



Here we are in the midst of autumn in Vancouver and while all the hallmarks of the season surround us, those fall colours and full classrooms are accompanied by a somewhat unfamiliar legal market. Historically, this is a time when candidates outnumber job openings, but in recent years, a boom in the local marketplace bolstered by increased international business, streamlined technology and growth within film, tech and mining industries, has turned the tables. How do we make the most of the candidates' market? Our senior HR advisors at Arlyn Recruiting share their expertise on what the tight market means for firms and candidates, while offering advice on how to thrive in the face of new challenges and opportunities.

"A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty."
- Winston Churchill

Are you a good leader? A legal management reality check

What kind of leadership do you respond to best? Is it the same approach that works with your colleagues or senior management? Do you value independence and room to grow at your firm, or do you perform best when given clear goals and expectations?

In September, Arlyn Recruiting's HR experts Diane Cronk, Julie Van Leeuwen and Anna Liu, in conjunction with the BC Legal Management Association, led a workshop on engaging and motivating employees and came up with the following list of qualities that their most effective leaders share. Want to motivate your own legal team? First, ask yourself if you are:

Approachable: How responsive are you when one of your employees comes to you with a concern and how likely are you to follow up with it? How well do you keep your composure under pressure? How much do you value and lead with kindness, compassion and empathy while pushing your team to achieve their goals? And how communicative are you? Is your feedback



LOCAL LAWS OF LEADERSHIP: During a workshop led by Arlyn Recruiting's HR advisors, in conjunction with the BCLMA, local legal managers weighed-in on what constitutes good leadership.

ongoing or sporadic and unreliable?

Empowering: How do you inspire others to do the right thing in terms of compliance or tasks? How much do you understand about your own role, your team and their strengths and how willing are you to give them responsibilities? Do you value employees taking initiative and respect that initiative may lead to taking on new roles beyond their job descriptions?

Trustworthy: Once your team has been given those responsibilities, how much trust do you put in them to fulfil their duties without microman-

agement? If you come from an environment where employees feel empowered to share personal matters, can you be trusted to uphold privacy and maintain confidentiality?

Balanced: Regardless of senior management's agenda, or your personal feelings, do you treat all employees equally or are there certain rules which apply to some people more than others? How much of a role model are you? Do you exemplify the kinds of behaviours that you'd like to foster in your employees, or are you regularly 10 minutes late?

Dear Diane...

Advice from Arlyn's career coach Diane Cronk

Our question this month for Arlyn Recruiting's in-house career coach Diane Cronk comes from a junior candidate questioning the hiring process. They write:

"When and how do you first negotiate salary? I don't want to seem greedy or lose my chance of landing work. Do you have any conversation starters or phrases to soften what can be a difficult discussion?"

Many juniors want to talk "negotiation," however, here's the bad news: **firms don't want to negotiate salary, vacation time or benefits** (these will typically come out at the time of the offer and if you don't think the offer is fair, you can decline). Firms feel that they are offering you a "foot in the door." Once you have a number of years behind you, you can negotiate, as you will have acquired the skills and knowledge for the role. If a hiring manager asks you what salary you are looking for, it might be best to answer, "I'm impressed with your firm and I feel that it would be a wonderful introduction to my legal career, therefore, **I would like to be offered a salary which is reasonable in this marketplace.**"



Need advice? We offer coaching with Senior HR Advisor Diane Cronk, a certified coach currently completing a master's in counselling. Send questions to info@arlynrecruiting.com.



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4 tips for building EQi at work

Emotional intelligence is all about how well we know ourselves and manage our interpersonal relationships, keys to integrating and thriving at work. Whether or not you already have strong emotional intelligence, dubbed EQi, there are steps you can take to up your game.

Check in with yourself.

When you have strong reactions to a situation at work, try to name how you're feeling. By simply making a note of your emotions, you'll be better equipped to deal with them.

Solicit feedback. Once you know how you're feeling, check-in with your co-workers to better understand where they're coming from.

Ask why. Now that you have a better understanding of how everyone feels, try to take a look at what lies beneath those feelings.

Seek opportunities for growth. The reality is, nothing lasts forever, not any one conflict, job or often your own feelings towards them. Try to learn from your mistakes and move forward. Common sense? Yes, and it's not always so common. Knowing individual strengths leads to stronger teams and higher productivity.

Vancouver legal industry growth dwarfs new grads, support staff

Our director on the strong candidates' market and how to make the most of it

Last winter, Stephen Danvers, director of Arlyn Recruiting and man plugged into the state of law firm staffing, gave a talk on local market conditions to the BC Paralegal Association. The big takeaway: the Vancouver legal industry is growing faster than paralegal programs can produce new grads. Fast forward one year and the sentiment rings even truer than before. As the disparity between supply and demand continues to widen with every passing season, firms are turning to recruiters for help.

While Danvers can't do anything about the number of qualified candidates, the industry veteran is able to offer insight into the factors behind the changing state of the Vancouver legal market — and how new grads can make the most of it.

"We've seen new international and national firms moving into the legal sector here, meaning we've seen the growth of larger firms, as well as boutique and in-house roles," Danvers says. "We're seeing online legal services here such as e-Mediation and e-Negotiation supporting that growth along other new technologies: virtual legal libraries and the utilization of telecommuting, increased use of smartphones and tablets. It's unreal how fast things are moving in the legal market and how the law firms are trying to keep up."

While firms would have traditionally hired one staff member to support one or two lawyers, they're now hiring the same individuals to work alongside up to five lawyers and sometimes more. Yet it hasn't reduced the number of jobs. In the past, corporations would have worked with larger law firms to meet their legal needs. Now they're starting to build in-house teams, as have companies within the tech, mining and film industries.

"We have more roles than we have people, so it is definitely a candidate's marketplace, which is interesting. Candidates have been sitting tight on their jobs

and maybe not wanting to make a shift because they're concerned about the economy or concerned about what's happening in the States — we're not sure why."

For clients, that translates to taking on more junior candidates for open positions and accessing any resources available to find qualified support staff. And for new grads? While there may be more opportunity than in years past, new candidates still need to have legal experience inside a firm to land a solid job. Excelling in a practicum placement, Danvers says, is the best way to start a career.

"After they've obtained two years of experience, then they're in a position to move their career forward and they become a commodity."

Expectations need to be managed and the first year in the industry is a tough one, regardless of market conditions. Still, the prospects are brighter than ever for junior staff, who continue to find permanent roles out of practicum placements. This summer, one firm took on six junior paralegals from a local program and hired them all on permanently.

"That's unheard of — and that's the market," Danvers says.

Legal Administrative Assistant and paralegal programs are full and have been for the last few years, but is the rate of growth sustainable? Will legal hopefuls find the market has shifted before their diplomas are printed?

"The positions are going to remain solid, meaning the marketplace is still reacting to the current conditions in Canada and the current conditions are very positive for business," Danvers says, noting that it would take an event similar to the downturn of 2009 to slow hiring.

"Right now the local market in British Columbia has been one of the strongest markets in the county. Recruitment hasn't been able to keep up with the growth."



Stephen Danvers, Founder and CEO of Arlyn Recruiting

A little about us...

We offer training, consulting, outplacement, temping and recruitment services. We're here to help in all aspects of employment in the legal field, from staffing an optimal workplace, to finding the perfect position to fit your skills. Our job board is constantly updated with new opportunities and we're always here to talk.

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