



Top 10 Reasons for Law Firms and Individual Attorneys to Use a Legal Recruiter

[By Sharon Aboussleman and Jeff Bloom]

When law firms have hiring needs, many of them overlook the option of using a legal recruiter. Similarly, when attorneys evaluate new career paths, many do not consider contacting recruiters. This may be due to lack of knowledge regarding the recruiting process, not knowing who to contact, misinformation on the benefits a recruiter can provide, or even a prior negative experience with a recruiter. However, there are many excellent reasons for attorney candidates and law firms to use recruiters. Here are what we believe to be the top 10 reasons for each group.

NOTE: This article is based solely on Lucas Group's policies and practices.

FOR LAW FIRMS ...	FOR ATTORNEY CANDIDATES ...
<p>1. Professional representation by a recruiter.</p> <p>The recruiter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> acts as an objective, third-party liaison between the law firm and the candidate. represents the client's best interests. is an educated, trained, and skilled professional (and often a former practicing attorney). provides professional advice tailored to the client and the candidate. does more than collect resumes or post on the Internet. provides professional guidance throughout the interview process. provides experienced assistance and guidance during compensation negotiations. 	<p>1. Professional representation by a recruiter.</p> <p>The recruiter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is an educated, trained, and skilled professional (and often a former practicing attorney). does significantly more than collect and send resumes. provides professional and tailored guidance as well as representation relating to the interview process, resume editing, multiple offers, resignation, counteroffers, salary negotiations, etc.
<p>2. Higher price, higher value.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Myth:</u> A candidate who is not represented by a recruiter has a better chance of landing a job than a similarly situated candidate who is represented by a recruiter and, therefore, comes with a recruiter-fee price tag. <u>Reality:</u> Law firms often view candidates who are represented by recruiters as being in the upper echelon of potential candidates because they know that recruiters actively seek these individuals out for placement. 	<p>2. Higher price, higher value.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Myth:</u> Using a recruiter is too expensive. We can save money by recruiting on our own. <u>Reality:</u> Using a recruiter is a cost-saving measure. Time is money. Recruiting is a time-intensive activity that generally involves searching, phone calls, advertising, screening candidates' resumes, interviewing, checking references, salary negotiations, etc. Recruiters save clients time and money by engaging in the majority of these activities on behalf of the firm and presenting on-point, qualified candidates.



<p>3. There is no cost to the law firm unless a placement is made.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruiters generally work on a contingency-fee basis. When circumstances warrant it, a retainer may be advantageous to both the law firm and the recruiter. There is often a replacement and/or refund policy when the attorney candidate leaves the firm within a certain period of time after placement. 	<p>3. It is completely confidential.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The employment search process is kept completely confidential between the recruiter and the attorney candidate. The recruiter does not communicate with any potential law firm on behalf of the attorney candidate without prior express permission.
<p>4. There is no cost to the candidate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no cost to the recruited candidate. Thus, cost is not a deterrent to prospective attorney candidates. 	<p>4. There is no cost to the candidate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The candidate pays nothing. The recruiter is paid by the law firm on commission and, in some cases, on retainer. The candidate saves valuable time.
<p>5. Recruiters know their clients.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruiters make it a point to know their clients (attorneys, practice groups, culture, environment, etc.). Knowing their clients ensures that recruiters will be able to effectively sell prospective attorney candidates on opportunities with law firms. 	<p>5. You can lessen the effects of the unexpected.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> So many things may change even after the employer conducts several interviews (e.g., job requirements, job description, or estimated compensation). A recruiter's involvement in dealing with the changes will allow for a higher probability of keeping potential offers alive.
<p>6. Recruiters are tapped into trends in the marketplace.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruiters converse with prospective attorney candidates daily and, thus, are very aware of trends and circumstances in the marketplace (compensation, bonuses, billable hours, partnership tracks, firm cultures and environments, employee retention rates, etc.). Being aware of trends in the market is critical to knowing how to attract the best candidates. 	<p>6. The recruiter has established industry relationships.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruiters network each day within their areas of expertise and often are the first to hear about new job opportunities. Recruiters have relationships with law firms and the hiring authorities within them.
<p>7. Recruiters are tapped into the talent pool.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The recruiter: connects and networks with prospective attorney candidates every day. is able to locate and present the upper echelon of potential candidates who would be interested in exploring opportunities with a law firm. 	<p>7. A recruiter is the best market source.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Published company information is not sufficient. (Details about culture, environment, and employee retention usually remain unpublished.) The recruiter generally has "insider information" regarding law firms. The recruiter can provide detailed, unpublished information regarding a specific position prior to sending a candidate's resume. The recruiter often has familiarity and experience with the law firm, its interview and hiring processes, its compensation, etc. The majority of available attorney jobs are not advertised in the newspaper or through other job boards.



<p>8. Recruiters actually recruit the best candidates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any law firm can post a job listing in professional publications, at university career centers, on firm websites, or on various job boards on the Internet. This generally results in a flood of resumes from candidates who do not even remotely meet the firm’s minimum hiring criteria. Recruiters actually recruit attorney candidates by locating, calling, and screening individuals who meet the law firm’s hiring criteria. 	<p>8. The recruiting industry is an industry.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The recruiting industry is a multibillion-dollar business comprised of skilled, trained, and knowledgeable individuals (many of whom are former practicing attorneys).
<p>9. Recruiters provide invaluable feedback.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback following an interview is extremely important. The recruiter will receive direct, candid, and honest feedback from the attorney candidate that the law firm may never receive on his or her own. 	<p>9. Recruiters provide invaluable feedback.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback following an interview is extremely important. The recruiter will receive direct and honest feedback from the law firm that the attorney candidate may never receive on his or her own.
<p>10. Passive candidates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Myth:</u> Recruiters only work with attorney candidates who are “on the market” (e.g., unemployed or searching for new jobs). <u>Reality:</u> Recruiters call and recruit highly talented attorney candidates who are happy where they are and are not looking for new jobs. Recruiters convey accurate and persuasive information regarding the advantages of exploring new opportunities. 	<p>10. “Only a fool has himself for a client.”</p> <p>The recruiter acts as a third-party liaison who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> represents the candidate’s best interests. acts as a go-between (he or she can place blame for problems that arise on himself or herself instead of on the candidate). is trained to handle situations unemotionally.