

Lateral Outlook

Search Strategies for the Slow Market



With the legal market slowing significantly and competition for the few places available getting stronger, you would be forgiven for feeling a little half-hearted about your chances of getting an offer.

We won't rehash the bad news that you know all too well. Instead we'll share some good news – firms are still hiring, even if at slower rates, and there are strategies that can turn things around and help you stand out from the competition. It's a matter of discovering the best strategies and applying them. Here are some strategies you should consider:

Strengthen Your Skills. Though personality matters, in a slow economy your skills carry the weight. Hone them by taking on additional assignments, seeking out more responsibility and assisting teams working on high-profile or cutting-edge cases. Even if you lose your job, those skills matter to potential employers now more than ever. The efforts also demonstrate you are a motivated attorney who will go the extra mile to get great results.

Improve Your Attitude. When interviewing, don't complain about your current situation. Now is the time for your interviewers to see that you are the type of person who not only possesses a can-do attitude, but can back it up with results as well. Convince them that not only will you hit the ground running, but that you will hit the ground winning.

Network. It's amazing how easy it is to let years - even a decade or more - pass by without contacting those classmates or former colleagues who once were a part of your life.

Well, now is a great opportunity to reconnect with them and at the same time increase your chances of getting that ideal job. Afraid to pick up the phone? Join the club – our experience, however, is that most attorneys are flattered to be remembered, whatever the reason. Naturally, you won't present them with your resume on the first meeting, and of course, the key is to stay in touch – even after you find a new job.

Consult the Experts. Many positions are never advertised, so to get a jump on what's available in your area, seek the advice of a professional. Law school career services offices can often provide valuable advice, and professional recruiters are an excellent source of market details and inside information. Even recently-employed attorneys who are willing to share their in-the-know-secrets with you are a good source of information. Leave no rock unturned in your quest for an offer.

In tough times, those putting in the extra effort are the ones who will reap the benefits. If you can rise above the common belief that mass-mailing your resume to every firm in town is the best you can do, you will show firms that a slow market hasn't slowed you down one bit.

Interested in learning more? We can help. Email us at info@elitelaterals.com or call Amy Savage at 202.280.2408