

FIRM ADVICE, INC.

Permanent And Temporary Legal Placement

CURRENT MARKET

Many of my friends and colleagues are interested in hearing my take on the DC legal market, so here it is (WARNING! This email may contain information that may be disturbing [to be reminded of], so please use discretion in deciding to read):

In the nearly 14 years that I have been in the legal placement business in DC (my company will be nine years old next month), I have not seen a worse employment environment—I warned you. What is worse, I have never seen such a dismal forecast. Everyone, except anxious real estate agents, pretty much agrees that the **market is going to continue to decline this year**. The only real question is when will things get better—I'm counting on early 2010.

IF YOU ARE CURRENTLY EMPLOYED

My advice to those of you who have a job is to stay put. It is very difficult to tell the stability of an organization until you are on the inside, and only then if you are at a sufficiently high level. I've seen people duped despite thorough due diligence before taking the bait, and now they are suffering for it. Additionally, if you switch jobs, you would be last in, first out, if the organization takes a turn for the worse. If you are unhappy in your current situation, use 2009 as a retrenching year: network and acquire the skills and experience you will need to get you where you want to go when the economy rebounds.

IF YOU ARE SEEKING EMPLOYMENT

If you have no choice but to find a new job, the good news is that some companies are hiring. Beef up your job search by ensuring you are covering all the relevant job boards, including Monster and CareerBuilder, but also Indeed.com, job.com, lawjobs.com, Theladders.com and Craigslist.com. Also, expand your networking to include organizations you don't typically attend, such as events sponsored by the DC and the Fairfax bars. When you attend an event, arrive early, stay late, and make it your goal to connect with three new people, and then follow up with them.

We are fortunate to be in the DC area, which will probably not feel the full force of the decline. Additionally, if the government increases its spending, this area will be the first to benefit.

LAW FIRMS

Law firms are feeling the effects of the recession, just as is nearly every other organization. One way some (certainly not all) firms are trying to combat laying off

[more] associates is by placing them on work that traditionally is handled by contract, or document review, attorneys. **Firms are then billing their clients for associates that cost several hundred dollars per hour, rather than \$55 to \$60 per hour for a document review attorney.** In these difficult times, in-house are keeping a closer eye than ever on staffing by their outside firms and their billing practices.

CONTROLLING LAW FIRM COSTS

Many of our clients are opting to further control outside legal fees by selecting an agency they trust to provide their law firms with document review attorneys. This practice is one of the aspects of the DuPont Model for controlling outside legal fees. **Firm Advice places the document review attorneys to work in the firms' offices or in office space close to the firm; we can also provide the reviewers with computers and anything else that may be needed.** The structure of Firm Advice enables us to provide very competitive, possibly unbeatable, rates and our screening process is unsurpassed in the legal placement industry. In addition to hundreds of document review attorneys, we have the following attorneys available on a temporary or direct hire basis:

Domestic and international contracts:

A 1996 Georgetown Law School graduate who worked at Winston Strawn for 10 years drafting and negotiating domestic and international commercial agreements. These agreements included distribution and sales agreements, supplier agreements, confidentiality agreements, administrative services agreements, software licensing, royalty, and real estate purchase and sale agreements, as well as handling M&A, divestitures, and setting up domestic and foreign subsidiaries. He just completed five months of work for a government supplier of IT products and services. Our client was very pleased with his work and would have liked to hire him. Although not an employment lawyer, he has crafted employment and consulting agreements.

Commercial contracts in telecom and IT industries:

Multilingual corporate attorney with 15 years in-house experience with domestic and international companies in telecom and information technology industries. She is a skilled negotiator with experience drafting and negotiating commercial transactions, including vendor agreements, M&A and federal, state and local government contracts. I have known her for six years and have successfully placed her in contract positions, one of which resulted in her being hired by the company.

Commercial real estate:

For the majority of her career, this attorney has been a senior legal manager at commercial real estate developers that had many partnerships and sub-entities. She has held a broad range of responsibilities, including drafting and negotiating contracts, corporate governance, business formation, compliance, litigation management and HR. She was generally responsible for the corporate legal work and has substantial experience with transactional asset contracts such as licensing agreements and vendor contracts, including telecom, development agreements, service provider agreements and consulting agreements. This attorney has some FAR and GSA experience as well. I have known her for approximately five years and she is very knowledgeable and personable.

Transactions, SEC, commercial contracts:

A 1998 University of Virginia Law School graduate who obtained his BA from Stanford *with honors* in 1991. Between college and law school he was an intelligence officer in the Navy. Following law school, he worked for Akin Gump handling business transactions, including M&A, SEC matters, and litigation. After four years he joined the enforcement division of the SEC, where he worked on investigations and prosecutions. Three years later, in 2005, he joined his father's business practice where he advises clients regarding all stages of the business lifecycle, from formation through sale or liquidation. His practice includes representing parties contracting for services ranging from construction to employment.

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