

THE JOHN MARSHALL LAW SCHOOL CAREER SERVICES JOB SEARCH GUIDE

V. NETWORKING

Networking is a crucial part of the job search process. Networking is simply meeting people who may be able to help you in career planning and job searching. It involves meeting new people, as well as keeping in touch with already existing contacts in order to obtain information. Kimm Walton says in *Guerrilla Tactics for Getting the Legal Job of Your Dreams*, “It’s not who you know, it’s who you *get* to know.”

WHY SHOULD I DO IT?

Career services professionals stress networking because it is the most effective way of finding a job. Surveys show that only 25-30% of all job openings are ever advertised. The rest are filled through word-of-mouth. **This means that 70-75% of jobs are found through networking.** This makes sense from the point of view of employers; they would rather trust their business to someone who comes with a personal recommendation than someone from a stack of anonymous resumes and cover letters. By networking, you are letting people know your interests and putting yourself in a position to hear about unadvertised jobs.

BUT I HAVE NO CONTACTS

Often students complain they have no contacts. They are mistaken. Identify people you know in the following areas of contacts:

- ❖ Family members
- ❖ Friends
- ❖ Neighbors
- ❖ People from religious activities
- ❖ People from volunteer activities
- ❖ Professionals (doctors, bankers, stock brokers, accountants, insurance agents, etc.)
- ❖ Law Professors
- ❖ College Professors
- ❖ College Friends
- ❖ Sorority, fraternity, or social club
- ❖ Members of professional associations
- ❖ Customers or clients
- ❖ Health club contacts
- ❖ People with similar hobbies
- ❖ Former legal employers
- ❖ Former non-legal employers
- ❖ Co-workers

- ❖ People who helped you get into law school *and many, many more*

Many of these people are not lawyers, and that is all right; they may have lawyers or friends of lawyers within their own networks. It is up to you to let these people know you are in law school and that you are looking to meet people in the field who can answer questions, provide advice, and put you in touch with additional contacts. To make it easy, focus first on those people who helped you get into law school, such as supportive friends and family, and professors who wrote recommendations — these people already have a stake in wanting you to succeed.

HOW TO MEET EVEN MORE CONTACTS

Being in law school, you have the potential to network all the time. Take advantage of these opportunities. Lawyers are everywhere:

- ❖ Attend CSO programs – The CSO brings alumni speakers to the school throughout the year.
- ❖ Sign up in the CSO for an alumni mentor.
- ❖ Let the CSO know you are interested in helping out at programs.
- ❖ Participate in the Mock Interview Program in early September.
- ❖ Attend the Practice Tracks Program in November where over 70 attorneys talk with students about different areas of practice.
- ❖ Get to know your professors.
- ❖ Help a professor who is organizing a conference.
- ❖ Join a student group and organize a speaker panel.
- ❖ Write an article for a legal publication.
- ❖ Join the Chicago Bar Association or other bar associations. Attend committee meetings.
- ❖ Volunteer with a legal organization.
- ❖ Meet attorneys through internships, externships, and law clerking positions.
- ❖ Get to know your classmates – they are the future of the legal profession.

THE JOHN MARSHALL LAW SCHOOL CAREER SERVICES JOB SEARCH GUIDE

THE ALUMNI CONNECTION

The wisdom of John Marshall alumni can lead to valuable career advice. A CSO counselor can assist you with obtaining an alumni list divided by city/state and practice areas.

Another way to search for alumni in particular practice areas, cities, or law firms is through Martindale-Hubbell (at www.martindale.com or accessible through LexisNexis). Although Martindale-Hubbell is a very useful tool, keep in mind that it is predominantly used for attorneys in law firms (attorneys in government agencies, for example, are not listed) and law firms need to pay to have a listing. Therefore, many alumni will not be listed in Martindale-Hubbell.