



# 10 Steps to Build a Successful Law Career

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# About this book

**'Building a successful law career'** provides the reader with immediate access to understanding the world of legal practice to assist in finding a legal job and then advancing within the organisation. This book aims to assist both newly qualified, and about to be qualified, lawyers, by providing guidance as to the early stages of developing a successful law career. The world of professional legal practice can seem overwhelming and bewildering to those entering the profession and the advice contained in this book provides valuable insight into the thinking and concerns of those who will have most impact on the early years of a lawyer's professional career – their employers. The huge expansion of the range and nature of legal topics and fields which provide employment and practice opportunities for young lawyers has become extremely bewildering in the last five years. The principles of advancement in the legal profession, however, have remained constant. The ideas contained in the text will assist young lawyers in obtaining employment and, following on from this, making sure that early advancement through the ranks of the huge, annual, new lawyer intake proceeds as quickly as the reader's ability and work ethic deserve. Your legal career may be a journey lasting 40 years, or more. It stands to reason that you should take a little time at the beginning of this journey to at least have a plan for the first few years; which is where this book come in. This relatively short book aims to do for its readers what it says in its title – Build a successful law career! It does this by providing practical advice, tips, suggestions and best practices for the early years. This includes deciding which areas of law to pursue, obtaining interviews and performing to your best ability in those, as well as ensuring that the first working years of a legal career result in recognition and advancement rather than being stuck in a depressing dead-end role. The information contained in these pages will assist new lawyers in avoiding pitfalls and generating and making the most of employment opportunities. The book covers all aspects of the early years of a legal career, from law student days, seeking a first employed role and choosing a suitable area of law, to getting an interview – and how to behave at that interview, through to the best practices to achieve early advancement within your first years of legal practice. The insights and advice given, cover the thinking and requirements of the employers and what they are hoping to see from the new lawyers, giving the readers a huge advantage over their contemporaries, and contenders, for advancement leading to a successful legal career.



# About the Author / Copyright

## About the Author

Richard Brady is the founder and head of the British legal centre, which is generally recognized as the leading international training provider of practical legal skills to recently-qualified young lawyers, through its on-line broadcast lessons and courses and its global network of training centres. He started his legal career as a prosecutor in Southern England, presenting cases on behalf of the local Police force, before leaving for private practice and rising to senior partner of his own successful London-based law firm. Having obtained further professional qualifications in Insurance and Finance following his involvement with a Middle Eastern based Insurance company, he began working as a specialist in a Finance House in the City of London, before leaving to set up his own finance house which he ran for 5 years. Realising the educational possibilities offered by new technology in 2010, he founded the British legal centre in 2010, with the initial aim of providing on-line training through new technology, for lawyers around the world. This remains the principal objective of the British legal centre, although it has been widened in the last few years to incorporate blended learning programmes, with the opening of traditional training centres in Western Europe, Latin America, and the Middle East that support the on-line courses with live training events in those regions.

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Richard Brady. Building a successful law career, British legal centre. Kindle Edition.

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# Introduction

When I set out on my legal career, fresh out of law school, I had little or no idea what area of law I wanted to work in. I had no idea as to whether I wanted to be based in an office or appear regularly in court, or even how to find a job with a law company. I didn't come from a family with a history of working in the legal profession and my naivety and lack of preparation for the world of work made the first few years of my legal career very tough - I made one mistake after another in terms of work, and behavior, with my first legal jobs.

The surprising thing was that I was not alone in this! Even now, every year in different countries all around the world, thousands of newly qualified lawyers will still find themselves in the position I was in: wondering how to find a job and a career path that will lead to a satisfying professional life to fulfill their true potential.

This book aims to provide the sort of advice and information which I wish had been available to me when I qualified. Its purpose is to guide the reader into what is important when seeking a job, performing at interviews, and then working in a law company or legal department.

What is important to newly qualified lawyers, may be very different to what is important to employers and the 10 chapters of this book explain to the newly qualified, what employers are hoping to see in them. This is a guide for the early years of your career to ensure you maximise your potential, finding work which suits you, and then thriving and advancing within your career. All without having to wait and experience years of stagnation learning how to get ahead in the law.

There is nothing in this book which I would describe as 'Rocket science': No magic tricks, or single solution fixes. What the book contains is practical advice, which may not occur to you when you are fresh out of law school, wondering where to start and, even, how to start?

# Introduction

The same principles apply to the advice in the book regarding the early years of your law practice. What may be important to you, will probably be different from the important qualities which your employers are looking for, in order to feel comfortable in promoting you and advancing your career. This book will tell you how to move ahead in the first few years of your legal career.

There is one piece of advice which I will share with you now - Read the advice in this book, understand it, and then put it into practice! Don't think, however, that just by reading this book you're going to be successful - you need to follow the advice contained in the book to achieve the legal career which you know in your heart, you are capable of. Once you have qualified, when it comes to the world of work, a very handy maxim to apply is, "less education and more application". You need to know the law but from then on, it's up to you to move your career ahead.

You have taken an important first step - acceptance of the fact that you don't yet know everything you need to know, to be successful. Read this book and then follow the advice!

Good luck in your career, you deserve it.

# **Part 1. General Basics of Building a Successful Law Career**



In this first chapter, I am just going to speak about the initial requirements, the building blocks you will need to use, to become successful. In future articles I am going to explain how to use each of these blocks and how to acquire and practice the skills needed by successful lawyers in their careers.

Building a successful career requires planning, ability and a measure of good luck. The planning you can do for yourself. Abilities are things that you can acquire, or improve, so again, it's up to you to put the effort in. The luck often comes from the amount of effort and work we put in, so a lot

of it is up to you – Golfers say, 'The more I practice, the luckier I become'. In the legal world, we can help create our own luck by acquiring and honing our abilities and working effectively towards our goals.

The first question to be asked and answered in any article of this kind is, 'What do you mean by successful?' Success means different things to different people. It is a general truism that people who have not yet achieved great wealth in their life, tend to believe that their lives will be happier if they are rich, which doesn't always turn out to be the case. So I have set out some simple goals to be achieved in a lawyer's professional life, which are usually mentioned when lawyers draw up lists of what it is to be successful. The point about this particular list is that it, even if you disagree with it, is essential to have goals if you wish to push yourself to achieve something in life. If you haven't achieved anything, how can you say that you are successful?

# Part 1. General Basics of Building a Successful Law Career

## Most lawyers want:

1. To work in an area of law that they enjoy and find interesting
2. To receive sufficient income for their work to enable them to live comfortably
3. To receive an income which is greater than other lawyers working in the same field
4. To be acknowledged both by other lawyers and clients as being professional and knowledgeable
5. To achieve a work/life balance that allows them to enjoy a life away from their work

If we assume that a successful lawyer is one who achieves all 5 of the items listed above, then the question becomes how to do this? There is no one unique formula but many successful lawyers have followed a similar simple route and I am going to repeat it here. You can modify it to suit your particular likes and dislikes and also your own particular goals, but these qualities, and the help mentioned, has assisted many to success. Whatever you put in your list, however, there is one rule to follow to begin – do not make money your paramount goal! You will be happier, less stressed, and generally more fulfilled – you will also be amazed at the difference it will create to your attitude.

The first 3 points below you are probably all familiar with, but I am going to repeat them anyway, as they are essential for any kind of law career success. The remaining 5 points are those that successful lawyers have stuck to, to ensure they achieved success.



# Part 1. General Basics of Building a Successful Law Career

The **first** thing for any young lawyer is, Study! You must know and understand the law! There is no substitute for knowing the law! You may be the best public speaker with the best connections but you won't be successful if you give bad legal advice. Even after you finish at university, keep on studying and reading about the law in the area you want to work in. Have you ever noticed that the expensive international law symposiums still attract senior partners and heads of law companies, still keen to gain knowledge and information – Why do you think they are doing that? They need to know the law to remain successful, let alone achieve that initial success!

The **second** thing is – Hard work! – Again, there is no substitute. All successful lawyers worked hard to be successful, regardless of money or family contacts. Clients will have money and contacts as well, but they will expect their lawyers to work harder than they do, and to be more knowledgeable. There will always be deadlines to meet, documents to be drawn up and meetings to be attended. You have to work hard to keep up with your rival lawyers let alone stand out from them.

**Third**, Preparation. Really great lawyers always say that they read, read and re-read their cases and files before they go into court, or a meeting. You are going to need confidence and that comes from knowing everything about the facts of your case and the law relating to it. Never sit around in Court, or before a negotiation, just waiting for the thing to start. There is always something useful you can be doing with your time, even reading the papers for one last time perhaps, or watch and listen to the other lawyers around you. I picked up some devastating questions and phrases from watching the lawyers in the cases being heard before the case I was in was called on. That extra 10% you are putting into your work is often what makes the difference between success and failure in the case and for your client. Remember these words from Abraham Lincoln, a truly great debater, 'Whenever I am fixing to argue with a fellow, I spend one third of the time thinking about what I am going to say and two thirds of the time thinking about what he is going to say'. In other words he spent time preparing for the debate or argument. If you want to be successful, you must do the same.

# Part 1. General Basics of Building a Successful Law Career

**Four** – have a plan for your career. Don't drift aimlessly from one job to another. Decide what kind of law you want to practice, what kind of organisation you want to work in and what position you want to fill in that organisation. Write it down if necessary and keep it where you can look at it frequently, so that you can see what you are aiming for. Now you can see where you want to be, the next step is to decide what is the best route to get there. You must, I repeat must, have a plan that to follow. Break the eventual goal up into smaller steps, little steps if possible – they are much easier to achieve and you will gain momentum and confidence. This means a build-up of energy, the energy you will need to achieve the goals you set for yourself. Without a step-by-step plan, most people fail to achieve their goals. Remember also that there is no point in having a plan unless you follow it. You must stick to it to achieve the career you want. You can get a great deal of help here by considering what other lawyers, whom you consider successful, did on their path to success. You will probably find that they all had a broadly similar path. All you have to do is to follow their proven route.

**Five.** I cannot over-stress the importance and the help you can get from having a successful lawyer as your mentor. They have already been along the route that you want to take and they can tell you what is, or is not, important. Many global corporations have a mentoring structure built into their management systems to help those with potential achieve the success they want. Do you think these companies waste their money on this as a gimmick? Mentoring works, and if you are lucky enough to find a successful lawyer to mentor or advise you then take their advice. It may unlock the doors to the success you want.

# Part 1. General Basics of Building a Successful Law Career

The **sixth** point is closely related to having a plan. Whatever you do in your career always think about how it will look on your CV. There are some jobs, which may give you all the freedom you want but they are with organisations that no one has ever heard of, or in positions that give no scope for development or initiative. As a general rule try to work for well-known law companies that other potential employers will know and respect. It is probably better for your long-term career to be an associate at Herbert Smith, for example, rather than a manager in a 2-partner firm unknown outside the city where it has its office – regardless of whether it is a higher salary. Remember building your career is intended to pay off later when you achieve the success you listed in your plan. Always keep an eye on the eventual financial rewards, if this is one of your measures, not what you will earn along the lower part of the path.

**Seven** – observe the lawyers around you whom you consider successful. What is it they are doing that makes them a success? Make sure that you do the same. We become what we keep thinking about. If you think, work and act like a successful lawyer then you will become a successful lawyer.

The **eighth** and last thing, but most important of all, is Determination. Things will not always be easy or simple and there will be disappointments along your route. Think of the great men and women of history – do you think they never had a disappointment or hit a difficulty? The reason why they became successful was that they kept going in spite of difficulties and setbacks. They were determined. When you hit a difficulty just go back to the plan you have drawn and see where you want to be. You must keep your momentum going. Are you going to let one bad client, or one new difficulty, stop you from getting what you know you can achieve, of course not! As lawyers, we have the luxury of having new work and cases every week. You are only as good, or as bad, as your last case. Tomorrow is another day and another chance to move forward on your planned route. Keep remembering how you will feel when you have achieved the things you listed in your plan and can say **'I'm a success'**.

## **Part 2. Growing your own professional client base – Networking Events**



To become successful as a lawyer requires a number of positive qualities, hard work and, usually, time. You can speed up the process of becoming successful, however, by building up your own personal following of clients giving you momentum, which will bring you and your abilities to the attention of those who can help you in your career or giving you more choices in your career.

To become known you will have to meet people and attend events where you are likely to meet new clients and helpful contacts. The initial pitfall which many young lawyers fall into, is to assume that effort is the same as progress. It's not. There is little point in a business lawyer networking and socialising with other business lawyers if the intention was to find new clients. They should instead be socialising with business organisations where the business clients go. If you want to work in entertainment law then go to every club and restaurant opening you can – its where show business people gather to be seen and photographed and where you are likely to meet new clients.

First, identify what it is you are looking to achieve. Is it a better job, career progress, more clients, different types of clients? Once you have identified what you want to achieve then you can start to plan which sorts of events and activities are likely to bring you into contact with people who can help you achieve these aims. It is essential to get out and meet people so they can see you and find out what you do. Not every person you speak to will want, or need, a lawyer, or will be able to help you, but some will. You will start to notice how many potential new clients and good contacts you meet on average at each event and you will get better at picking up new leads.

# Part 2. Growing your own professional client base – Networking Events

Some **important points** to remember about **Networking** events are:

1. Don't spend the whole evening just talking to people you already know but, on the other hand, don't try to speak to every single person in the room. Everything works better if you plan things. If you are going to an established regular event, then try to find out which individuals are likely to be present and then choose a maximum of about 6 or 7 of them to speak with during the evening.
2. It's much better to spend 15 minutes creating a good impression on the 6 people you identified before you arrived, than on speaking for 5 minutes with 18 different people who won't really find out enough about you in that time to remember you properly.
3. Remember also that you only have so much time each week for networking so make the time count – Don't just stand on the side-lines waiting for people to come up to you. If you want success go out and get it – You deserve it don't you?
4. If you are going to a meeting of a particular industry, or a company event, then briefly read up on the latest news affecting the industry or the company – It's what they are going to be talking about, and if you can show you already know about it then you will probably impress them with your knowledge of their concerns.
5. People in business like 'team players'. Clients do as well. If you have a limited knowledge of a specialist area of the law try and 'team up' with a more general lawyer who can deal with the general aspects of a client's work. You will be able to refer work and clients to each other and the business clients will like it that you aren't trying to cover every area of law yourself.



## Part 2. Growing your own professional client base – Networking Events

6. If you find yourself in a conversation regarding a legal topic that is outside or more expert than your level of knowledge, then listen and talk about the benefits of working with the lawyers in your law firm who can solve this problem. Promote the firm and its abilities if you can't suggest an answer yourself and, if the client does engage your firm stay in contact and find out what is happening with the case so you can discuss it with them when you next see the client.
7. You have probably already found that when people discover that you are a lawyer they start telling you about something that's bothering them or someone who needs a lawyer. Listen to them and ask questions – they know more about their business and industry than you do. Find out all you can about the problem from them and then, when the time is right don't be afraid to ask for the business. – It may be that you will have to let the relationship develop first. Maybe it will require a separate meeting, or lunch, before you can see that they feel comfortable with you. Finally you can just casually say something such as, 'That's something I could help you with, if you like'. You will be surprised how pleased many people will be at the fact that somebody has offered to help them.
8. Stay in touch with other lawyers you meet working in other cities and jurisdictions on Linked In and Facebook. One day they will have a client in your jurisdiction and they will think of you to act for the client.
9. After the meeting let potential clients access your network of lawyers. They will appreciate that you are sufficiently confident of your own abilities not to worry about competition. They will also appreciate that you are giving them information for free and are not solely concerned with how much money you will be paid.

## Part 3. The Ability to speak in Public



After the first chapters dealing with general matters, I want to begin to look at specific areas of skill and ability that a lawyer will need to be successful in his or her career. The first skill that gets a lawyer noticed is the ability to use words to explain and persuade, so let's look at some basic rules about improving your public speaking skills.

At some stage in your legal career you will find it necessary to speak in public, it may be a presentation to clients or it may be in a courtroom. Being able to address a courtroom full of people and argue a case, or merely to speak in front of an audience, clients, or shareholders, is a skill that all lawyers should possess. Most of the people that we think of as good public speakers were probably very awkward and shy when they first spoke in public. Their skilful performances are something that they have learned to do and something you can learn also.

The first rule is to know your subject. This means read the case papers, or the subject of presentation, and read, and re-read again, until you know all the main points that you are going to speak about. You must know the law relating to the case as well as the facts. It is the unexpected question to which you do not know the answer, because you didn't prepare, that will put you on the defensive – making you look nervous and stammering. The client will never forgive you, and will never recommend you, if you show you did not prepare properly before walking into the courtroom. Knowing the subject really thoroughly gives you a tremendous feeling of confidence, and it is this confidence that will enable you to stop worrying about the audience and start showing your real personality.

## Part 3. The Ability to speak in Public

The second rule is almost as simple as the first and this is to practice. Practice in front of the mirror, in front of friends, in front of your relatives. The more you practice the easier it will become. If you are shy about speaking to a large number of people then just imagine you are speaking to one person in the audience. Choose one person in the audience and, even though you will look around the room – to take in all the other people that are there – pretend you are speaking to just that one person. It seems to take away the nervousness and you will feel more natural, so your words flow as if you were having an ordinary conversation with that one person.

In order to help you become more relaxed, try and visit the room where you are going to speak before the hearing, or the event. Walk around the room, perhaps moving one or two chairs. Become familiar with the room so that you feel comfortable to be there. The next time you walk into the room it will not seem a strange and intimidating place. It will be somewhere you have been before and where you feel comfortable. This will help your confidence and it is confidence that makes a great public speaker.

When you speak in a courtroom, you will usually be the only person speaking at that instant. In court, one lawyer speaks and then another lawyer replies and so on. For this reason, because you have all the time in the world to explain your case, do not be afraid to speak slowly. This will have two advantages:

1. It will give you time to think ahead about what you are going to say in the next sentence or part of your presentation.
2. It will give each word greater power and will force the audience to listen to you. Listen to speeches of Winston Churchill. He was a powerful orator and you will notice that his words are slow and deliberate, but they are mesmerising and you feel compelled to listen to what he is saying.

## Part 3. The Ability to speak in Public

Remember that the people listening to you, want you to speak well. They want you to say something in an interesting manner to keep their attention. They all want you to succeed in keeping them interested. They are on your side even if they are the opponents in the same court case. Never apologise for being nervous. The audience will not be interested in the apology, and they may not have even noticed that you were nervous to begin with. It is much better to cover your nervousness by speaking more loudly. This they will remember, not the nervousness.

Remember also your body language. This is part of the way in which we communicate with each other. Great public speakers use their body language to reinforce their message. Their gestures and facial expressions serve to confirm the truth of what they had just said, even if they know that they are not telling the entire truth. For people who are beginners at public speaking is better not to try and learn sufficient body language gestures to help explain the message but rather to leave this until they have become practised public speakers. It is best for beginners to try and avoid doing anything by way of gestures or facial expressions which distracts people from the words and the message that the speaker wants to give.

Do not waive or flutter your hands. If you see that you have a problem in keeping your hands still, then hold a book! This keeps your hands still. Try to keep your feet planted in the same place during your speech. Do not shuffle from foot to foot. When you stand up, put your left foot down into the position you wish it to stay in, and then do the same with your right foot, as if you had just planted two trees! You will find that it is easier now to stand still whilst you speak to your audience. If you still have a problem, then hold on to the chair or table with one hand – This has the effect of anchoring you in one spot – Now the audience doesn't have to keep changing their position to see you.

## Part 3. The Ability to speak in Public

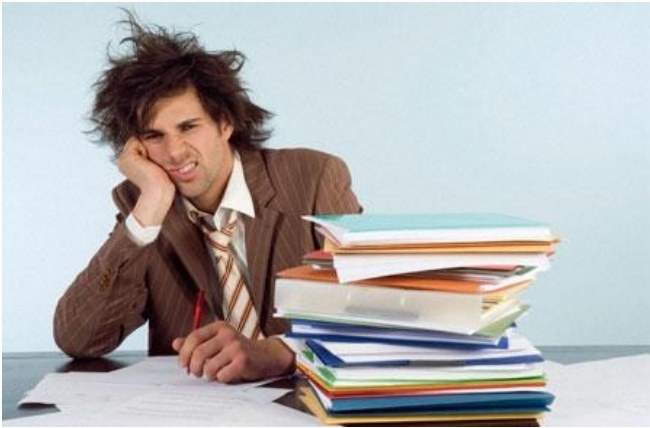
The reason why you are speaking is to convey a message or a piece of information, and it is essential that you concentrate on this message, or piece of information, rather than your own worries and insecurity at how you might sound, or what sort of performance you are giving. A simple rule of giving a message to the audience is the rule of three. It works in sales and in political speeches, and also in legal arguments. First tell the audience what they are about to listen to, e.g. 'I am going to explain why my client should win this case'. Second, tell the audience your message or the information. Third, tell the audience what it is you have just told them, e.g. 'So you can see that because of X and Y and Z, which I have just explained, my client's claim should be upheld and he should win this case'.

The last point about appearing in court, or making any public speech, is that the more often you do it, the easier it becomes and the better you become at doing it. If you really want to become an effective court advocate, you must do 3 things. Go to the local courthouse and watch other lawyers speaking there. Notice the difference between the good speakers and the poor ones. Remember the phrases and the style of the good speakers – at some stage you will find a moment when you can use one of the memorable phrases in your case, and you will look as good as they did when you first heard it. Next, take every opportunity to speak in a public setting – whether it is making a speech at a friend's celebration dinner, or a debating club. The more often you speak in front of an audience, the better you will become. Third, never ever pass up the chance to speak in open court. This is what you want to become great at – How can you do that if you hide when the opportunity occurs?

There are many other tips and little tricks which clever, experienced, confident public speakers use in court, or in meetings. If you practice law, and become confident, you will pick up your own little tricks and phrases. Soon people will start to say that they wish they were as good at speaking in court as you are. When someone else says it then you will feel all your work and practice was worth the effort you made.



# Part 4. Writing a successful CV



So, you have finished University and perhaps even started your first job. Now you need to write a CV that markets you, and your unique capabilities, to a future potential employer. Remember that a CV should be an advert for you as an individual. It's your own personal brochure, but it must be relevant to the particular job that you want to apply for.

A CV has two purposes, the first is to help employers decide if your skills match their requirements, the second is to impress and interest them sufficiently to invite you to an interview.

As always, with anything to do with your career, it is better to plan the CV before you begin writing. You are going to prepare several lists which will help you write the CV.

There are **five basic steps to writing a successful and effective CV:**

- Make a list of your skills and experiences
- Find the Job that you want to apply for
- Choose the right style and format for the CV, depending on the position
- Write the CV
- Adapt the CV for each particular job application

Begin with making the list of skills – this is like brainstorming by yourself – just write them on to a large piece of paper and then add comments beside them as you go through the points in this article.

Write down your interests and experiences, including university. Think about what you have done in the last five years and what you liked or disliked about each. Now list what you learned from each activity, e.g. Coached Football team – Liked: being part of a team, Disliked: losing matches, Learned: how to communicate with team members.

## Part 4. Writing a successful CV

Now list your skills. There are two types of skills, hard skills and soft skills. Hard skills include the knowledge that you gained at university and in any subsequent work. They include your legal knowledge and expertise. Soft skills are the skills you have acquired through your experience in life and are difficult to assess. In general they can be transferred into your daily working life such as an ability to communicate, problem solve or manage, or lead. When you have identified your hard and soft skills think of specific situations where you have demonstrated the use of these skills. Make a list of these occasions.

Next, we come to achievements. List the times in the last five years that you have come to a situation and used your initiative, or soft skills, to solve the problem or make a situation better. This demonstrates to a potential employer that you use initiative and deal with problems, perhaps even can lead a team of people. Past performance is the best indicator of future performance, so the more successful incidents and awards you can list, the easier it will be for the employer to see your potential value. What things are you proud of or received awards for, when were your suggestions accepted by others, have you started a new trend or procedure, trained or taught others, satisfied a difficult client or situation, achieved a personal target such as running a marathon? You are going to put all these hard and soft skills and achievements into your CV along with your values.

Our values are usually formed earlier in life by our family culture and social surroundings. They are a limitless number of values such as achieving recognition by your fellow workers, earning a large salary, having a family, telling the truth, not stealing. Make a list of those values that you believe are important. Not everyone has the same values as yourself and may not consider your values as important as their own. Once you have listed 10 different values, choose those which you must have in your job, those which you would like to have but are not essential, and those which are not important. You will use this list in the next stage of writing the CV.

Now use the list of values you prepared to select an employer, or to decide if a particular job will satisfy you. Having spotted the job or employer, you are now going to write a CV that will interest them in you and cause them to invite you for an interview.

## Part 4. Writing a successful CV

CV's can be either targeted or untargeted. Targeted CV's are intended for one specific employer and one specific job. In today's difficult financial climate, most employers will receive many untargeted CV's for every post they advertise. They will be receiving CV's even when they are not advertising. You need to put yourself ahead of the people sending out tens or hundreds of untargeted CV's hoping that somebody will give them a job. The way to do this is to target your CV each time for a specific employer and position.

You are going to list your CV chronologically to show what functions and activities you were involved in and what you achieved and learned from these experiences.

Begin the CV with your name and contact information. This is very basic but I will mention it now: Write your full name. Underneath this write your current and full-time address and your phone number, including mobile phone number if any. If you have a personal website then put this address also. Do not use funny or odd nicknames in your e-mail address e.g. bigpants@a....).

In order to show the employer that you are exactly right for their company, you are going to add a career objective section to show why the position and company are perfect for you. Write one or two phrases which show where you want your career to go. Make sure that this is exactly the type of work that the company needs the applicant to do. This section will prove that you are thinking of the future and have a good idea of what you want to do. Career objectives can include things such as, 'to develop as an international arbitrator', 'to use my English and French language ability to their full extent', 'to specialise in IP law'.

The next part of the CV will show your qualifications and abilities. List these in chronological order. Then add the languages which you can speak, beginning with those that relate to the position, even if it is not your first language. If you are fluent then add this. If you are not fluent but can understand the language, then do not specify your level of ability.

## Part 4. Writing a successful CV

Now you will list your soft skills e.g. good communicator. You will do this by listing your achievements when you used these soft skills, from one of the lists you made earlier. E.g. organised Toastmaster meetings, created weekly newsletters for group. If you have computer skills you should list them in this section.

Next, we come to the section related to your experience gained in your career so far. List your experience in date order, beginning with what you are doing now and working backwards. Give details of the length of each employment and the position title, including the name and city of the organisation. Briefly describe your responsibilities in each job and write down some examples of your soft skills and achievements in that job. Use bullet points and the active voice in single line statements. If you have been awarded any honours, prizes, or bonuses for special work, this is the place to mention it, and make certain that you do mention it, because it will make you stand out from ordinary workers. If you belong to any professional associations that are relevant to your career goals, list them here. It shows your interest in achieving your career goal. Mention any attendance at conferences relevant to the work involved in the position here, also.

We are coming to the end of the CV now and here, especially for those who are applying for their first job, it is important to add some details about your interests. Employers may use this section to learn more about your personality and may use this information as an introductory topic at the beginning of your interview. This is also a place where you can show that you are unique because of your range of interests and activities.

Well done. You have now written your first draft of your CV. Now you are going to check to see that it is targeted for the specific job you want and that is precise and short. Read and re-read the CV to check the spelling and grammar. Do not leave it to spell-checker to do this for you! Make sure that you used the active voice rather than the passive voice. It is useful to remember that HR managers and employers will probably spend just 20 or 30 seconds scanning your CV to see if you are of interest – for this reason you need to add in key words which will catch the eye of anyone scanning the pages. If the job advertisement mentioned words such as ambitious, self-starter, enthusiastic, then make sure that you have included these words in the section where you describe your soft skills and also, if possible, in a career objectives section.

## Part 4. Writing a successful CV

No employer will want you to attend for an interview if you have not carried out any research into their company. If you have not already researched the company now is the time to do so. The company probably has a website and you can learn all about their aims and objectives and the work they do from this site. If not, ask your friends and contacts if they know anything about the company or the people who work there. Once you have this information check your career objectives section again to see that it is relevant to what the company does. If not, then change it to make it relevant. Now go back and check the soft skills and achievements which you have mentioned in your CV to ensure that they are relevant to the post offered. If they are not relevant, then take out the small achievements but leave the bigger ones – to show what you can do.

All that is left now is the correct formatting and layout. It should go without saying that the CV should be typed on white A 4 paper. Do not use italics but a standard business style font with capital letters for each new section or bullet point. Follow the sequence listed above. Keep your CV to 2 pages in length, maximum. Employers and busy HR managers have no time to read long CV's and a long CV will give the impression that you cannot communicate in a short, effective, organised style. If your CV runs onto a second page then make sure you add sufficient information to fill up 75% of the second page - do not use just the top few lines of this page.

So now you know that the CV is unique to you and targeted for a specific job with a specific employer. The whole purpose of the CV is to get you an interview. It has to be viewed as a marketing tool to get you into the door of the company. Any CV that fulfils any other purpose e.g. to show what a nice person you are will be destructive to your chances of getting the job.

In the next chapter, I will show you how to use the items you have mentioned in your CV to market yourself during the interview so that the employer can see you fit exactly into the position they want to fill.



## **Part 5. Giving a successful interview**



In the last chapter, we looked at how to structure and write your CV in order to get an interview for the job that you want. In this chapter we will look at how to prepare for the interview, how to behave during the interview and, finally, some of the things you should, and should not, say during the interview.

Many job opportunities for lawyers require a two or three stage interview process. You must consider what you want to achieve in each interview. You wrote your CV in a style to achieve being offered an initial interview. If it is a 3-interview process then, in your first interview you want to achieve getting invited back for a second interview. In the second interview, which will be to choose the best applicant for the post, you want to achieve being invited back for the third interview to confirm you in the post.

Remember that you have a unique variety of skills and experiences and knowledge. You must display sufficient of these talents during the interview to show an employer that you can help the organisation reach its objectives. As with everything in life, the interview will go better if you prepare for it before you arrive. In order to prepare properly learn something about the organisation so you can mention some of what you learned to show your interest in the company. This can also lead on to a detailed conversation about a topic you are familiar with if you are careful to mention the right topic. Think about your own career successes and problems which you have overcome and think about how you can mention those to show what you can do to help the company achieve its goals in the future. If you have researched the company, you will know what these goals are.

## Part 5. Giving a successful interview

You must also think about some probing questions to ask. This will show the interviewer your own depth of knowledge and understanding of your work and their company, and also what is important to you. There will probably be two or three interviews, so you will need to change these questions as you proceed through the interview process. Think of the standard questions you expect to be asked and you can prepare answers for them before you arrive. Make certain that, if you are going to mention something you did successfully, then you are able to give all the details. Many people fail to stress a past success sufficiently to impress the interviewer with it.

The best preparation for an interview is practice. Ask a friend to pretend they are interviewing you. Get them to use some of the standard questions that interviewers ask e.g. 'tell me about yourself', 'where do you want to be in five year's time'? If you have the option to videotape the interview, do so and then you can see how you behave. You may have small mannerisms and movements that you were unaware of, and will wish to eliminate to create a better impression.

The night before the interview – not the morning of the interview, prepare all the documents you will need, including 3 paper copies of your CV to be able to supply up to 2 interviewers if necessary, plus one for yourself. Leave in good time to arrive before the interview is due to start – Don't put yourself under pressure before you have even arrived at their office.

One of the things of the interviewer should be looking for is to check that you will fit comfortably with the rest of the team of employees. So be pleasant and friendly. Be certain to make eye contact. Be professional by arriving on time and in suitable professional clothes. Give a firm handshake, especially to westerners working in the law company – they put great store on this. During the interview, make sure that you answer the questions but make certain that you stick to your message. When the conversation varies from the topic you wish to speak about – i.e. how you can assist the company to achieve its targets, gently bring the conversation back to your talents experience and successes. Don't sit silently waiting for them to think of another question.

## Part 5. Giving a successful interview

Interviewers will probably ask you some difficult questions, such as, 'What are your weaknesses?' 'Why did you leave your last job?' When dealing with difficult questions like these it is important to be honest but to say the right thing and to stress the positive rather than negative. For example, it would be a mistake to say, 'my main weakness is that I need to be pushed to complete targets on time'. It would be much better to say that, when you were at university you had an issue with completing paperwork but that you recognised this failing, and you now use a diary and organiser to make certain that all projects are always completed on time. This shows that you accept that you are not perfect but that you had a problem which you have outgrown through your own efforts. When dealing with difficult questions always talk about what you are going to do in the future. If the questions refer to something in the past then show how you overcame the problem and have developed so that it is no longer an issue but how your development will help you in the future.

One thing you must never do is to blame others for something in the past. e.g.

'I left my last job because I didn't like the people there - they were very unfriendly' - it would be better to say, 'I left my last job because I wanted the opportunity to work with a new team to reach my full potential'. Don't say, 'I left because I wanted more money', better to say - 'I felt it was time that I took on a more senior position to develop my career'. Don't be conceited. Never chew gum. Try not to look at your watch. Always say 'Thank you' at the end of the interview and make certain that you send a thank you e-mail the same day - even if it is 7 pm when the interview finishes make certain the e-mail goes that evening.



# Part 5. Giving a successful interview

Now, let's look at **10 things you must never, never say** during an interview.

1. What is the salary? – It is up to the interviewer to raise the topic of salary. Let them tell you how much it pays. It's part of your preparation to find out the typical salary for that position in that city. Then, if they ask you how much you expect to be paid? You will be able to give them a realistic figure.

2. What does the company do? – This shows that you have no particular interest in this company but would accept any job just to receive a salary. You will not get the job.

3. Do not use slang or modern idioms and make certain that you use correct grammar. – This is a formal professional conversation and you are showing what a professional lawyer you are – don't make the interviewer have to guess what you are talking about.

4. The interviewer wants to know what you can do for the company so don't start asking questions about what the company can do for you. – This makes you appear selfish and that you feel that you are doing the company a favour by giving them the possibility of employing you.

5. Never, never, ever swear or use bad language. – It indicates that you may well swear at a client, or other staff, if you can't avoid swearing in a job interview.

6. Don't refer to people as stereotypes. – Don't refer to all black people, all disabled people, all men, all women, or any general group using derogatory words terms or phrases. This would show that you cannot work with certain types of people as a team member and therefore may not fit in to the company.

## Part 5. Giving a successful interview

7. Never criticise your former employers, or law professors. Don't talk in detail about problems you had at another company - If there was a problem, then refer to it very, very briefly as a difficulty with personalities/work practices and then move on to talk about a different topic and the future. Do not expand the topic to show why you were right and they were wrong. The interviewer will think there is some sort of personality problem with you, or will think that this is how you are going to talk about them someday and will not want you in the team.

8. If asked, 'Do you have any questions?' Do not say, 'No', or 'I think that covers everything'. - have some questions prepared about what the company wants to achieve in the future this tells them that you see yourself as part of that future and will work to share in achieving the success they want. Failing to ask questions tells the interviewer that you are not interested in the company, or in your future career.

9. If asked, 'Do you have any weaknesses?' Do not say 'No'. The interviewer will think that you are either very arrogant or that you are lying. - Refer, instead, to what is called a positive weakness. e.g., 'I don't like to waste time on making polite telephone conversation'. This shows that you want to get on with your work and is regarded as a positive weakness. Have some of these answers ready for the interview before you arrive.

10. If asked, 'Tell me about yourself?' Do not launch into your life history and ramble on for 10 minutes about everything you feel important that has happened to you. - The interviewer really just wants to know a little about your personality and the biggest achievements in your life. Don't dwell on any one point. Let the interviewer ask you about it if they are interested by it.

## Part 5. Giving a successful interview

**Two final points.** **First**, the interviewer may wish to see how you respond in an unexpected situation, or if a sudden problem occurred. For this reason, you may be asked what seems a really stupid question. e.g. "If you were an animal, what sort of animal would you be"? The interviewer is trying to surprise you and the most important thing is not what you say, but the fact that you are able to think quickly and give an answer, even if it sounds as stupid as the question. I remember one situation where the interviewers loosened the panel on the back of the applicant's chair so that the chair broke when the applicant attempted to sit down. The interviewers wanted to see if the applicant would respond, or would sit stunned and shocked by what had happened. The interviewers said later they would have been happy with any words or response, but not with no response. There is no wrong answer to these crazy questions other than to make sure you say something even if it makes less sense than the question. Just take a second or two and then answer, e.g., 'I would be a black panther because I would wait silently in the night for my victims'. (What utter rubbish – but it's an answer to the question).

The **Second** point is that what follows is a very standard question, so be prepared for it – 'Why do you want to work here'? Make certain that you have an answer ready for this question and try to tie in how your unique qualities fit in with the company's aims for success.

The purpose of an interview is to see if you and the company are suited to each other. You may well be the best applicant for the job in terms of qualification but it may become obvious during the interview that you would not be happy working in an organisation with the kind of culture that is described to you. If you want to feel successful in your life then working in a job which you enjoy is a big part of that feeling and if, during the interview, you realise that you might have made a mistake in thinking that this was the perfect job for you, then do not be afraid to tell the interviewer. You will be helping them to do their job and they will appreciate this and possibly recommend you to their friends in HR in other companies for your honesty and integrity. It may also be that they will realise that they have been giving you the wrong impression about the culture of the company and will change what they have said. Do not be afraid to walk away from a post which you realise would make you unhappy. Better to wait until you find a post where you can use and develop your talents and will be happy in your work and a lot more successful in your career.



## Part 6. Letter writing skills

Daniel Webster said, 'the power of clear statement is the greatest power at the bar'.

As a lawyer, your competence will often be judged from the style, tone and content of your writing. It's neither fair nor accurate in assessing ability, but it is a fact of life, that when we read a letter we tend to build up a mental picture of the person who wrote it. You want people to think of you as both professional and competent and so clear, structured, written texts, both in letters and legal documents, are what you should always aim to produce.



In this chapter we going to look at general writing skills in letters rather than writing skills for formal documents and contracts.

The first thing to remember is that nobody writes as well as the authors which they read. If you want your writing to be of the same standard as articles from the Times, or the Economist, then

you have to read articles from these journals on a daily basis. Few of us have time to do this, so here is a set of rules to follow to make your letters direct, effective and professional.

- **Organise your thoughts.** If you have to write a letter which contains a number of different complex points, then quickly note down an outline of the points you have to mention. Arrange them so that the most important will be mentioned first. The next most important will be mentioned second, and so on.
- **Begin drafting the outline of the letter straight away.** Good writing comes from editing earlier drafts. If you want the letter to be well-written then you are going to have to re-read it and edit it. Don't worry about the opening sentence when you start, because you're probably going to change it when you edit the letter anyway.

## Part 6. Letter writing skills

- **Remember you are writing for the reader, not for yourself.** Think about how best to explain the points you want to make in the letter. Think! Especially, about the level of knowledge of the topic which the reader already has. This will influence how much you need to explain and the words you will use.
- **In any opinion letter begin by thinking about what that opinion will be.** The remainder of the letter should be structured so that your opinion is the logical conclusion which the reader will reach at the end of the letter. The letter will guide the reader through the facts and the law leading to the opinion. If the letter is well structured then the reader will reach exactly the same conclusion as the one you have written. In letters always be positive when you give your opinion. Try to write with authority avoiding phrases such as; I think, perhaps, it might be..., etc.
- **Use signpost words, or phrases, to guide the reader showing that you are moving on to another point.** e.g. – turning to, moving on to...
- **Restrict each paragraph to dealing with just one topic.** Every new topic – a new paragraph.
- **When writing sentences, remember the Hippocratic Oath.** ‘First do no harm’. Sentences that are too long, or too complex, confuse the reader and make your ideas difficult to follow. They will give the impression that you are trying to distract attention from the weakness of your argument.
- **To give your writing impact keep your sentences short.** The shorter the sentence, the greater the impact. Journalists try to keep their sentences to below 15 words. The sentences are easier to understand. Most sentences of 35 words, or more, can be broken down into two sentences. – When you edit, look for ways of shortening each sentence.
- **Restrict each sentence to one complex idea, or two simple facts.** e.g., It is Friday morning and I am now in my office.

## Part 6. Letter writing skills

- **Don't use a sentence which introduces an idea without explaining the relevance of that idea.** e.g., Don't say, 'Section 2 of the UK Bribery Act 2011 states that...!', better to say, 'A new offence of bribery has been created by section 2 of the UK Bribery Act...'
- **Avoid phrases known as 'throat clearers'.** e.g., 'it should be noted that...!', 'it is important to understand that...!', 'the facts of the case are...!'. These are very pompous, and they move attention away from the point you are trying to make.
- **Use the active voice rather than the passive.** Explaining who, or what, did something, makes it easier for the reader to follow the narrative.
- **Try to use single word verbs rather than verb phrases.** e.g., Don't say – 'reach an agreement', simply say – 'agree'. Don't say – 'place a restriction upon', simply say, 'restrict'. Don't say – 'in compliance with', simply say, 'comply'.
- **To make the sentences easy to understand keep any modifying words or phrases close to the words they modify.**
- **Be precise** – avoid vague words and phrases such as, "very clearly, simply put, very plainly". Support and strengthen your words and ideas by using precise language, e.g. say – "not supported by the facts of the case", instead of, "probably incorrect".
- **Don't use the phrases "I think" or "it seems to me".** Everything you write is what you think or how it seems to you, so these phrases add no further information to the reader.
- **Get rid of all the legalese.** Remove all words such as, aforementioned, heretofore, wherein. Sometimes we use these words in contracts and legal documents, but they have no place in a letter.

## Part 6. Letter writing skills

- **Once you have completed your first draft of the letter then you must re-read it and re-write it.** Edit, edit, edit! Be ruthless when you cut out words and phrases. The shorter the letter, the greater the impact. Each time you edit the draft give that draft a new number.
- **When you are editing try to shorten sentences and try to find words that you can cut out.** Every word in the letter should be adding to, or explaining, the message, if not, then cut it out.

**Read the following sentence:** In view of the fact that your client has no made no attempts to repay the money which is owed to our client, in the amount of £5,000.00, it has become imperative that we take immediate appropriate legal action to protect our client's interests, and position, to ensure repayment of the aforesaid amount. - This is a typical piece of legalese bad writing, cloaking itself in the guise of a professional lawyer's letter written to another law company. Wouldn't it be much easier to say – Since your client has not repaid the £5,000.00 owed to our client, we will begin court action to obtain repayment.

- **Do not use contractions in business or legal letters.** Use 'do not' 'is not', rather than don't or isn't.
- **Grammar, spelling, punctuation.** Once you have edited and re-written the sentences, paragraphs and ideas in your draft, then check, and re-check the grammar, spelling, and punctuation. All the impact of your letter will be lost if you make simple grammar, spelling, or punctuation mistakes. Don't rely just on using Spellchecker. Put the final draft to one side for 5 or 10 minutes and then go back, and re-read it. A fresh pair of eyes have a much better chance of seeing any small mistakes that may remain.

The professionalism you use when writing letters will convey itself to the readers. Clearly constructed, easy to follow, well-written letters will give the impression that you are a professional competent lawyer who gets straight to the point. That is the image that you want to give – Isn't it?

For further help the [British Legal Centre](#) has a number of short intensive legal writing courses relating to both letters and formal documents, such as contracts. View the list of [Online Legal English courses](#) to see if any of our courses, or free resources, would be of use in developing your professional and legal skills.

# **Part 7. Deciding which area of law to work in**

For law students and newly qualified lawyers, choosing the area of law they will work in is a major career decision which will stay with them for the rest of their lives.

It's incredibly important that you make the right decision but how can you do this before you have any real experience of working in the law? Here are some suggestions to help you make the right choice.

First thing – don't rush the decision! You're probably going to be practising law for 30 or 40 years so it's important to start off strongly in the right direction – in a field of law in which you can succeed.

Whilst law firms generally suggest that they provide services across a vast range of legal and practice areas, you will find that most lawyers specialise in just one area – or even a subset of one.

How much control newly qualified lawyers have over the specialisation process varies and can depend on the type and size of firm they joined as trainees, and which practice areas they experienced during training.

You will find that economics plays a big part in which departments have vacancies available. For example, during an economic downturn there will be less demand for M&A lawyers and construction industry lawyers, but more demand for litigators and insolvency lawyers. It's unlikely, therefore that you will be able to choose from the wide range of specialisms which the firm claims it deals with. You're more likely to be forced to choose from those areas which the firm is currently busy with. You can exercise some control however, by researching the law companies you are interested in, gaining work experience wherever possible, and making targeted applications based on your preferences.

## **1. Research**

Before digesting the huge array of specialisms in the legal profession, you need to ask yourself whether you're broadly interested in commercial law (where you would act for companies and organisations), family/private client law (where you would act for individuals), or criminal law (where you would defend or prosecute people accused of crimes).

# Part 7. Deciding which area of law to work in

The practice areas that a firm offers will be determined by the type of client it serves, so think about the type and size of firm you would be comfortable in. Law companies range from small high-street firms working locally, to global corporations, themselves serving huge numbers of multinational corporations. Which would suit you best?

Look at the important departments within a firm – these are the ones which are most likely to have vacancies. You will need considerable luck, and possible connections, to find employment in a small niche firm staffed by just a few lawyers.

Firms' websites offer an insight into this – look at how many lawyers make up each department, which departments produce a lot of briefings, and which recent deals are covered most prominently. You could also call, or email, the recruitment team to ask how practice areas are weighted. HR managers like to see this sort of interest in their company from prospective applicants. It shows the applicant is making a considered choice when applying for a job with the company – not just sending out hundreds of CVs in the hope that somebody is interested.

## 2. Work experience

When I qualified, I thought that planning law was the area I wanted to specialise in, based on the fact that my father worked in the construction industry and I knew something about visiting building sites. It took me less than three months of working in the area of law to know that it was not for me. It did not give me the opportunity for constant appearances in court, and the opportunity to argue legal points and question witnesses. Something which I rapidly came to love, once I had fallen, almost accidentally, into the role of a public prosecutor whilst hoping for the right law job to come along.

The point about my little story is, the only way to know for certain whether a practice area is right for you is by gaining some first-hand experience. This is why work experience in a law office is an unbeatable way to find the career that suits you. It doesn't even have to be in the practice area which most interests you. Even if you decide that the areas you experienced during the placement were not for you, it is useful because you know not to apply for jobs in that field in the future.



# Part 7. Deciding which area of law to work in

It may sound surprising, but vacation scheme jobs are probably the most valuable form of work experience because they are so intense, as they tend to cover multiple practice areas over the course of a few weeks. You can experience a brief snapshot of lots of different types of legal work without being stuck in a post, which you quickly understand is wrong for you, wasting weeks, if not months. Another advantage of these holiday schemes is that they are an important part of the recruitment in many firms, with successful placements typically ending in an interview for a training contract.

There are, however, many other useful forms of legal work experience available and all of them are beneficial. Don't hold back. Don't sit around waiting for something to happen. Take the initiative and contact local high street firms to ask if you can help out for a couple of weeks, or even just shadow one of the lawyers for a day or two – you can learn a lot about what might be an interesting area of work by talking to lawyers about their jobs and watching them work. It will also get you noticed by the law company. A few words of warning here – make sure you have done your homework on the firm before getting in contact, you might be asked why you want to come to their office rather than their rival down the street AND, once you are in their office, be pleasant polite and respectful – don't ruin your chance of future employment with them by being difficult or a know-all AND – whatever you do – don't date any member of the staff!! You want to come over as a responsible, interested, intelligent, prospective employee, not Jack the Lad, or a femme-fatale who may cause problems later with inter-office relationships.

Apart from law companies there are also local advice offices dealing with family law, crime, immigration and human rights – they will probably be happy to accept you as a volunteer at a law centre of the local Citizens' Advice Bureau, if you feel this area of law would be interesting to you.

There are also lots of opportunities for direct contact that you don't have to organise yourself – open days, presentations and university law fairs, for example – that enable the well-briefed candidate to find out more about what it is really like to be a certain type of lawyer.

# Part 7. Deciding which area of law to work in

## 3. Training

With extensive research and some legal work experience under your belt, you will be well equipped to target your applications at firms operating in the areas that really interest you. When you start training is when the specialisation process really begins. Training contracts are usually divided into “seats” in different departments, both contentious and non-contentious law, so here is where you will find out, if the reality of working in your chosen practice area matches your expectations.

The final stage of the specialisation process can be competitive. Remember that the reality of working in a practice area may be very different from what you imagined, so don't exclude all types of law in favour of just one area. You may end up enjoying things you never thought you would, and finally work as a different type of lawyer than what you imagined when you were a student.

Don't tie yourself to one rigid idea for your career path. Some people begin training contracts thinking they have to be certain type of lawyer, or qualify into a certain area. That's wrong, but what you find you really enjoy could be something unexpected. Try as many different things as possible. Don't worry about mapping every twist and turn of your path too early. Your law career is going to last 40 years, take a little extra time at the beginning to make sure that you set off in the right direction.

**Here are five tips to help you determine your future practice area:**

### 1. Assess your abilities.

When deciding on an area of specialization, consider your strengths and weaknesses. You may have strengths that lend themselves well to a certain area of law, such as excellent public speaking skills, which are important for litigation but, if you view public speaking as one of your weaknesses and prefer to work directly with clients on a one-on-one basis, transactional law might be the path for you.

### 2. Consider your background.

Your previous education and work experiences may sway you towards a specific area of law. For example, a business degree may help you to better understand areas of law dealing with corporations. A science background, such as a biology or geology degree, may be useful in a career in environmental law.

# Part 7. Deciding which area of law to work in

## 3. Follow your passions.

Many legal professionals pursue a specialization that aligns with their personal interests. If you feel strongly about improving access to legal counsel for under-represented communities, for example, a public defence attorney is just one of a number of jobs you may want to consider.

## 4. Network.

Speaking with attorneys who specialize in different areas of the law can provide you with invaluable legal career advice. Ask them how they selected their specialization and what they enjoy most about their work. Also, check with them about skills and qualifications they believe are needed for someone to excel in those legal areas.

## 5. Use your school as a resource.

Your law school can provide a wealth of information that can help direct you to the right place within the legal work place. Speak with your career counsellor about your experience to date, your interests and your ambitions. They can provide insight into different legal jobs and how your qualifications might fit.

Also, ask your counsellor if they can connect you with a mentor who can offer an insider's view on a particular aspect of law. The mentor's first-hand knowledge could help you define your path.

Choosing your specialization can be daunting when you're just embarking on your legal career, but you don't have to figure it all out on your own. Legal career advice from established attorneys, your career counsellor, mentors, and other resources can help you determine the area of law that's best for you.

*What if you don't know which area you would develop into, or what practice suits you?*

Here is my personal tip – My personal suggestion to you in those circumstances: go into Litigation first!!

# Part 7. Deciding which area of law to work in

A Litigation practice allows you to have a basic understanding of legal disputes that can arise between parties, the types of legal avenues available when resolving a dispute. Even if you intend to go into a different general practice of law later on, a basic understanding and experience in litigation assists you to better draft agreements, be more precise with language and advice, because you can better understand all the commercial and factual problems that could possibly arise for your client. If you are intending to go into a niche or boutique practice, then a general understanding of a litigation practice is the first necessary building block.

It is for this same reason that I always advise law students to undertake short stints as “attachment students” or “interns” in law firms during their college breaks or while waiting for their exam results. This way, they have some understanding of what is available out there, prior to entering the workforce. Even if it’s not ‘your thing’, try out a short 2-week or 1-month or 2-month period (if necessary ‘for free’ just to get the experience) in different practices – a large corporate firm, a small boutique firm, in different areas of practice. That’s the only way you can actually make a clear and informed choice once you are ready to start work.

Remember - You need to determine what suits your personality, talents and goals. Research online what each area of practice is like and, for your goals, what type of experience it requires (there are too many permutations to list here).

Poor career choices will lead you to either becoming professionally stressed, develop mental illness or worse, cause mistakes in your work, which may lead to a Professional Negligence suit to be slapped against you and your work!

It is always a good idea to work in a field in which you would excel, thus ensuring professional development, growth and, not to forget, professional, personal (and mental) happiness all around. Choosing the wrong specialisation or area of practice (and staying in it) is the one way to ensure you will be miserable and perform poorly. So let me finish with the same message I started with – Take your time to work out what area of law would best suit you and only then, make your choice.

## **Part 8. Seven skills that will land you work experience at a law firm**

Following on from the suggestions of how to decide what area of law is right for you in the 7th chapter in this series, I wanted to share some tips about how to get temporary posts that will allow you to experience real legal work in a law office.

I can't stress how important it is to understand what you're getting into when you choose the area of law you are going to make your career in. It's really important to have some practical work experience of that area of law before you commit to it, so you will know if it suits you. This is why temporary job posts, whether through vacation schemes, temporary placements, or internships, are really valuable to newly qualified, and about-to-be qualified, lawyers.

You should improve your temporary workplace application to demonstrate practical skills and wider awareness if you want it to be successful. Like a lot of legal writing later in your career, you have to put yourself in the shoes of the employers and consider what they are hoping to see in your application. Then you have to put these things in the application so that they can see you have what they are looking for. An extra 30 minutes polishing the application to include the points in the following list will make a difference and the application will become something that might land you the position.

All of the temporary work posts you can apply for during your student day's Vacation schemes will provide the widest amount of experience in the shortest period of time, usually a period of two to four week's work experience. They can even be a stepping-stone to a training contract, but the application forms are complex and probing, and deter many law students. There is no 'best formula' for writing a good application but firms are looking for certain skills. You can demonstrate some of these in your application.

# Part 8. Seven skills that will land you work experience at a law firm

Try and follow these seven suggestions:

## 1. Analytical and evaluative skills

Every legal problem requires analytical and evaluative skills. Clients present their lawyers the fact, and expect the lawyer to analyse it and compare the possible legal solutions, and then advise of the respective merits of each.

A lawyer needs to know exactly the right questions to ask. Being able to appreciate the small details when constructing and thinking about the big picture is essential for a lawyer. Universities know this and are always organizing mock court trials and pro bono work for students to help show – and hone – these skills in a legal context. These activities offer the perfect chance to start applying your theoretical knowledge in practice and demonstrate an interest in and commitment to law. Joining a debating society is a must for any law student getting to grips with the big issues facing society, as well as providing valuable practice in the art of public speaking – a very valuable legal skill.

## 2. Teamwork

Teamwork is important if you want to work in international commercial or corporate law because the type of work you will do is so big in scale and complexity that you're unlikely to be working on a project by yourself.

Often, entire departments will be tasked to solve one legal problem, and it's vital for a lawyer to draw on all the expertise and talent available and bring the best out of whoever they're working with. In your application, draw analogies with productions and team-work you've undertaken, anything that shows you can work with a team – amateur dramatic groups, music groups, challenges you've faced in sports teams and events you've organised as a part of society. HR managers are looking to see that you can fit in with the team and not cause friction in the office. They want an easy life and do not want to import prospective 'difficult' employees to disrupt the harmony of the existing teams in the office.



# Part 8. Seven skills that will land you work experience at a law firm

## 3. Written communication

Legal writing is all about communicating ideas, concepts and information with the greatest possible clarity. 70% of what a lawyer writes is usually intended to persuade and the most persuasive texts are those which the readers can understand. A large proportion of a lawyer's life will be spent drawing up documents. The art of being a good commercial lawyer is being able to convey information in an easily understandable manner. Albert Einstein said 'One type of genius is the ability to explain a complicated idea in a simple way'. That is what lawyers have to do all the time. You must be able to demonstrate that you understand how, and when, to alter a written text, whether to be concise or, for purposes of clarity, to fully explain a complex legal issue to a client. You must also show that you can write formally and in a structured manner to opposing lawyers, or for a judge.

No matter what subject you write on, writing articles for your university's student newspaper or publications are a great way to show your writing ability, and also your ability to time-manage, work in a team and meet deadlines.

## 4. A global mind-set

The work of many lawyers is cutting-edge, involving many major deals, crossing international borders. Clients can be giants of the international business world and your work can include site visits, client meetings and deal closures anywhere and everywhere.

Mention trips and expeditions you've been on, include foreign holidays, the more exotic the better! – it's useful to show that you are able, and willing, to survive in remote destinations around the world. Being an expert on a particular culture could even give you an edge that other students don't have. Make sure you mention your foreign language skills but don't worry if they're non-existent. Speaking another language fluently is an advantage but not essential.

# Part 8. Seven skills that will land you work experience at a law firm

## 5. Business sense

For law students, understanding and demonstrating that they understand and practice the concept of commercial awareness can be very difficult. The phrase 'commercial awareness' is itself very vague and abstract. Law firms, however, want to see that you understand the concept

Commercial awareness is about recognising two ideas: first, that a law firm itself is a business (and wants to make a profit) and second, that all the problems of the business world drive your client's legal needs so you must be able to understand and help them to react.

Try to keep track of general developments across the business world: new deals, changing international legislation and emerging global markets. Right now, can you tell me whether the economy in Brazil is going up or down? How will the new EU rules on data protection affect the way you companies store and use customers' details? This is the sort of thing you should have an opinion on. You need to be able to demonstrate that you understand the wider political and economic implications of a transaction or case – in other words, you know what is happening in the wider world outside your university.

## 6. Organisational skills

Once you become a qualified lawyer you are going to be very busy. You will be going to court, drafting contracts, meeting clients, networking to gain new business, conferences to attend and new cases and law to keep up with. If you can show that you can arrange your time to juggle different activities, this is a very positive sign to a law company. Mentioning any events you've helped organise, or your membership of a society committee, is a great way to demonstrate that you possess these skills.

# Part 8. Seven skills that will land you work experience at a law firm

## 7. Passion for the law firm

There are lots of law firms out there, many of which offer student lawyers holiday placements. Law firms know it's highly unlikely that you're applying only to them. Whilst you may be the very best candidate academically, firms still want people who are genuinely interested, even excited, about working with them – if they are thinking that they might offer you a job then your probation period is probably going to be very tough as they want to see that you have the determination to succeed – they may even be thinking ahead to the possibility of offering you some sort of future training contract at the end of a successful vacation placement.

Obviously, therefore, only apply to firms you genuinely want to work for and can show that know well. A 'machine-gun' approach to sending out your CV and applications may work for a few, but usually it is a time-wasting, labour-intensive exercise that may not even produce a single interview. Show your passion for the firm through sincerity, by demonstrating a knowledge of the firm. An application full of empty statements and declarations of 'loving what your firm does' will not fool the HR Department – show them that you understand exactly what they do and want to do AND then tell them why you want to be a part of that.

# **Part 9. How to move your career into top gear – Winning quick promotions**



There are some things you can be doing that will position you for promotion, but many people don't think of them.

Whether it's a court case, a negotiation, or trying to win promotion – it always helps to put yourself in the position of the person you are dealing with. It's not about how much you want to be promoted or how hard you will work, it's about the perception and needs of the decision

makers which decides whether they want to promote you.

To make them consider promotion, you have to make sure that you bring yourself to their attention for all the right reasons.

Work performance is not the single most important issue in deciding whether to promote associates to manager, and then on to partner status. Many factors, including economics, ability to win new clients and business and potential, available workloads, all affect whether the firm and practice area can support another manager or partner. The decision makers will also consider rival candidates for promotion.

In today's modern legal profession law firms tend to view the bottom line as equally, if not more important, than the desire to practice law. Although they are obviously inter-linked, law firms will always be interested in staff that they see can help them make a profit. Few firms can afford partners who are unable to pay their own way. Today managers and partners are expected to work harder and are often judged on financial performance rather than legal ability.

This article is only a guide. There are many individual reasons, which I cannot cover in one article, which might affect the decision, but the points I will mention are those which are frequently quoted by senior lawyers and HR Directors in relation to promotion.

# Part 9. How to move your career into top gear – Winning quick promotions

Partners recognize that an associate's services and contribution cannot be measured with certainty, nor can their overall performance be assessed on a specific scale.

Partners also know that an associate rarely achieves the highest level in all established criteria: some associates do certain things better than others, so each must be assessed individually. High marks in every category is not essential for promotion. It's the criteria, as a whole, which provides the topics for consideration or objective comparison, so that uniformity and fairness can be achieved in the selection process.

Here are some generally acknowledged tips – but – if you are thinking you can get promoted just by reading an article then you have been misinformed. Promotion depends on work and a lot more besides. This article will try to ensure that you are directing your efforts along the right lines. And there is something else. Once you have read this article, stop planning and plotting and get on with the work needed to win a promotion – 'Less education and more application', will almost certainly work best.

## 1. Know who to target

Are there documented requirements? If so – the job is half done. If there aren't any documented requirements and you're wondering what you need to do, there's a simple answer – ASK SOMEONE! Many young lawyers are terrified of asking their superiors about career advancement. I know that some partners are frightening but, unless you're working for one of those, then why not speak with your partner about their ideas for advancement within the firm.

Even if there are promotion policies and criteria – remember the subjective criteria. These ALWAYS exist. The unspoken requirements that you need to understand. Look at the people who are at the level you want – what do they have in common? Again, ask a senior person. If necessary you're going to have to figure it out yourself – but at least make an educated guess!

# Part 9. How to move your career into top gear – Winning quick promotions

## 2. Know where the power is

If you want promotion, discover who makes the decisions. Influence in law firms is complex. The partner you work may have lots, or none. Ask others who have been promoted. It can be difficult to move the conversation to discover the answer but it's essential you find out. Why? Because you must know who you need to convince and what they care about. Only then can you see where you should focus your efforts.

## 3. Don't get distracted in planning

When trying to get promoted some people get a bit lost. They spend so long planning, writing, noting, observing and obsessing that they actually forget to keep improving. It's like reading every self-help book ever written, but never actually getting started. I will repeat 'A little less education, a little more application' would probably be more helpful.

Basically, you will get a promotion if you meet 2 out of 3 criteria:

- it makes economic sense for them to promote you.
- you meet the requirements for promotion.
- they can't afford to lose you

If you are making money, serving clients, getting along with your team, networking well, and are a generally responsible contributor to the firm, then, by and large, you haven't got too much to worry about. So spend a little time planning and understanding the requirements – but not too much.



# Part 9. How to move your career into top gear – Winning quick promotions

Rather than obsessing about how to get promoted, why not obsess about improving your contribution to the firm, or gaining International legal qualifications in case you decide to take your skills to another firm, or Country? The one will likely follow the other. The UK Law Society's QLTS (a Solicitor's cross over exam for foreign lawyers to practice as UK Solicitors anywhere in the world) is probably the quickest and easiest route to gaining International legal qualifications which you could use in Dubai, Shanghai, New York, or London or, basically, anywhere in the world. We can help you with free advice on this qualification, just click on this link to arrange a free advice call –

<https://www.british-legal-centre.com/set/qlts-exam-preparation-course>.

Due to the relatively structured nature of the law profession, those who do want rapid, regular promotion must be prepared to sacrifice a lot – remember that long working hours don't make for a good work/life balance or family life. Leading law firms are opening offices where the world's emerging economies offer great prizes – China, South America, India, Indonesia – willingness to travel, plus international qualifications, could be the key to carving out a successful lucrative legal career.

It will take usually take seven to ten years to build up the expertise needed to be considered by a large firm. Firms are looking for intelligence, legal knowledge, common sense, solid client relationships, good business sense, stability in both personal and professional life and, in the case of largest firms, absolute dedication to the firm and the work.

Should you stay with one employer and go all out for partnership, or to move to other firms? Understanding about the future prospects of your present firm, and the likelihood of promotion, is necessary for these decisions. Here is some further guidance:

# Part 9. How to move your career into top gear – Winning quick promotions

## 4. Ask for a mentor at work

Mentors can offer valuable career guidance. Having a wise, experienced colleague on your side can really help propel your law career in the right direction. Many law firms have formal mentoring programmes – but, even if your company does not, it's certainly worth building a close, friendly bond with your department manager or other influential people you work with.

## 5. Don't be a wallflower

If no one knows how brilliant an employment lawyer or personal injury lawyer you are, and that you are keen to progress, you won't get noticed. You must be noticed for decision-makers to consider you. It's important to actively promote yourself and become a known entity within your department and even beyond. Consider ways of regularly updating your boss on achievements. If possible, show the revenue, or the new clients you have brought in. Promotions are not all based on your past performance, but you can make a strong case for a promotion by showing your past and ongoing successes.

## 6. Make yourself so valuable that they can't afford to lose you

Build your productivity and client skills so that you are an essential part of the firm, then you can negotiate from a position of strength.

One law recruitment expert said: 'The path to partnership is simple to understand. If you have among the highest billable hours in the firm and have the ability to maintain and continuously attract new clients, you will have a good chance of making partner'. Clearly, those who are doggedly productive, able to carry out complex legal dealings without making mistakes, and able to keep clients happy, will go far. It will help to truly excel in your specialism, by constantly building knowledge and expertise. Keep current with industry news and events, and pay attention to events outside your legal area.

# Part 9. How to move your career into top gear – Winning quick promotions

## 7. Refine interpersonal skills

Communication soft skills are part of being a successful attorney, essential to forging relationships with professionals in your office and within the legal community and winning new clients. Strengthen communication skills by interacting with a wide range of people and personalities. From clients to co-workers to co-counsel – you need to be able to work with them all effectively. Strong communication skills are not just for arguing cases or writing memos but also for conveying important information and business solutions to clients. If you are shy, or reserved, then practice, by forcing yourself to speak with people even if you feel awkward – the more you do it, the easier it becomes!

## 8. Network

The more people who know you, appreciate your strengths and abilities, know your value to the organisation and recognise your ambitions, the more likely your name will be discussed when opportunities arise. You can use social media here, but don't look as though you are job-hunting for another firm. Internal networking teaches you much more about the firm or company if you network with people in other areas of the same firm. **Be visible.** There are many ways to raise your profile in addition to hard work. Take part in office events, such as team-building activities, holiday parties, birthday celebrations, non-profit or pro bono work, and other official mix-and-mingle opportunities. These allow you to network with co-workers and partners in a more relaxed setting and find out more about the firm.

## 9. Increase your responsibilities

How can you show how hard-working and committed to the company you are? Simple! Volunteer. Asking for more responsibilities and for more work shows your interest and desire to help your department and firm to succeed.

# Part 9. How to move your career into top gear – Winning quick promotions

## 10. Behave like a manager and you will become one

Whatever your role in the firm, you have to work hard to earn a reputation for being dependable, professional, and cooperative. If you look like manager material, you are more likely to be considered for management posts that come up. If it helps, volunteer for tasks outside your usual work – help set up presentations, speak at events or take on extra projects.

Please, try and dress professionally! Looking the part is sometimes half the job in itself. The clients and seniors want to see someone who looks like a manager or a partner.

Whatever you do – never get yourself a reputation as a clock-watcher or complainer or someone who fails to complete tasks. Show a positive outlook and a 'can do' attitude even when things are difficult. Be a problem-solver. If a difficult client or a hold-up occurs – come up with at least one solution then ask your boss to let you deal with the situation. Problem-solvers are more likely than complainers to land a promotion.

## 11. Work hard as a team player

Because so much of work is now accomplished through teams – either departmental or cross-functional – it's important to share successes with your team, and to avoid finger-pointing when there are failures. Showing yourself as a team player will build your reputation and increase your value.

## 12. Be client-focused

If you're an attorney at a law firm, demonstrating your rainmaking skills is one of the best ways to get noticed. Improving client service levels involves maintaining an active dialogue with clients. Consider inviting some of your best clients to lunch to discuss their legal needs, where they feel your firm is doing well, where you can do better, and how you can improve the quality of the services you deliver and reduce the client's costs.

# Part 9. How to move your career into top gear – Winning quick promotions

## 13. Develop your business skills

A law firm is a business – it needs attorneys who can provide legal advice that keeps clients' business goals in mind. Show partners and other senior colleagues you clearly recognize corporate clients' growing demand for more value for their spending, more predictability, better communication, transparency in billing, and improved efficiency. Embrace changes that may be introduced – Especially new technology, so you can explain it to others, which gives you the aura of being the firm's expert on the topic.

## 14. Improve your English language skills

The language of International business is English. The language of International law is legal English.

If you are a non-native English speaker, make sure your legal English skills are at the highest level. Study and improve yourself. You are in a career which may last for 40 years of your life. You can surely find a couple of hours a week to improve your English to move ahead of your contemporaries in the race to the top. Obviously, we at the [British Legal Centre](#) can help you with this and with the QLTS qualification. But whatever you do – do something! The alternative is to be left behind, wondering, Why not me?

# **Part 10. The Key to moving ahead in your career – Mastering Legal English!**



Lawyers need to produce emails, texts, and documents that serve the needs of the client. These needs include solving existing problems efficiently, foreseeing and forestalling future problems, issues, tensions, and uncertainties, which occur in all forms of human social and economic transactions.

Courts, in particular, are growing

increasingly impatient with lawyers' texts, which are so badly written that they result in litigation.

The spread of Common Law Court systems in Civil law Countries, such as the DIFC in Dubai and the newer court systems now developing in Abu Dhabi and Kazakhstan, all contribute to the requirement for lawyers to possess a high level of legal English ability to appear before the courts and to conduct cases and other legal business.

In the 21<sup>st</sup>-century, with the de-facto use of English as the language of international business, legal English has become even more important in the international legal sphere. It is the common legal language, which all non-native English speaking lawyers use in their international transactions. This leads to the simple rule that, if you want to practice international law – you must be able to use legal English effectively.

Throughout this book I have tried to provide tips and guidance which will assist you in developing, speeding up, and achieving success in your legal career. If I had to choose just one piece of advice, above all others, then it has to be – Constantly improve your legal English ability!

# Part 10. The Key to moving ahead in your career – Mastering Legal English!

Law students around the world are now required to study so much law in their degree courses, that they have no time to develop professional skills. Because of this, you will quickly be able to gain an advantage over your contemporaries if you can improve your legal English ability to a high level. One other point is almost certain, as well: Unless you are able to speak English and deal with legal English effectively then you have little chance of becoming an international lawyer. Clients will not wish to deal with a lawyer who can only communicate with them through an interpreter. Clients prefer the human element and want to deal direct with the lawyer who is handling their matter.

Lawyers who operate internationally, who communicate with clients and other professionals across different cultures, have a need for both trans-national legal awareness and trans-cultural linguistic awareness. Whatever the nature of the legal writing, whether for correspondence, documents or courts, legal skills and language skills are a vital part of a lawyer's professional training.

In particular, legal English is particularly important in relation to legal writing and the drafting of written texts including contracts, court pleadings and judgements, legislation, and legal correspondence. Whilst legal English has been the traditional preserve of lawyers from the English-speaking countries, which share common law traditions, the spread of international legal work as extended the use of legal English into a global phenomenon. I will repeat what I said earlier – you cannot practice international law unless you can effectively use legal English.

Fortunately, there are many legal English courses and course providers, including online courses, which will help you to develop your legal English soft skills. The problem with legal English is that it is a distinct type of English, in effect a sub-language, as it is so different from ordinary conversational English. It is not based on the ordinary logical rules of any natural language but, because it is derived from at least four different linguistic traditions, Latin, Anglo-Saxon, ancient Norse language, and Norman French, it has extremely complex grammar rules and strange linguistic patterns.



# Part 10. The Key to moving ahead in your career – Mastering Legal English!

It is not English as you learnt it at school, but a language developed by lawyers over the last 1,800 years, beginning in the third century A.D. with Latin and then building in Anglo-Saxon, Norse, Norman French and archaic forms of English from the 17th and 18th century. You cannot master this language without studying it and perfecting its use through constant practice.

## Why is it so important for newly qualified lawyers?

Learning legal terms is important for your career if you are studying law regardless of the country. The main reason behind this is the rise in globalization. Since many people study in one country and then apply their learned skills by moving to another country, it is important that you should be able to communicate well while interacting with others.

Since learning both written and spoken legal communication skills is essential to succeed in the legal profession, you should give special emphasis to it. You can test your legal language skills yourself by enrolling in a specific program that caters to lawyers who want to polish their language skills in applying legal terminologies. You can take a **free on-line test** of your legal English ability on the British legal Centre website at: <https://www.british-legal-centre.com/tests-list>.

Following the test you will receive instant e-mail feedback on your Legal English strengths and weaknesses plus suggestions for future study to improve your ability and knowledge.

Learning legal terms along with the concepts of law is the only way you can represent yourself as a lawyer. Due to a challenging market for lawyers, it is a necessity for all lawyers.

# Part 10. The Key to moving ahead in your career – Mastering Legal English!

When you enter the market as a qualified lawyer, you will come across various clients in the country you have shifted to. Similarly, you will have to use all the legal terminologies that other lawyers use in that region. For instance, if you have studied law from Brazil and you want to practice in the US, you will most likely interact with US attorneys. In order to talk to them regarding legal matters, you must adapt their legal language, i.e. English used in law that is particular to their region. If you do not know universally accepted legal terminology then you will be unable to work with other lawyers wherever they are. If you want to progress your career and also make yourself invaluable to your employer and client, then master legal English and its uses in documents and texts.

## **There are so many courses, which one is best for me?**

There is too much law in the world for you to know all of it, and there is so much legal English relating to this law that it's best if you are selective in the course or courses you choose to help you develop. If you were in shipping law then there is little point in you learning about the 'Right of capture doctrine' or 'Mother Hubbard' clauses from Oil and Gas law. For those who need to improve their legal vocabulary and legal grammar, a general course of legal English would probably be the best way to begin. Once you understand the vocabulary and grammar then it would be useful to take a course of legal writing, not only to practice and develop what you know but also to develop new techniques and skills to use the language to persuade and argue. It is a natural progression from mastering legal writing to moving onto writing contracts and legal documents - so that a contract and legal document-drafting course should be the next stage of your improvement. From then on, it might be worthwhile to take a more specialised course of practical law and legal soft skills to polish your ability to practice in a specific sphere of work, e.g. arbitration law and practice, oil and gas law.

# Part 10. The Key to moving ahead in your career – Mastering Legal English!

It's difficult to over-stress how useful it is to immerse yourself for one, two, or even three weeks at a legal Summer School in an English speaking country. Your general command of English will improve as well as your knowledge and skill in using legal English, along with legal writing and contract drafting. I truly believe that the **British legal centre's Summer School programme** is the best value in the market, but there are other companies offering training in different places, so you will have to choose firstly, whether you want to invest this time and money in yourself, and which offer to choose.

The final step would be to take a QLTS exam preparation course to prepare yourself for the UK law society's qualified lawyers transfer scheme exams. Applicants who pass both levels of these exams will then be automatically qualified as UK solicitors able to practice anywhere in the world where UK solicitors can practice. You will find UK solicitors in Hong Kong, Dubai, Saudi Arabia, the US and a hundred other countries. By raising your legal English skill level to pass these exams you will become a true international lawyer.

I anticipate that those of you who have read through this book, will have in mind becoming international lawyers travelling to, and working in, different cities around the world in international law and business, so here are some free materials to get you started.

# Part 10. The Key to moving ahead in your career – Mastering Legal English!

## Some free materials to get you started

To help you achieve this, and thank you for taking the time and effort to read through these chapters here is a link to some free materials. Let me invite you to visit the website of our company: [www.british-legal-centre.com](http://www.british-legal-centre.com).

Here you'll find free tests of your **general English** and **legal English** ability – you will receive immediate feedback by email on the results of your tests.

You will also be able to access and view **free trial lessons** from the **Legal English course**, the **Legal writing course**, and our very popular **Contract and legal document drafting course**.

The website also has details of the **QLTS exam preparation course** and we can arrange a free telephone consultation to give you more information about the course and guidance on the amount of time needed to bring your English up to the level required to pass the exams.

The last messages I want to leave you with relate to success and developing yourself and your career come from famous people. I know that some people may argue with my advice in the chapters in this book, but it's difficult to argue with the advice from these successful people.

"Success usually comes to those who are too busy to be looking for it".  
H.Thoreau.

"There are two types of people who will tell you that you cannot make a difference in this world: those who are afraid to try and those who are afraid you will succeed". Ray Goforth.

"Success is not final. Failure is not fatal. It is the courage to continue that counts".  
Winston S.Churchill.



# Part 10. The Key to moving ahead in your career – Mastering Legal English!

I agree with Churchill – I believe it's important to experience failure at least once in your life, in order for you to learn how to get past it and move on to success.

And something I heard somewhere but I don't know who said it first. "In life you will meet three kinds of people: Those who make things happen, those who watch things happen, and those who say: what happened?" Make sure that you're one of the ones who make things happen. Success is there waiting for you. Go out and take it - why shouldn't you have it? But remember, no one else is going to deliver it for you. Your own actions and determination are going to be needed on this journey.

And lastly, from Albert Einstein speaking about Success: "Try not to become a person of success, rather become a person of value!" Kipling spoke about 'Success' and 'Failure' being two imposters and Einstein's words puts the idea into context - Enjoy your career, but don't be a slave to it!

Thank you for taking the time and trouble to read through this book.

I hope it will inspire you to new ideas and actions to develop yourself and your career. Feel free to contact me through our company website for advice on courses or career planning. I will always be happy to hear from you and will do my best to give you honest reliable advice to help you progress your career and abilities. You can contact me at: [info@british-legal-centre.com](mailto:info@british-legal-centre.com)

Richard Brady