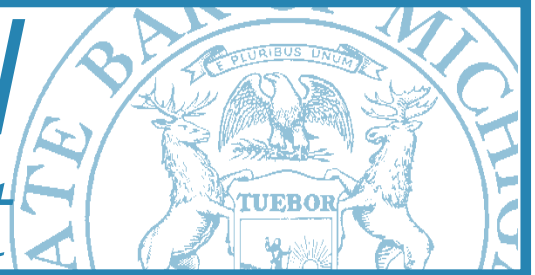


Michigan Legal Assistant



Spring 2003

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A Legal Staffing Primer: Legal Staffing Firms and How They Can Work For You

By Ola Glezen, Esq.

With the many career opportunities available for legal assistants today, legal staffing firms offer a way to keep your finger on the pulse of the marketplace, even if you are not actively looking for a position. This article provides a simple overview of what legal staffing firms are all about – what they are, how they operate, why you should consider working with them, what you should look for in a staffing firm, and how to interact effectively once you've decided on a specific company.

What Is a Legal Staffing Firm?

Simply put, a legal staffing firm is a business that finds jobs for legal professionals – legal assistants, attorneys, legal administrators, etc. There are three types of positions that legal staffing firms fill: Direct Hire positions, Temporary/Contract positions, and Temp-to-Hire Positions. A Direct Hire position occurs when the candidate becomes a direct employee of the staffing firm's client at the time of hire. A position is Temporary/Contract when a candidate performs work on-site at the staffing firm's client, but remains an employee of the staffing firm. In this second situation, the staffing firm pays the candidate an hourly rate, provides benefits, etc. When a position is Temp-to-Hire, the



position starts out as a traditional Temporary/Contract job, but there is potential for it to become a Direct Hire position in the future.

Legal staffing firms come in a variety of shapes and sizes. Some offices are "satellites" of a national company, some are locally owned, and others are partnerships or sole proprietorships. The primary clients of legal staffing firms are larger law firms and corporations. Smaller firms and corporations also use legal staffing firms, but to a lesser extent. Legal staffing firm clients are those entities that will pay a fee to the firm once a candidate is successfully placed. Legal staffing firms find clients via different avenues, including advertising campaigns, legal directories, networking

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Calendar of 2003 Events

Date

Description

**July 18-19 National Association of
Legal Assistants (NALA)
CLA Exam**
For info regarding testing sites
contact NALA at
(918) 587-6828

**Sept. 11-12 State Bar of Michigan
68th Annual Meeting**
Lansing, MI

**Oct. 1 National Association of
Legal Assistants (NALA)**
Deadline for filing applications
for March 21-22 CLA
examinations

**Oct. 19-20 National Federation of
Paralegal Associations, Inc.
(NFPA)
Leadership Conference**
Kansas City, MO

**Dec. 5-6 National Association of
Legal Assistants (NALA)
CLA Exam**
For info regarding testing sites
contact NALA at
(918) 587-6828

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

I hope everyone is enjoying the summer weather!

I know most of us don't even want to think about fall, but I need to bring up the fact that the Annual Meeting is just around the corner, which means that it's almost time to bring in new council members. Please mark your calendars for Friday, September 12, 2003.

Becoming a candidate for a council position or committee chair is something I strongly encourage all of our members to consider. The council definitely needs additional members to help. This year, a couple of council members held three and four positions. Our goal is to have one position for each person. Meetings are usually once every other month. It really does not take that much time out of your schedule unless you are holding more than one position. Then, it can become very overwhelming.

In addition to the council positions, the Section also has the following committees that I encourage you to become active with: Pro Bono, Education, Web Site, Newsletter, Membership, Annual Meeting, Scholarship, Public Relations, and Job Bank.

You want to take part in this incredible organization! I think that becoming a member of the council of the Legal Assistants Section of the State Bar of Michigan is one of the greatest opportunities to serve and make a difference in our profession. We would love to bring people from around the state to the council so that we can get statewide representation. If you have some fresh new ideas for our future or feel that some change might be needed, please don't wait for someone to come to you, get involved.

Sometimes the council's circle gets stuck on "what ifs" instead of "what might be," which is why it is so important to have new council members get involved. We need to increase the size of our circle. The council of the Legal Assistants Section of the State Bar of Michigan wants to focus on member satisfaction and to be a sounding board for the legal assistants of Michigan. We can make a difference in our profession! Please watch for the Declaration of Candidacy forms that will be sent to you soon.

I look forward to seeing you at the Annual Meeting in September and as always, please do not hesitate to contact me at diversifiedparalegal@yahoo.com.

Tracey C. Hammond, owner of Diversified Paralegal Services, LLC, has been a legal assistant since 1994. She holds an Associate of Science Degree in Paralegal Studies from ABA accredited, Davenport University. Tracey is the current Chairperson, Treasurer and Scholarship Chair of the Legal Assistants Section.



Editor's Note: The section newsletter is published quarterly.

The deadline for submission of articles, calendar items, and letters to the editor for the Summer 2003 issue is August 8, 2003. Please make all submissions to Kevin Dennis Gasiewski, CLAS, Managing Editor, by e-mail (kgasiews@ford.com) or facsimile [(313) 323-2647]. Thank you.

The views expressed in this column, as well as other expressions of opinions published in the Newsletter from time to time, do not necessarily state or reflect the official position of the State Bar of Michigan Legal Assistants Section, nor does their publication constitute endorsement of the views expressed.

ASK LINDA

Dear Linda: In your last article you mentioned different personality types. Can you tell me more about how this can help me with interviews and determining what personalities I work best with?

The answer to this question is not a simple one. The study of personalities is an endless topic and as you know, I am a paralegal first, a recruiter second, and only a pop-psychologist after that. Because my job requires understanding which personality types work best together I have learned how to spot certain clues. Even this doesn't make me an expert.

However, there are some basics that I gleaned from the literature that might be of benefit. The sources I found enlightening are David Keirsey's *Please Understand Me*, and Dr. John M. Oldham's *The New Personality Self-Portrait: Why You Think, Work, Love & Act the Way You Do*. The Keirsey piece was first published in 1978 and became a best seller all over the world. His concepts of temperament and character are fundamental to understanding the differences between people. The interpretations of Keirsey and Oldham will not make you an expert either, but they will give you some unique insight into why people behave the way they do.

Idealist, Rationalist, Traditionalist and Hedonist

The literature talks about four basic temperaments: The Idealist, the Rationalist, the Traditionalist, and the Hedonist. Within each disposition are four basic styles or motivating factors. While we probably belong to one dominant group, I found that there was a lot of overlap, even within each of the individual styles.

The Idealist

Idealists are motivated by the desire for perfection. They are on a search for self to find an identity that is uniquely theirs. They view and experience life as a drama and they romanticize their experiences. Idealists are creative, cultured, deep, detail conscious, disciplined, emotional, intuitive, loyal, nurturing, organized, reliable, sensitive, serious, sincere and systematic. On the other hand they are also alienated, bashful, critical, difficult, detached, judgmental, moody and can be overly sensitive and self-critical. Examples of Idealists might include: Hillary Clinton, Al Gore, Dick Cheney, Adolph Hitler, Frederick Chopin, Joni Mitchell, Michael Jackson, and yes, Martha Stewart!

Idealists are Conscientious, Sensitive, Vigilant and Dramatic. The Conscientious have a basic desire for perfection. They foster hard work and doing the right thing in the right way. They are perfectionists and like all tasks and projects to be complete to the final detail. Persevering, they stick to their convictions and opinions. Orderliness is very important, as is prudence and thrift. These are not people who give in to reckless abandon or wild excel. They are also into collecting things. Yes, they are pack rats.

The Sensitives have a basic desire for acceptance. They prefer the known to the unknown. They like routine. They care deeply about what people think of them. They are deliberate with discretion and do not make hasty judgments. Their demeanor is courte-



ous and self-restrained. They function best when they know precisely what is expected of them. You will not find the Sensitives too quick to share their most inner thoughts, even if they know you well.

The Vigilants desire autonomy. They possess a resilient independence and are very cautious before entering into a relationship. They are good listeners. They will stand up for themselves if under attack but take criticism very seriously. The Vigilants place a high premium on fidelity and loyalty.

The Dramatics like attention. They live in a sensationalized world to which they react emotionally. They are moody. They have a rich imagination and tell entertaining stories. They are drawn to melodrama. They like to be seen and noticed and to be the center of attention. They pay a lot of attention to grooming and enjoy clothes, style and fashion. They can be seductive and engaging. They are eager to respond to new ideas and suggestions from others.

The Rationalist

Rationalists want to gain power and to change the environment. Rationalists are ambitious, analyzing, assertive, bold, conceptual, demanding, dominant, productive, resourceful, results-oriented, self-assured, strong-willed and task-oriented. However, they are also argumentative, arrogant, bossy, critical of others, domineering, impatient, impulsive, insensitive, intolerant, preoccupied, short-tempered, stubborn, tyrannical, and can be workaholics. Some familiar examples include Fidel Castro, Sigmund Freud, Bill Gates, Sadaam Hussein, Joseph Stalin, Madonna and Harry Potter!

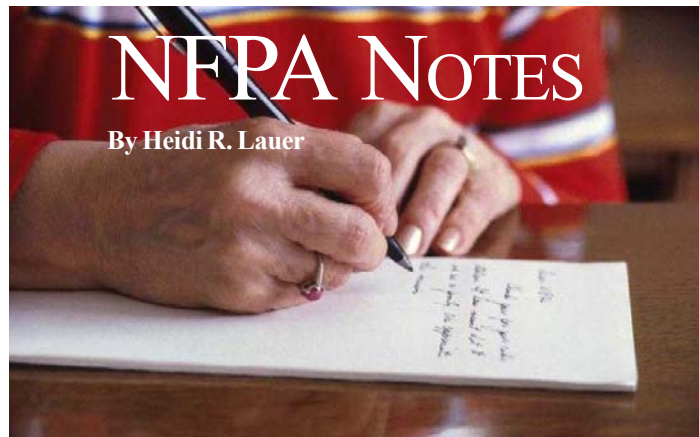
Rationalists are Aggressive, Idiosyncratic, Inventive and Solitary. The Aggressives desire power. They are take-charge people. They like the lines of authority to be clear. They run a tightly disciplined ship. Highly goal-directed, they are practical and pragmatic

Continued on page 5

New Hampshire Senate Bill 83

On May 21, 2003, the National Federation of Paralegal Associations (NFPA) together with the Paralegal Association New Hampshire (PANH) submitted comments on NH SB 83. The purpose of the bill was to provide that paralegals and legal assistants who are under the direct supervision of an attorney admitted to practice law in the state of New Hampshire

are not practicing as attorneys. The concern of NFPA and PANH was over the lack of a meaningful definition of the term "paralegal". SB 83 used both terms "paralegal" and "legal assistant". Due to the varying meaning and roles that the term "legal assistant" might represent, it was recommended that the NFPA definition of "paralegal" be used. If passed the bill would have been effective January 1, 2004, however the governor's office has indicated that the bill is dead.



2002 Pro Bono Hours Reported

On June 9, 2003 the totals were in for the 2002 24-hour pro bono aspiration. 113 paralegals met or exceeded the 24-hour annual goal of pro bono service. A total of 2,712 pro bono hours of service were devoted by paralegals. Information about NFPA's Pro Bono program can be found at <http://www.paralegals.org/ProBono/home.html>.

The NFPA is a non-profit professional organization that is headquartered in Hoffman Estates, Illinois that represents more than 17,000 paralegals in the United States and Canada. For more information on NFPA, contact them at their new location at the National Federation of Paralegal Associations, c/o Stonehedge, Inc., P.O. Box 958092, Hoffman Estates, Illinois 60195. For the near future you can leave a message at 816-941-4000. NFPA's email address of info@paralegals.org and website of www.paralegals.org will remain the same.

Heidi Lauer is a member of the Legal Assistants Section of the State Bar of Michigan. Heidi currently works at Greatland Corporation in Grand Rapids.

Fourth Annual Day Dedicated To Legal Assistant Education

The Fourth Annual Day Dedicated to Legal Assistant Education was held at Madonna University on Friday, May 9, 2003. Participants came from various locations including Grand Rapids, Saginaw, Lansing, and the Detroit Metropolitan Area. Their areas of specialty included, real estate, intellectual property, corporate, and probate.

Several of the topics during the seminar were intellectual property, medical malpractice, real estate, Westlaw, writing for professional publications, and grant writing. General sessions in the morning and afternoon included Victoria Kremsky, Esq., discussing the unauthorized practice of law as it relates to legal assistants, and JoAnn Hathaway from ProNational Insurance Company presenting on Risk Management for Law Firms.

Participants were provided with CD-ROMs containing seminar handout materials from the speakers. If you were unable to attend and would like to obtain a CD-ROM, contact Kevin D. Gasiewski, CLAS, by telephone at (313) 845-1053 or via email to kgasiewski@ford.com.

The Legal Assistants' Section is grateful to Jennifer Cote, Esq., and Madonna University for hosting this event. For those who were not able to attend, the facilities were ideal and the food,

provided by Sodexo's onsite cafeteria, was wonderful.

If you are interested in working on the Education Committee to plan the next education event, please contact Kevin D. Gasiewski, CLAS, by telephone at (313) 845-1053 or via email to kgasiewski@ford.com. The Section is looking for members interested in serving on the Education Committee in order to continue its goal of educating legal assistants. Members are also encouraged to submit suggestions and new ideas for future seminars.

Patricia J. Towers, CLA, is the Chairperson of the Education Committee of the Legal Assistants Section of the State Bar of Michigan, as well as a council member of the Section. She is currently employed by Rader, Fishman & Grauer in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, as a legal assistant in the Litigation Section. Ms. Towers received her Bachelor's Degree from Central Michigan University and her Legal Assistant's Certificate from Georgetown University. She passed the Certified Legal Assistant's Exam administered by the National Association of Legal Assistants in 1998. Ms. Towers has over 13 years experience as a legal assistant in the area of Intellectual Property Litigation.

in accomplishing objectives. They function well in difficult and dangerous situations. They like action and adventure and are physically assertive.

The Idiosyncratics are non-conforming. They are more in tune with their own feelings and belief systems whether or not others accept or understand them. Self-directed, they require few close relationships. They do their own thing and are oblivious to convention. Open to anything, they are interested in the occult, the extrasensory and the supernatural. They are metaphysical and drawn to abstract and speculative thinking. They are particularly sensitive to the way others react to them.

The Inventives seek recognition and social status through their intellectual and imaginative achievements. Highly competitive they want fame and glory and develop highly idealized images of themselves. Although they are energetic, they can also be subdued. They will act in ways that are subtle but will attract attention. The Inventives have an unusual thought process with a wide range of interests. They are intelligent, competent, innovative and clever.

The Solitaries do not really have a need for companionship and are comfortable alone. They are sangfroid, meaning calm, dispassionate and unsentimental. They show an indifference to pain and pleasure.

The Traditionalist

Traditionalists desire peace and accord. They want to belong and to be givers. This type may want to become an official to gain entitlement or preserve heritage. Whatever the case, they want to belong and to earn status. Traditionalists are accepting and accountable, diplomatic, dry humored, easy going, obliging, patient, peaceful, sensible, supportive and trusting. On the other hand, they are awkward, boring, conforming, dispirited, indifferent, monotonous, passive, shy and uncreative. Traditionalists include George W. Bush and his father, Jesus, Ronald Reagan, Woody Allen, Walt Disney and Marilyn Monroe (don't ask).

Traditionalists are Leisurely, Serious, Self-Sacrificing and Devoted. The Leisurely desire the freedom to do as they please. These are not people who function well where the activity is compulsory. They believe in their own inalienable rights. They will agree to play by the rules but will deliver only what is expected and no more. You cannot exploit these people. They are relaxed about time and not obsessed by urgency or deadlines. They do not relinquish to authority, nor are they overawed by it. These are blind luck types. They need to be free, but they do not like to risk important relationships.

The Serious look for duty and responsibility. They maintain a sober demeanor. They are not pretentious but they are accountable. They are thinkers, analyzers, evaluators, and ruminators. They will critique others, but they will also critique themselves. This type anticipates problems and prepares for the worst.

The Self-Sacrificers want to be needed. They will give you the shirt off their back. They are noncompetitive and unambitious. These are ethical, honest and trustworthy individuals. A Self-Sacrificer will not boast or be proud and they are uncomfortable if you fuss over them. They are uneasy in the limelight. They prefer

to shoulder their own burdens and have a great deal of patience and a high tolerance for discomfort. They tend to be rather naïve and innocent.

The Devoted like being taken care of. They are thoroughly dedicated to their relationships and place a high value on sustained relationships. They do not like to be alone and favor teamwork and cooperation. They seek out the opinions of others and follow their advice.

The Hedonist

The Hedonists crave popularity, being loved and excitement. Hedonists are amusing and animated. They are the cheerful, cute types with a lot of enthusiasm and excitement. They are gregarious and playful. They like to take risks and be spontaneous. On the other hand they are careless, disorganized, egotistical, flighty, forgetful, impulsive, narcissistic, permissive and reckless. They want to be free and they act impulsively. Hedonists do not make long-range plans. They are free spirited and light-hearted. Would it surprise you to know that Bill Clinton is a hedonist? What about Princess Diana, Prince Charles, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Steven Spielberg, Donald Trump, Lucille Ball, Beethoven, David Bowie, Elton John and Mozart?

Hedonists are Self-Confident, Adventurous, Mercurial and Artistic. The Self-Confidents desire admiration. They do not doubt their uniqueness and expect others to give them the red carpet. They have great aspirations and politically take advantage of the strengths and abilities of others to achieve their goals. They are competitive and love getting to the top. They identify with people of high rank and status. They visualize themselves as the hero and have a keen awareness of their inner state of being. They demonstrate a lot of poise and receive praise and compliments with grace.

The Adventurous live by their own internal code of values. To live is to dare. They love risk and challenge. They are gifted in the art of winning friends and influencing people. They love to keep moving. They were probably mischief-makers in their youth. They are courageous and bold. They live in the present. Life is meant to be experienced now.

The Mercurial desire relationships. They must always be deeply involved in a romance. They experience passionate, focused attachment in all of their relationships. They show what they feel and they are emotionally active and reactive. They put their hearts into everything. Uninhibited, they are spontaneous and fun-loving. They are imaginative and curious.

The Artistic seeks creativity. These are moody people who like to choose relationships which will further their work. They are highly disciplined, gifted and have superior powers of concentration. They are hedonistic and impulsive. They are attuned to color, line, texture, shading, touch, motion, seeing and hearing. They may seem aggressive and tough on the outside, but they are actually gentle, kind and generous on the inside. They alternate between extremes of sociability and social reticence.



It is not that easy to size up a personality during an interview unless you are extremely keen and you ask a lot of personal questions. It can be done but it requires very acute interviewing skills, and don't be too hard on yourself if you don't accomplish it in any great detail.

Once you get on board, you will have more time and information with which to make your assessment. Playing a little pop-psychology on the boss, or on a co-worker might be of benefit if it maximizes the relationship. Just be a little cautious when you start to practice your craft. Some people might find it intimidating if you know a little too much about them.

Linda S. Jevahirian is the Founder and President of Legal Search & Management, Inc. LS&M is a specialty firm that provides temporary and permanent recruiting to firms and corporations interested in improving their practice through the use of legal assistants.

Linda speaks regularly about succeeding in the legal assistant profession. She has also been published by Legal Assistant Today, The National Law Journal, Legal Management, and other legal journals.

Linda is in charge of the Legal Assistants Section of the Detroit Metropolitan Bar Association Legal Assistants Section. She invites you to attend the meetings on the fourth Tuesday of every month at the Penobscot Building in Detroit. For further information contact her at lindajev@aol.com, or 248-471-3443. Watch for the new LS&M web site at www.legalsearchonline.net.



Pro Bono Update

The response to our new pro bono program has been tremendous. Eighteen members answered the call and signed up for the pro bono database!! My heartfelt thanks goes out to these compassionate individuals who have agreed to help further the cause of pro bono activities in our communities.

When our program is fully implemented the State Bar will assist in matching pro bono attorneys with paralegals to aid in the delivery of legal services. The same benefits to utilizing paralegals in traditional settings will now be applied in the pro bono setting. Paralegals throughout Michigan will now have the satisfaction of being able to use their professional talent and skills in order to help the less fortunate.

The Legal Assistant Section Pro Bono Committee is now working with the State Bar to develop a proposal for implementing the program. More information on the program will be available by our annual meeting in September.

If you would like to join the pro bono database or if you would simply like more information about this exciting new program please contact:

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111 Lyon Street NW
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503
Phone: (616) 752-2264
Fax: (616) 222-2264
Email: kkasiorek@wnj.com

The Successful Legal Assistant The Detroit Metropolitan Bar Association

The Detroit Metropolitan Bar Association (DMBA) continues their Paralegal Membership Series "The Successful Legal Assistant". The summer series, June, July and August feature Roles and Responsibilities. The June session covered Litigation and Immigration. The July session will cover Real Estate and Corporate. The August presentation will include Probate, Estate Planning and Intellectual Property.

"The Successful Legal Assistant" series began in June 2002 with the assistance of Program Director, Linda S. Jevahirian, President and Founder, Legal Search & Management, Inc. When the DMBA indicated an interest in paralegal membership Jevahirian immediately offered to develop the concept and the sessions.

Says Jevahirian, "The new DMBA membership has been a great outlet for some major issues that affect paralegals in the workplace. The sessions focus on very general workday issues and concerns that are critical to effective self-management in a law practice. The consistent turnout has been an excellent venue for networking and expanding resources."

Legal assistants of all levels are encouraged to attend and to bring a friend. Meetings take place the 4th Tuesday of each month on the 13th floor of the Penobscot Building at Smart Detroit.

For further information please contact Angela English at the DMBA (313) 961-6120, ext 200 or aenglish@detroitlawyer.org. Feel free to contact Linda at Legal Search & Management at (248) 471-3443/lindajev@aol.com.

Legal Staff Primer

Continued from page 1

functions, personal contacts, referrals from past and present clients, and local and national associations of legal professionals, just to name a few. Candidates are found through these venues also, as well as through online and print advertising, and good old-fashioned cold-call recruiting!

Though every legal staffing firm has different procedures, here is the basic process: once a client communicates a staffing need, the firm identifies and screens appropriate candidates (those matching the specific job description provided by the client), and sends their information (resumes, references, etc.) to the client. The client then decides whether to proceed with the candidate. The staffing firm will then either coordinate the hiring process (i.e., second interviews, offer, counter-offer, etc.) until placement, or inform the candidate that he or she is no longer under consideration

Why Should I Work With A Legal Staffing Firm?

If you are job-hunting, legal staffing firms offer excellent resources because of their wealth of networks and contacts different from your own. This can save you valuable time and energy, because while you answer advertisements, search online job boards, and call your friends and acquaintances, having a resume on file with a legal staffing firm ensures that you do not miss out on opportunities outside your own circle. Legal staffing firms complete your individual job search efforts.

If you are not actively looking, you should still keep a current resume on file with a legal staffing firm. These firms can act as your eyes and ears in the legal marketplace — a free ticket in the job lottery, so to speak. While you may be happy in your current job, you can also rest easy in the knowledge that should an ideal position arise, you will receive notice, often before the job is advertised. If the position tempts you, pursue it. If you decide not to explore the opportunity, you can remain content in your current position because you know that, at least for now, the grass is not greener on the other side!

Working with a legal staffing firm also imparts a realistic understanding of your own marketability, job prospects, and the state of the legal community. You learn about standard salaries and benefits in your local job market, as well as the reputations of various firms and corporate legal departments.

If I Decide To Work With A Legal Staffing Firm, How Do I Decide Who To Work With?

Your career is important — work with a legal staffing firm that makes you feel comfortable. Consider size, geographic scope, reputation, and referrals. Ask yourself the following questions: After you submit your resume for a position, or you receive a call from a recruiter, how are you treated? The legal staffing firm recruiter should treat you as a professional and focus on your specific career goals and job requirements. You should always keep in mind, however, that your expectations must be reasonable, and a good recruiter should be able to discuss your expectations and the

reality of your place in the legal marketplace in an honest and constructive manner, one that will allow you to capitalize on your strengths.

Does the recruiter obtain your authorization and release its client's identity before sending out your resume? The legal community is small and you want to know where your confidential information travels. More about this later.

Are your calls and emails returned within a reasonable amount of time? In general, your call or email should be returned within 48 hours. Keep in mind, however, that most staffing firms have a small number of recruiters handling hundreds of resumes and candidates, so don't be afraid to call back until you receive a response.

What is the background of the staffing firm's personnel? Look for a firm where the staff themselves are legal professionals (lawyers, legal assistants, etc.) Such individuals will be more in tune to your needs and the needs of their clients because they will have "real world" experience with the day to day demands of legal practice.

Finally, does the firm require any monetary payments? Reputable legal staffing firms are paid by their clients once a successful placement is made. There is no charge to candidates for the legal staffing firm's services. Be wary of any outfit asking you for up front money in exchange for finding you a job.

Can I Work With More Than One Legal Staffing Firm?

You can work with any firm you believe will further your career goals. However, if you are working with more than one legal staffing firm, you should make each firm aware of this situation, to prevent harming your chances of a job offer where multiple firms send your resume for the same position. Some candidates mistakenly believe that having different firms send their resume to the same client will heighten their chances of a job offer. Doing so will actually hurt your chances, because many potential employers will not want to embroil themselves in a dispute over which firm should be paid for your placement. They will simply withdraw your resume from consideration, or "back burner" it to avoid conflict.

To avoid this circumstance, you should always know where your resume is being sent, and it should never be submitted without your express authorization. Another risk of sending out your resume without your authorization is that you have no idea who will be viewing your materials, and know that you are looking for a job. For example, you do not want your resume to end up in the hands of someone who knows your boss, as word may get back to him or her that you are job-hunting. The bottom line is that the staffing firm should, as a matter of course, never send out your resume without your express authorization. If the staffing firm does not indicate that this is his or her standard practice, ALWAYS insist your approval be sought before any resume submission.



Do I Have Any Special Obligation to A Legal Staffing Firm If I Use One?

Most legal staffing firms will have standard paperwork addressing the parameters of the candidate-staffing firm relationship. Most firms will require an authorization to check references, verify education, perform drug testing if necessary, etc. There also may be standard representations that the legal staffing firm cannot guarantee you a position, and, for contract positions, that all employment is “at-will” or terminable at any time by either party.

In addition to these standard agreements, most firms will require an agreement that you will go through the legal staffing firm exclusively for job opportunities that you learn of through the firm. This does not mean that you cannot search for jobs on your own. It simply means that if you find out about an opportunity through a legal staffing firm, you agree to go through the firm for that opportunity. For example, if you sent your resume to XYZ Firm for an open position, and then you receive a call from a recruiter for the same position, you would tell the recruiter that XYZ already has your resume, at which point the recruiter would NOT represent you for that particular opportunity. However, if you get a call from a recruiter for a position at ABC Corporation, and you have not sent your resume there yet, then you would give your permission to the recruiter to send your resume to ABC Corporation, if you are interested in that opportunity. The understanding would then be that the recruiter is representing you for that position, and would be paid a fee by ABC Corporation if you are placed there. Such understandings protect both your interests and the legal staffing firm’s interests.

Most agreements between candidates and legal staffing firms have time limits. This means that if a certain amount of time (about a year or so, in most cases) has passed since the staffing firm sent

your resume to a client, or since you last worked on a contract assignment with the staffing firm’s client, then you can enter into an employment relationship with the staffing firm’s client on your own. Additionally, most staffing firms have individual contracts with each of their clients covering such circumstances.

What Is The Etiquette of Working With A Legal Staffing Firm?

As in many other circumstances, the Golden Rule applies: treat a legal staffing firm the way that you would like to be treated. Be courteous, responsive, and professional. If you are asked to provide additional information regarding your background, do so promptly. If your situation changes, and you will be unable to follow through with an interview, or a job offer, communicate this immediately to your recruiter. Legal staffing professionals know that no one can predict what life will bring, but they need to be kept in the loop regarding your circumstances. For example, if you just received a job offer from a staffing firm’s client, but you are really more interested in another opportunity and want to wait before accepting, communicate this to your recruiter. Or if you will be unavailable for contract work for a few months, send a quick email to let your recruiter know.

Finally, realize that staffing firms have only a handful of recruiters to handle hundreds and thousands of potential candidates. Understanding the time constraints on your recruiter as well as yourself will go a long way towards improving your mutually beneficial relationship. The bottom line is that a legal staffing firm can provide a cost-free, additional set of “eyes and ears” in furtherance of your professional career development.

2003 Legal Assistants Section Annual Meeting & Seminar

**September 12, 2003 Lansing Center/Radisson Hotel
Lansing, Michigan**

The Section’s business meeting and election will be held from 9:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. on Friday, September 12, 2003, with the seminar immediately following. The State Bar is hosting a breakfast from 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m., which will be a great opportunity for us to network with other section members and attorneys. As a member of the State Bar of Michigan, Legal Assistants Section, you are encouraged to attend all functions associated with the 68th State Bar of Michigan Annual Meeting. Be sure to watch for your July issue of the Bar Journal for a complete listing of all events. Although some of the events require the payment of a fee, most of the seminars are free to State Bar members – including the Annual Meeting and Seminar sponsored by the Legal Assistants Section. Both events will be held at the Lansing Center.

Our speakers this year will be Gregory Conyers and Ellen Brisson. Gregory Conyers is the Administrator of the Justice Initiatives Program at the State Bar and a member of the State Bar Pro Bono Involvement Committee. The Legal Assistants Section Council has long been interested in how legal assistants can become involved in pro bono opportunities. Mr. Conyers is knowledgeable about pro bono projects and will discuss how legal assis-

tants, with their skills and experience, can assist the community and those who need legal assistance.

Ellen Brisson is the owner of Forward Focus Coaching, a personal and business coaching company. Ms. Brisson is a certified Global Coach affiliated with the International Coach Academy. She is also a member of the State Bar of Michigan Legal Assistants Section and the Detroit Metropolitan Bar Association. Ms. Brisson combines 15 years as a paralegal, a Bachelor of Arts with a degree in Psychology from Wayne Sate University and extensive coaching training. Ms. Brisson assists individuals in enhancing their professional careers and personal lives.

All legal assistants are welcome to attend the Annual Meeting and Seminar. The speakers are excellent and you will not want to miss out on this opportunity to discover how to enhance your career and personal lives by volunteering your time on pro bono projects and how to reach your goals with advice from a professional coach.

If you would like more information on the 2003 Annual Meeting and Seminar, please contact KathyAnn Blunck, Annual Meeting Coordinator and Section Chair-Elect, telephone 231-486-4526, or by email at kblunck@shrr.com.

DECLARATION OF CANDIDACY



Notice of Call for Declaration of Candidacy for Officers and Members of the Section's Council

To: All Members of the Legal Assistants Section of the State Bar of Michigan

Officers and members of the Council, listed below, will be elected by the members of the Section, voting either by mail or in person at the Annual Meeting in Lansing on September 12, 2003. All ballots will be tallied at the Annual Meeting. A term year runs from the end of the Annual Meeting to the end of the following Annual Meeting.

The positions to be filled are:

- Chairperson-Elect 3 year term (1 year Chair-Elect, 1 year Chair, 1 year Ex-Officio)
Treasurer 2 year term
Secretary 2 year term
3 members of the Council 2 year term

This is a notice of call for declaration of candidacy. Any member of the Section who wishes to declare himself or herself a candidate for an office or a member position on the Council is requested to complete and submit the Declaration of Candidacy form. Excerpts from the Section's Bylaws regarding the duties of officers and members of the Council should be reviewed before responding (a copy of which can be found on the Section's Web site at www.michbar.org).

The Section's Nominations and Elections Committee, by authority under the Bylaws, may nominate additional candidates. The Bylaws also permit other nominations for the same offices to be made from the floor at the Annual Meeting of the Section. If you have any questions, please call any member of the Nominations and Elections Committee.

NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

- Kathy Ann Blunck (231) 929-4878
Kevin D. Gasiewski, CLAS (313) 845-1053
Tracey C. Hammond (517) 625-9109

Dated: July 7, 2003

I hereby declare my candidacy for the position checked below:

- 3 year term as Chairperson-Elect, Chairperson, and Ex-Officio
2 year term as Secretary
2 year term as Treasurer
2 year term as member of the Council

of the Legal Assistants Section of the State Bar of Michigan and consent to the placing of my name and information about me on the slate of candidates to be prepared prior to and in conjunction with the elections at the Annual Meeting in Lansing on Friday, September 12, 2003.

Name:
Member No.:
Employer:
Address:
Telephone No.:
Email:
Area(s):

Statement of qualifications for office (100 words or less):

Signed:

Dated:

I would like to serve on the following committees. CHECK as many as you wish. You DO NOT need to run for office to serve on a committee.

- NEWSLETTER EDUCATION PRO BONO
PUB. RELATIONS MEMBERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP

Return by August 1, 2003 to:

Kevin D. Gasiewski, CLAS
Ford Global Technologies, LLC
Suite 600 East
One Parklane Boulevard
Dearborn, MI 48126

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Membership Benefits Include:

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- ◆ **A discount on your first section educational seminar**
- ◆ **Insurance** (including health and reduced auto insurance)
- ◆ **State Bar Platinum or Gold MasterCard** (to those who qualify)
- ◆ **Verizon Wireless** (miscellaneous discounts)
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For information contact:

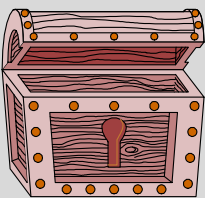
Kevin D. Gasiewski, CLAS (313) 845-1053

Don't forget to check out the Legal Assistant Section webpage for back issues of this newsletter.

www.michbar.org/legalassist/home.html



Of General Interest



Maurine Payne is our section historian. Should you have pictures or articles for the history books, you may contact Maurine at: Lewis & Munday, P.C., 660 Woodward Avenue, 1300 First National Building Detroit, Michigan 48226
Phone: 313-961-2007, ext. 159 Fax: 313-961-1270.

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For more help, call the Member Services help line at (517) 346-6326 or (800) 968-1442, ext. 6326 or e-mail Judy Clark
jclark@mail.michbar.org

NEW MEMBERS LEGAL ASSISTANTS SECTION STATE BAR OF MICHIGAN

Catherine M. Ragan
Troy, MI

Janis C. Mudgett
Otsego, MI

Kathleen L. Ueberroth
Livonia, MI

Amy Kristine Martin
Southfield, MI

Lorre Ann Allen
Troy, MI

Ann Rachelle Van Hautte
Saginaw, MI

Cynthia A. Gilmore
Detroit, MI

Jennifer Marie Constantino
St. Clair Shores, MI

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