Identifying Prospective Employers: Where To Look & Whom To Write

Duke University School of Law
January 12, 2011
Today’s Program

- Review databases and other resources to help you identify prospective employers.

- Discuss a system to maximize your opportunities with those employers by strategically researching whom to write.
There are four key elements to a successful job search:

1. IDENTIFY prospective employers.
2. CONNECT with those inside organizations of interest, and within their surrounding communities.
3. APPLY.
4. FOLLOW UP.
IDENTIFY: How Do I Expand My Universe of Prospective Employers?
Identifying Prospective Employers

- NALP Directory
- Vault Career Insider
- Chambers & Partners USA
- Chambers Associate
- The Government Honors & Internship Handbook
- The Public Policy Handbook
- PSLawNet.org
- Idealist.org
- Martindale–Hubbell
- Leopard Solutions
Additional Resources

- Leadership Directories
  - American Bar Association
    - Membership Lists
    - Sections, Divisions, Forums & Committees
    - CLE division for lists of “Program Faculty”
  - American Association For Justice
    - For directories, section members and CLE faculty
  - State & Local Bar Associations
  - Association of Corporate Counsel
    - “Chapters” & “Committees” Sections
  - Law Periscope
    - Search Engine of 300 largest U.S. firms with an “Advanced Search” function
Vault’s Career Insider

- Unlimited, premium access available only through Career Center’s webpage.
  - Under the “Resources” column, “Online Job Search Tools.”
  - Register as “New To Career Insider” to create a personal account.

- Offers access to:
  - Downloadable Career Guides;
  - Employer profiles and rankings;
  - Discussion boards;
  - Industry blogs; and
  - News covering the latest trends and issues.
Martindale–Hubbell

- Basic Practice Profile data on virtually every lawyer in US & Canada.
- Detailed Professional Biographies of leading lawyers in more than 160 countries.
- Searchable by organization name, practice area, city.
- Lawyer and Law Firm Ratings based upon peer review.
- Information on corporate and government lawyers.
- A good tool for smaller firms, but most firms invest more heavily in their websites than in Martindale.
- Links to websites provided, but no e-mails or direct dial phone.
Access through Duke Law Career Center webpage.  
Search engine – 800 law firms, covering 110,000 lawyers.  
Search tools comprised of:  
◦ Attorney Reports  
◦ Job Reports  
“Attorney Reports” feature allows you to run reports on each listed firm displaying number of attorneys by:  
◦ Practice Area/Specialty  
◦ Law School/JD Year  
◦ College  
◦ Clerkship  
Click to e-mail/ Click to reach website bio  
Two reports side-by-side  
History Report – offers data on law firm’s makeup by quarter over the past year
“Job Reports” give overview of market by location.

- What positions are currently “open” & which practice areas are currently “hot” in which regions.
- Can run job reports by:
  - Practice area/specialty
  - Region & city
- Also provides contact information for law firm recruiting coordinators

A great research & networking tool -- for the limited scope of employers covered.
Chambers & Partners USA

- Ranks the leading firms and lawyers in an extensive range of practice areas throughout America.
- Rankings based upon independent interviews with thousands of lawyers and their clients.
- You can search for lawyers/firms by name, practice area, state, and/or Nationwide.
- Divides both firms and lawyers into “Bands” based upon their ranking in a certain practice area.
- Also lists “Key Individuals” and “Up & Coming” lawyers by state and practice area.
The Government Honors & Internship Handbook

- Lists all Federal departments & programs seeking summer applications from law students.
- Similarly, lists all State & Local Government Programs seeking law student applications.
- Appendices list application deadlines by agency name, and even breaks out 2010–2011 1L applications by deadline.
  - [www.law.arizona.edu/career/GovHonors10-11/Table2.cfm](http://www.law.arizona.edu/career/GovHonors10-11/Table2.cfm)
The new 2011 Public Policy Handbook is available here: http://www.law.arizona.edu/publicpolicyhandbook/

Table 2 lists agencies seeking legal interns, sorted by their respective deadlines.

Clicking on any agency’s link will lead you to a description of that agency, its summer program and the specific application process.
Directories encompass fourteen distinct “Yellow Books,” each including the latest contact information for leaders in a specific “sector.”

Sectors with “Advanced Search” functions include:

- Law & Lobbying Firms
- Corporate
- Financial
- Federal Agencies
- State Agencies
- Judicial
- Congressional
- Government Affairs
- Non-Profits
Employers <50 Lawyers

- Not on NALP.
- Often, less detailed websites.
- Often, no designated hiring contacts.
- Often, no NALP style info on compensation and practice areas.
- Little info available on Vault, etc.
- So you have to do it “Old School.”
  - Speeches and Conferences
  - Articles and Texts
  - Read the “trades”
  - State/Local Bar Associations, including section members
  - Clients/Businesses who can “light the way”
What’s “Old School?”

You have to research and utilize:

- Speeches and Conferences
  - PLI, ABA, State & Local Bar Association presenters
- Articles and Texts
  - Law Journals, Section Publications, Industry Publications, both for authors and those quoted
- Read the “trades”
- State/Local Bar Associations, including section members
- Clients/Businesses who can “light the way”
- Legal Sponsors of Industry–Specific Events
Mastering Legal and Business Media

- [www.NYTimes.com](http://www.NYTimes.com)
  - Deal Book blog

- [www.WSJ.com](http://www.WSJ.com)
  - Legal Blog; Deal Journal; Bankruptcy Beat; VC Dispatch; Corruption Currents, etc.

- [www.AmericanLawyer.com](http://www.AmericanLawyer.com)

- [www.Law.com](http://www.Law.com)

- The National Law Journal

- **Within A State – Specific Legal Market**
  - [Lawyers Weekly](http://www.lawyersweekly.com) (or other local legal publications)
  - Local Business Journal
  - Super Lawyers
  - Local Newspaper
Other Ways To Identify Leaders

- **“Super Lawyers” Lists**
  - Ratings in virtually every state by practice area, including “Rising Stars”

- **Law Dragon**
  - “Find” feature, news content and critical reviews of individual lawyers & judges
  - “Law Dragon 500”

- **Practising Law Institute (PLI)**
  - For seminar & webcast faculty, and “Treatise & Handbook” contributors

- **The numerous “American Colleges”**

- **Civic, Service and Not-For-Profits**
  - All collect contacts on members for fund-raising and activities
  - Board Members
Identifying & Ranking Your Personal Network

- When identifying potential contacts, consider:
  - Who’s doing the kind of work I want to do?
  - In the place where I want to do it?

- But I don’t know any lawyers... How do I find these people?
  - Family, friends, friends of friends
  - Undergraduate/Duke Law Alumni
    - Law School Alumni Directory
    - Duke Connect
  - Faculty/Administrators
  - Your classmates & upperclassmen
  - Fraternities/Sororities
  - Prior Work Experience – Alumni of ...
  - Martindale/Leopard Solutions/Linked In
  - Industry/Section Membership Lists
  - Read! (both print & blogs for authors and featured experts)
Applications

To Whom Should I Write?
If position has been formally posted:
  ◦ Send application to the listed individual
  ◦ May send separate letter to other individuals with whom you “connect”
    • Reference that you have already applied through proper channels
    • May state an interest in speaking with them further
If the position has not been posted:
  ◦ Send application to designated recruiting coordinator or member of the hiring committee, if listed
  ◦ May send separate letter to other individuals with whom you “connect”
    • Reference that you have already applied through proper channels
    • May state an interest in speaking with them further
If the position has not been posted and there is no clear point of contact for attorney hiring:

- Send application directly to an attorney, with this suggested order of priority:
  - 1st – Fellow Duke Law/undergraduate alumnus or other attorney with whom you have a “connection”
  - 2nd – Lead attorney in your practice area of interest
  - 3rd – Name partner or other senior person within the organization
The Career Center staff are happy to meet with you about your specific plan of action.

Contact a counselor directly or email careercenter@law.duke.edu to schedule an appointment.