

## LAWYER TO LAWYER MENTORING PROGRAM WORKSHEET I CAREER OBJECTIVES

Worksheet I is intended to facilitate a discussion about the new lawyer's long-term career objectives and ways to achieve them.

#### WHAT WENT WELL?

Start by sha	aring with	each	other	а	brief	story	of	something	that	went	well	in	your	practice
this week:														

Share your reflection by on one of these questions: What caused the good event? What does it mean? How did you contribute? Others? How can you have more such events in the future?

#### **ACTIVITIES FOR TODAY**

- Discuss how to get a legal career off the ground. See the attached article by Wendy L. Werner, Career Advice for Law Students and New Lawyers: A Roundtable Discussion, available at:
  - http://www.americanbar.org/newsletter/publications/law practice today home/law practice today archive/march11/career advice for law students and new lawyers.html
- ➤ Discuss the attached article by Kathleen Brady, *Seize Control of Your Career Development*, available from <a href="http://www.careerplanners.net/13.html">http://www.careerplanners.net/13.html</a>.
- Discuss the different types of law practice. Examples include: government or public office, private practice, large firm v. small firm v. solo practice, corporate, environmental, judicial clerkships, non-traditional legal positions, and Legal Aid.
- > Share with the new lawyer the long-term goals you had as a new lawyer. Discuss how and why those goals changed and the successes and failures you had in reaching those goals. Discuss what you have achieved and what career goals you have now.
- > Share with the new lawyer how you would do things differently in pursuing your career objectives if you had a chance to start over.
- > If the new lawyer is not in the type of practice s/he would like to be in long-term, the mentor may try to introduce the new lawyer to lawyers in the field s/he would like to explore.
- > Discuss networking opportunities that would coincide with the new lawyer's objectives.



- Discuss how bar association involvement can enhance career exploration and opportunities.
- > Discuss the new lawyer's resume and suggest activities in which he or she should engage to strengthen it toward meeting his or her career goals. Suggest ways for the new lawyer to develop professionally and to distinguish himself or herself from others.

#### **ACTION STEPS**

End the session by discussing what action steps you can take to either improve or set yourself up for future success based on today's discussion. Discuss how one or more of your Signature Strengths can help you achieve success in these steps.

#### RESOURCES

Deborah Arron, What Can You Do with a Law Degree? A Lawyer's Guide to Career Alternatives, Inside, Outside, and Around the Law (2003)

Cliff Ennico, Your Legal Career: Finding Success and Satisfaction in the Legal Profession (1998)

Hindi Greenberg, The Lawyer's Career Change Handbook: More Than 300 Things You Can Do with a Law Degree (1998)

Ron Hogan, View from the Top: Law Firm Leaders Unlock the Secrets of a Successful Legal Career (2005)

Gary A. Muenneke, et. al., Nonlegal Careers for Lawyers (2006)

Gary A. Muenneke, Careers in Law (2003)

Gary A. Muenneke, The Legal Career Guide, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition: From Law Student to Lawyer (2003)

Kimm Alayne Walton, Guerrilla Tactics for Getting the Legal Job of Your Dreams, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (2008)

Srikumar S. Rao, Happiness at Work, (20100



### Career Advice for Law Students and New Lawyers: A Roundtable Discussion By Wendy L. Werner

March 2011

These are challenging times for new lawyers and law students launching their careers. This roundtable discussion of experts in legal careers offers advice about how to get your legal career off the ground.

These are difficult times for new law school graduates, and for law students trying to obtain their first job out of law school. We thought that it would make sense to seek the advice of a number of career professionals who have worked with law students and lawyers as they have sought out their first jobs. Here are some of their thoughts on the job search.

We are fortunate to have with us Kathleen Brady who runs a career planning firm with offices in New York City and Philadelphia, Nancy Caver, who is a senior career advisor for the consulting firm Shannon and Manch in Washington, D.C., Dennis Kennedy, a technology lawyer in St. Louis, who was a law firm hiring partner, and Grover Cleveland, a Seattle attorney and author of the book, "Swimming Lessons for Baby Sharks." I can't think of a better group to help young attorneys and students think about these issues. Here are some of their thoughts.

What recommendations do you have for law students who will be graduating this year or next about how to best search for a job in this economic climate?

**NC**: In this challenging job market it is important for law students to gain marketable experience while they are in school. This will not only give them skills and experience but it will start to provide them with professional contacts and references which will be crucial for future job searches. Although paying jobs are desired, often legal internships and volunteer experiences offer a better quality experience and hands on training for law students. Volunteering for a judge or a court, working in a legal clinic, or working in a federal or local government office will allow the student to gain valuable experience which will make their resume more marketable. In any economic climate it is important to network and use contacts to search for a job but these days it is even more necessary. Students are often hesitant to make or to use their networking contacts. Law students complain that they do not have any contacts yet. They need to realize they have many contacts such as: professors, alumni/ae from their law school or undergraduate school, recent graduates, or more senior students are all potential contacts. Students should use LinkedIn.com to generate contacts and will be surprised once they start keeping track that they know more people than they thought. Studies have shown the number one way people find jobs and job openings is through networking and personal contacts.

**KB**: It is important for law students to have more realistic expectations. Your first job may not be your "dream" job, but if it is going to provide you with the skills and knowledge you need to advance towards your ultimate career goals, don't discount it because it isn't perfect. I am not suggesting you abandon your



goals and accept just any job, but if it can get you started in the direction you want to go, seriously consider taking it.

**DK**: Be creative. Trying new approaches is far more likely to bring you success than trying to do the tried and true tactics and strategies better than others. For example, working on improving your LinkedIn profile and making connections will serve you better than finding the perfect cream-colored paper for your resume and mass-mailing it to hiring partners. Networking effectively is an essential first step, but a continuing effort to assemble a portfolio of projects, accomplishments and references will be what separates those who get jobs from those who do not. Finally, law students have told me that they are getting advice not to blog or use social media. You must use good judgment, but building a useful blog on a topic, even if it involves only summarizing cases, may open doors for you in ways you never expected.

**GC**: If you are still in school, do not neglect your grades. Internships and other activities are fine, but when legal employers have to decide who to interview, grades play a big role in determining who makes that cut and who doesn't. If you already have excellent grades, extracurricular activities can give you an edge in landing a job, but most employers simply assume they will have to train new lawyers from square one. To land a job, you have to convince the other lawyers that you will do a better job of making their lives easier than anyone else they are interviewing. Two of the greatest fears that senior lawyers have about junior lawyers is that they will make careless mistakes and will not follow through on their commitments. Your words and actions have to demonstrate extreme attention to detail and unfailing dependability. Even the slightest error in your resume is likely to tank your job prospects in this economy. Being friendly – but not chummy – is also key. Senior lawyers want to know that you will be pleasant to work with and be nice to their clients.

If you have already graduated and haven't been able to find a job in the legal world in 10 months or more what do you recommend as other fields that might continue to make you attractive to legal employers in the future.

NC: In these challenging times I recommend that a recent graduate try to gain any type of marketable experience which will add value to their resume. Identify the type of skills and experience you want/need and then pursue work in those areas. Opportunities which would allow you to improve and expand their research, writing, and analytical skills would be a good choice. Keeping your mind open to consider options outside strictly legal work is another idea. Look for opportunities which will allow you to gain transferrable skills such as: contract administration, policy work, working for an association or not-for-profit organization. Contract or temporary work might offer exposure to litigation support or e-discovery. Using volunteer or pro bono opportunities to get legal experience, although unpaid, can allow you to get some valuable experience for your resume, it doesn't matter if the experience is paid or unpaid, full or part-time. Some recent graduates might have to juggle several paying jobs to pay the rent and then save a few hours for some volunteer work to help advance their legal skills and experience. From every job, you will add new contacts and a reference to grow your personal network. Most employers should understand the challenge new lawyers face in landing that first job in this economic climate and they should be impressed by the hard work and creativity you show in pursuit of that job. The first question a potential employer will ask



when seeing a time gap in a resume is, "What have you been doing with your time for the past 10 months since you graduated from law school?" You need to be able to respond to that question with confidence and pride. Replying with "I've been looking for a job" is not going to get you very far in the interview process.

**KB**: That is a tricky question that doesn't have a one size fits all answer. I suspect most students who haven't found a job in 10 months have limited themselves to the traditional big firms. Fewer than 20% of all lawyers work in the AmLaw 500 firms yet many students or recent graduates limit themselves to that segment of the marketplace. Think about small firms, perhaps even firms in neighboring suburbs or smaller towns. Those jobs are not necessarily posted anywhere and to uncover those opportunities requires networking and outreach which many people try to avoid at all costs. But if you can connect with a small firm and show them how what you have to offer you will uncover the "hidden" job market. Even as a new grad, you may only be able to offer your energy and enthusiasm or your intellectual ability...but that may be enough to free the partner up to generate more business, which is ultimately good for the firm.

Another option may be to get a job in the industry in which you have the greatest interest. So if you want to do corporate finance work, maybe there is a business role in a bank or financial institution; if you are interested in environmental law, consider an opportunity at an environmental non-profit or corporation. Learn something about the business that will be helpful. The reality is, that will not necessarily prepare you to practice law, but it may open up a career path where you can use your legal education in a way you never knew possible.

**DK**: The answer will vary for each individual. You will want to take some time to reflect on why you went to law school and put together a list of your best skills. Based on that, you can start to identify areas that best suit you. I find that I'm often recommending to law students and recent graduates who have interest and skills in technology to look hard at litigation support and e-discovery. However, I would recommend thinking about this time not as "down" time, but as a time to start putting together a portfolio of projects that you can later show potential employers while earning some money. Employers understand how difficult this market is and being able to tangibly demonstrate how you handled adversity will impress employers down the line.

**GC**: Anything that involves public policy should be helpful, such as working for an elected official or as a policy analyst for government. Whatever you do, I also recommend doing legal work on the side, such as contract work or pro bono work. This will keep your legal skills sharp and will demonstrate that you are serious about pursuing a legal career. I recommend against taking a job as a paralegal or any non-law job at a law firm. Sometimes graduates think this will give them an "in" at a firm, but more often than not, it just brands the person as a "non-lawyer."

We continually hear about how important networking is in the job search - and yet many law students and young lawyers are reluctant to contact people they don't know and ask them for their advice and/or assistance. What recommendations do you have to make this process easier - or more palatable to a law student or young lawyer?



**NC**: In a recent article about how people find jobs, it was stated that 64% find their job through networking. Often job seekers think networking is asking for a job, but in fact, networking is asking for advice and information. People are usually very willing to help by offering information and advice but making that first appointment with a networking contact can be daunting. Start with someone safe and easy to approach such as a professor, your roommate's mother, your legal research and writing instructor, someone who knows you and is willing to sit down and talk to you about their career and give advice to you. Create an account on LinkedIn.com. LinkedIn is a professional networking site on which you post your professional and educational information and then you are linked with contacts from your educational and professional backgrounds. People join LinkedIn for the purpose of networking- so it's a great place to start. Do your homework before you meet with a networking contact. Figure out what you want to gain from meeting with that particular individual (other than a job). Just to help you out – here are some questions I typically suggest you ask:

- How did you get your current job? What prepared you for this job?
- What skills to you think are important for a career in \_\_\_\_\_?
- What advice do you have for me....looking for my first legal job?
- Where do you see the industry/practice area/field headed in the future?
- What do you wish you knew when you were fresh out of law school?
- Can you think of somebody else to whom I can speak? May I use your name when contacting him/her?
- Please let me know how I can return the favor.

After your meeting remember to send a thank you note. Then keep this person in your networking loop. When you finally land a job remember to let your contacts know the good news.

**KB**: Start with people you know and ask them for introductions. Ask them for something reasonable. As Nancy said, you are looking for advice, information and referrals. No one is going to hand you a job, but if they can offer you ideas and introduce you to people in their network, you can take it from there. These two short articles that I can offer that provide tips on how to network to find a job <a href="http://factoidz.com/network-to-find-a-job/">http://factoidz.com/network-to-find-a-job/</a> and how to overcome resistance to networking; <a href="http://factoidz.com/overcome-your-contacts-resistance-to-networking/">http://factoidz.com/overcome-your-contacts-resistance-to-networking/</a>

**DK**: I think that you have to understand that networking is hard work. It's scary to put yourself out there and introduce yourself to people you don't know. Networks, however, are something that you build one block at a time, starting with people you know and growing from there. You are always looking for commonality - same hometown, same college, same law school, etc. As Nancy mentioned, tools like LinkedIn are invaluable in helping you map out a social network. It's also far easier on your ego not to get an answer from an invitation on LinkedIn than it is when you call someone directly. Networking skills can also be learned. There are a number of excellent books on the topic. Read them as well as the articles that Kathy mentioned and put into practice the techniques that best suit your personality. Also, becoming active as a student in bar associations and other groups will be a huge help in networking. An easy approach is the



alumni approach. Most lawyers will be receptive to talking to students from their law schools or undergraduate schools. Finally, think about what you have to offer to the networking relationship. Might you offer to teach an older lawyer about technology or social media in exchange for him or her giving you some tips about the practice of law?

**GC**: It may help to remember that all senior lawyers were once new lawyers and should be able to empathize with your situation. Lawyers also expect other lawyers to be assertive, and asking for advice will likely be perceived as a sign of strength. But you also have to remember that lawyers can be incredibly busy. Remember to respect the other lawyer's time. Be flexible about scheduling and offer to meet in the attorney's office. If you propose a short meeting – a half hour or less – the other lawyer is more likely to agree to meet. Dress as if you were interviewing for a job, and come prepared with questions that you genuinely want to know about the lawyer's practice. If you arrive at the meeting simply expecting to be handed a job on a platter, that will be obvious. You are likely to feel uncomfortable, and the person you are meeting with will feel manipulated. That's not the result you want. End the meeting on time, and ask for suggestions about other lawyers to meet. After the meeting, as Nancy suggested, send a hand-written thank you note.

Articles keep appearing in publications about the significant debt that follows law students when they graduate. Do you have recommendations for current students about dealing with this debt, or new graduates who are looking for their first full time job?

**NC**: I wish I had some sage advice to law students and recent graduates on managing their debt which I know can be overwhelming. The best advice I have is to keep your options open. I have seen students and recent graduates seek employment only with the larger law firms that pay the "big money" because they need to make a significant amount be able to live and begin to pay back their educational debt. In this market, the employers that pay entry level lawyers huge salaries are very limited. Many candidates overlook other employment options which might not pay the big bucks but will give them good, solid experience and a decent salary. You might still need to live like a student, drive an old car, brown bag your lunch, and keep those roommates for several more years but it is better to be employed making less money than to keep applying for jobs that just are not available while you are generating zero income.

**KB**: First, be smart about borrowing. Students take out loans to live on during law school. Think about borrowing less and getting a job to defray costs. You don't have to get a legal job. Bartend...proofread...be a security guard. But you don't want to work so many hours that you end up sacrificing your grades either. Find the balance that works for you. Once you have borrowed the money, if you can't afford the payments, call the lender and see what kind of payment plans you can work out based on your current status. They would rather receive something than have you default.

**DK**: I agree with Kathy about being smart about borrowing. It's essential to keep expenses low. There are some great personal finance blogs (The Simple Dollar and Wise Bread, to name two starting points) with great tips and information. There's a tendency to think that once you graduate from law school, it's a culmination of your effort and things will be much less of a struggle, especially financially. However, you quickly realize you've gotten to another starting point. Probably the best approach is to keep your focus on



reducing your expenses and think about finances over the long term. If you have a large debt load, do what you can to pay even a little extra to help get out from under it a little sooner. A large debt load will limit

both your work and lifestyle choices.

**GC**: To concur with my colleagues, while in law school, take on as little debt as possible. Right after taking the bar examination, I recommend consulting with a financial planner. ABA YLD conferences often offer free financial planning sessions. Whenever you make more than the minimum payment on your loans, you are buying freedom. But building a nest egg is also important in case you are laid off. A relatively painless approach to saving is to have a certain amount of your paycheck automatically transferred to an account that it is difficult to access. But once you land a job, you should also treat yourself. Making it through law school and landing a job demand a celebration. But don't go crazy. Piling on even more debt can limit your options if your dream job comes along at a lower salary.

Some new graduates, unable to find a legal job have been opening their own practices. What are your thoughts about this - and what recommendations would you have for someone starting his or her own firm?

**NC**: It is challenging to open your own practice as a recent law school graduate because you lack the experience and professional contacts to become established in the legal community. To make this venture work you need to do a lot of networking and marketing, using the same skills you use to search for a job. I recommend anyone considering the option of exploring what your state or local bar association has to offer and to take advantage of that support. Try to find a mentor, ideally a solo practitioner who needs some assistance. I know of a new graduate who found a solo who needed assistance through an ad on Craigslist. This person took the job and received excellent training. Although not stated in the ad the practitioner was nearing retirement and was looking for someone to eventually take over the practice. The income was not great but the opportunity was valuable and worthwhile.

**KB**: I definitely agree with the bar association recommendation. For example, the Association of the Bar of the City of New York has the Small Law Firm Center. Be careful about this option. Going solo is about more than practicing law; you also have to learn about running a business. Not everyone is cut out for that. Read books about opening your own practice; talk to seasoned solos to see if they would be willing to share their war stories with you so you can avoid some of the common pitfalls. Most importantly, *you need to write a business plan*.

**DK**: The single most important thing you can do when you leave law school is to find and work with a mentor. Ideally, this will be a lawyer who teaches you the practice, both substantively and ethically, and serves as a role model. If you start your own firm, either by yourself or with friends, finding mentoring relationships might be even more important. Starting your own practice out of law school is a tough call. It will definitely help if you have started another business earlier in life. I still recommend that you think in terms of building a portfolio. If you can do some contract work for lawyers - writing or editing briefs, helping on e-discovery or litigation projects, doing some research projects - you start to build both a portfolio and a network. Good work on piecemeal projects might lead to permanent employment or a mentoring relationship. You might still have to wait tables or paint houses to make ends meet, but you'll be



building a project portfolio. Not everyone is suited for a solo practice - be honest with yourself. My main advice to someone who decides to start a solo practice is to look for shared office space with other lawyers so you don't become isolated and can get some help.

**GC**: Hanging your own shingle can be challenging, because there is a lot of competition. Like Dennis, I recommend trying to find an office-sharing arrangement with lawyers who are willing to give you their overflow work. That can help ease the transition as you build your own practice. Some new lawyers also think that they have to have fancy offices and other elaborate trappings in order to appear successful. But posh offices are likely to strain your cash flow, and with technology it is less and less common to meet with clients in person. It is also important to identify lawyers who will help you if you have legal questions. This can be difficult, because other lawyers don't want to be responsible for your mistakes, and they may view you as a competitor. Your former law professors or other lawyers who are not in private practice may be your best sources for helping you work through legal issues.

**Nancy Saltsman Carver** is a Senior Career Advisor with the consulting firm of <a href="www.shannonandmanch.com">www.shannonandmanch.com</a> Ms. Carver has been a career counselor for over 25 years and is a contributing author to *The Lawyer's Career Management Handbook: Your Bridge to a Satisfying Career* published by West.

**Kathleen Brady**, is principal of *Brady & Associates Career Planners*, *LLC*, <a href="http://www.careerplanners.net/">http://www.careerplanners.net/</a>, a career development training company and *Kanarek & Brady LLC*, <a href="http://www.kanarekandbrady.com/">http://www.kanarekandbrady.com/</a>, a firm specializing in career coaching and transition services for the legal community.

**Dennis Kennedy** is an information technology lawyer, legal technology writer, blogger, (<a href="http://denniskennedy.com/blog">http://denniskennedy.com/blog</a>), podcaster, and former law firm hiring partner based in St. Louis, MO.

**Grover E. Cleveland** is the author of *Swimming Lessons for Baby Sharks: The Essential Guide to Thriving as a New Lawyer* (West, 2010). <a href="http://swimminglessonsforbabysharks.com">http://swimminglessonsforbabysharks.com</a>. He is a former partner at Foster Pepper PLLC one of the Northwest's largest law firms and currently holds an environmental policy position in Seattle.

**Wendy L. Werner** is a career consultant and law practice management advisor with the firm *Werner Associates, LLC*, <u>www.wendywerner.com/associates</u>, and is a member of the ABA Law Practice Management webzine board and is the vice-chair of the LPM Careers Committee.

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT QUARTERLY

November 2005

D.C. Metro Edition

Journal of Professional Development and Continuing Legal Education

#### Attention Associates: Seize Control of Your Career Development Kathleen Brady

any things appear to be beyond the control of a junior attorney. They are assigned a secretary, given assignments, and operate on someone else's timetable. Such external realities create a detrimental mindset, and junior associates simply resign themselves to accept that they have no control over their time, experience, or professional development. Such passive resignation is a sure-fire way to sabotage a career.

Professional development administrators play a critical role in helping junior associates recognize that they have the power to create the career—and ultimately, the life—they want as long as they are willing to accept responsibility for their own career development. They must learn to control the things they can and develop strategies to cope with those they cannot.

Career success hinges on individual actions. Share the following five Career Development Action Steps with your associates to help them understand exactly what it is they need to do.

#### **Associate Career Development Action Steps**

1. Recognize that technical competence is critical. Continually learn the law. Deliver complete, high quality work on time every time, and always give 110% in your day to day responsibilities. When you do that, you develop a reputation for being reliable and dependable. Benchmark your progress against your colleagues. If others appear to be getting more sophisticated work, ask yourself why. Is it because you have not proven yourself to be reliable? Is your substantive work not up to par? Answers to these questions can help you see yourself through the eyes of your superiors and enable you to address issues before they become insurmountable. And, before you assume there is some great conspiracy by the power structure to sabotage your career, determine how your behavior may be contributing to the situation and try to correct that first.

Continually seek opportunities to learn through professional reading, training programs and seminars and conferences. Take advantage of everything provided to you.

- 2. Align your goals with the organization's goals and your boss's goals in order to expedite your career. Think about what keeps your boss up at night and attach yourself to the projects, people and areas that will able you to contribute in a way that makes that person's life easier. The trick is to create and understand your value to the boss and the organization while remaining true to yourself.
- 3. Pay attention to economic forces and world events. Today's business world is changing constantly. As a consequence, attorneys need to be up-to-date not only in their practice area and but also in the world around them. Use databases containing information about industry trends, specific company profiles, etc. Visit trade or professional associations as well as alumni sites. Sign up for industry news alerts through professional associations or papers like Law.com. Ten minutes a day is all the time you need to invest in such activities.

As useful as the Internet is, you cannot hide behind your computer screen. You need to talk to people. People are the single most valuable resource in your career development. They have more current, detailed and accurate information about what is happening in the world of work than any website, book or article ever can. It is extremely important to use these relationships to broaden your field of vision in order to make informed, smart decisions. You can learn about upcoming assignments and projects, pro bono opportunities, career paths you never thought about, market rates, shifts in business practices and industry trends, etc.

4. Establish mentor relationships. Don't rely solely on formalized mentor programs to blossom into full- fledged relationships, or hope people will notice you and offer to take you under their wings. It isn't enough. Solid mentor relationships evolve naturally, not through administration. Certainly participate in formal programs, but do more. Create a support system or Board of Advisors. Establishing a network of mentors will allow you to learn from different styles, develop a range of skills and consider various perspectives of an issue.

The key to successful mentor relationships is your willingness to work hard and make the relationships worthwhile for the mentors because of your enthusiasm and commitment. A mentor is not someone who solves all your problems; you should not burden anyone with such a responsibility. Think of mentors as resources to help you plan and execute your career goals and help you navigate difficult situations.

Mentor relationships are the primary stepping stone to building professional networks. They can introduce you to people within the Firm that you need to know. You rely on your skills and experience to impact what work gets done. But knowing how work gets done within an organization depends upon the network of relationships that exist. Network internally to increase the chances of making an impression on decision-makers; monitor the rumor mill and learn about departments beyond your own. Volunteer for committee assignments; attend firm events; eat lunch in the cafeteria. Be sure to establish a presence within the organization.

Develop, use and nurture relationships continuously. Keep in touch with people you meet throughout your career; don't wait until you "need" something from them. Establish a reputation for being helpful. Pass along useful information; introduce contacts to people in your network who might be helpful to them. Always look for ways to build bridges. People will remember your thoughtfulness and will be likely to return the favor.

You are completely responsible for what you bring into every relationship and for what you project onto other people. Perception IS reality. Think about how other people see you. If you look and act like a loser, or someone who does not belong, that is exactly how people will respond to you. Your facial expression, posture and willingness to launch conversations matter. Dress and behave like a professional; be positive and upbeat; project a proud, confident image. Radiate confidence and people will be naturally drawn to you in every situation throughout your career. That will help to ensure that you have limitless resources in place when you need them.

**5. Shamelessly self-promote your contributions.** Doing good work is essential. Equally important is ensuring that people know you do good work. It is your

responsibility to bring that information to light. Who you know is always important, but who knows you is even more important. That does not mean you need to turn into an arrogant, boastful creep. It simply means you need to be comfortable talking about what your contributions are. In order to do that, catalogue your experiences and successes as they happen. On an on-going basis, maintain a file that includes the following information:

- The substantive nature of the work performed and the percentage of time spent on each category.
- Significant accomplishments.
- Clients for whom you did a substantial amount of work or the major projects you worked on.
- Professional and community activities. Include internal activities (recruiting, CLEs, etc) and external activities (speaking engagements, articles written, conventions and seminars which you attended, bar activities, community activities, etc.)

This information should be used in preparation for your annual performance review. Your performance review is not something that happens *to* you; you must be an active participant. Prepare an Annual Report, to be included in your personal file containing the information you've gathered throughout the year. As you prepare this report, also ask yourself the following questions:

- Is my work load insufficient, satisfactory, or too much?
- Am I receiving a sufficient variety of assignments to enable me to grow as a lawyer? If not, what can I do to address the issue?
- Have I had regular opportunities to discuss my work with supervisors? If not, what could I have done differently to get needed feedback?

- Have I received and acted on supervisors' suggestions for improving my work?
- Am I satisfied with my development as a lawyer within the organization? If not, in what areas would I like to improve?
- What are my goals for the next year? In what areas would I like to improve and what is my action plan to accomplish this?

Encourage your associates to seize control of their career development. They have the power; they just need some guidance as to how to use it effectively within your organization.



Kathleen Brady is the founder of Brady & Associates Career Planners, LLC and the author of Navigating Detours on the Road to Success: A Lawyer's Guide to Career Management (Inkwater Press, 2005). She previously served as Assistant Dean of Career Services at Fordham University

School of Law, National Director of Staff Recruitment and Development at Jackson Lewis, Manager of Associate Professional Development at Milbank Tweed Hadley & McCloy, LLP, and president of the National Association for Law Placement. She can be reached at (212) 918-4626 or kbrady @careerplanners.net.

Reprinted with permission from **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT QUARTERLY**. The author of this article is permitted to reproduce and distribute it without limitation, including republication elsewhere.

Copyright © 2005 Evelyn Gaye Mara. Address subscriptions and correspondence to Professional Development Services, P.O. Box 150306, Alexandria, VA 22315-9998, (703) 719-7030, maraeg@profdev.com.