

LEARNING TO THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX



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STATISTICS SHOW THAT 84.7 PERCENT OF 2012 LAW SCHOOL GRADUATES FOUND EMPLOYMENT UPON GRADUATION. However, of those graduates for whom employment status was known, only 64.4 percent obtained a job for which bar passage is required. In my years of practice, I have found that many of my law school classmates who were able to land a job using their law degrees were eventually opting out of those jobs to do something else. Although many of these classmates were females, there were also a surprising number of males. Studies show that 42 percent of women lawyers leave their legal career for a period of time. It is probably obvious why the statistics of women are so high, but I would suspect that the number of men may be on the rise in the near future given the increase of economic issues and the burnout rates. So, what are your options if you are unable to find employment using your law degree or you are interested in leaving the profession?

Most lawyers tend to excel in written and verbal communication. We are often strong negotiators and problem solvers, and we can think both critically and analytically. These skills are sought by numerous other professions and can be easily transitioned if you can learn to think outside the box. Some ideas on careers you could transition into using your legal skills include:

- **Advocacy work.** As lawyers, we are taught to zealously advocate for the client or the position we represent. Advocacy is a skill that is needed in a wide variety of professions such as sales, lobbying, fundraising, and nonprofit organizations.
- **Entrepreneurship.** Most lawyers have experience running their own practices. With this skill set, you could transition into a CEO position with a corporation, start your own company, or serve as an advisor to a business or organization that is struggling.
- **Public speaking.** Public speaking is often a strength of lawyers that can easily be transitioned into other careers. This skill can be utilized in a career such as a state or government public office position, a publicist for a company or a public figure, a motivational speaker, or a lobbyist.
- **Writing.** Often lawyers excel in writing and articulating things. This skill could land you a job writing or editing for a publication, or being a blogger or writer for a company or public figure. You could also transition to your own career as a writer or author.
- **Therapist.** Because most lawyers have a goal of helping others, a transition into a field of therapy could be a perfect fit.
- **Teaching or coaching.** Having a law degree makes you marketable as a teacher, professor, or a coach for tasks such as trial skills or advocacy.

If you are interested in pursuing a career outside of the traditional legal profession, think outside the box.

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