Degree?, Deborah Arron, 2004)

Students/attorneys pick from lists or identify these on their own. What do they enjoy (not just at work), what do they do well, what motivates them—money, good colleagues, need to make an impact?

These exercises can give those who are “stuck” insight into themselves, give them some support for who they are and what they want, and perhaps help end some confusion.

Counseling/Self Assessment Tools

- The talking cure: Allow them to vent. Use basic active listening skills. Try to identify what the block is by asking questions that encourage them to talk. Analyze each step of the job search process—resume/cover letter, interview preparation, interview style.
- Frequently ask “why?”, but maintain a non-judgmental stance
- How are they using networking connections?
- Why do they want the “grand prize?”
- Look at a first job as a step to desired job
- Give student homework and schedule repeat visits
- Need to find time to job search (like going to the gym)
- Take small steps everyday
- If they have been doing a lot of the right stuff in terms of searching, what are they doing for fun—can't focus on search 24/7
- Trying to avoid telling the student what to do—make sure student owns the job search process.
- The goal is to make them realize that they have options
- There's no "perfect" option that will satisfy all priorities - need to rank order priorities and decide which option(s) satisfies the most important priorities now, knowing that priorities may change over time
- When to stop being a "professional option maximizer" and make choices based on what s/he wants to do now

Building Relationships - Templates

Sample Networking Planning Worksheet

Networking Planning Worksheet

The practice of law is a relationship business. To be successful, you need to build strong relationships among your internal work team, become a go-to person for clients, and build your reputation in the community. Before you begin, you should clearly define the scope of your networking goals.

Networking goals

Are you trying to build relationships within your office or department, learn more about a particular practice group, grow relationships across offices, departments or practice groups, build your relationship in the community, or learn about alternative careers?

Contacts brainstorming

List people you already know who could be helpful in achieving your goals.

List people you would like to meet who could be helpful in achieving your goals.

List opportunities to meet with potential contacts. Schedule two meetings.

Overcome barriers to success

List perceived barriers to successful networking. Do you have very few contacts? Are you building contacts at the appropriate level – yours? Do you feel excluded from traditional networking activities, such as sporting events and golf outings? What types of activities do you enjoy? How can they be incorporated into networking activities? How can you stay in touch with colleagues from other places?

Commit to your goals

Write down 2 networking goals for each of the following time frames. Make sure your goals are S.M.A.R.T. (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timeline)

Goals for the month

Goals for the quarter

Goals for the year

Sample tracking & coding spreadsheet

Contact	Contact Type	Contact Info	Company	Next Action	Notes	Notes
Joe Smith	A – already know, person can impact my career <u>B – already know, impact unknown</u> C – don't know, but could impact career	404-555-1414; joesmith@cocacola.com Atlanta, GA	Coca Cola	10/1: Call Joe re: connecting with Fred @ Intel.	9/1: Called re: recent news about Intel entering Korean market. Joe knows someone there and will reach out.	9/20: Called re: follow up. Fred @ intel is out of the country until the end of the month.

Sample Business Development Planning Worksheet

Category/Action Steps	Target Date	Status/Comments
<i>Clients</i>		
1. Clients: develop your work product a. Develop a greater degree of practice specialization consistent with our clients' needs		
2. Clients: build relationships a. Communication proactively with clients with the goal of becoming their point of contact for questions		
1. Clients: expanding business with existing clients a. Develop relationships with junior attorney/executives at clients b. Familiarize yourself with the secondment process and listen for opportunities for yourself or others		
2. Clients: cross-selling other practices to existing clients a. Expand your knowledge of the Firm by participating in 'spot' training from other departments b. Identify key PH partners in your office, set action steps for raising your profile beyond your assigning attorneys		
<i>Raise your Profile at the Firm</i>		
1. Cultivate a highly visible professional profile across the firm. Set action steps for getting to know partners across offices, depts., groups		
<i>Writing/Speaking</i>		
1. Participate in writing an article or client alert.		
2. Assist in preparation of pitch materials.		
<i>Industry/Association Involvement</i>		
1. Identify key groups to get involved with, desired role, and action steps for pursuing		
<i>Community Involvement</i>		
1. Identify social, religious, community groups you are currently involved with, your role, and action steps for expanding your visibility		
2. Identify social, religious, community, etc. groups to get involved with, desired role, and action steps for pursuing		